

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PLANNING COMMISSION
WORK SESSION MINUTES
February 14, 2010
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
853-4560, Town Hall Room, 7:00 P.M.**

APPROVED

PRESENT: Chair Deits, Vice-Chair Jackson, Commissioner Honicky, Goldsberry, Goodale, Cordill,
Norkin, and Scales
ABSENT: Secretary Beyea
STAFF: Principal Planner Gail Oranchak

1. Call meeting to order

Chair Deits called the work session meeting to order at 7:30 P.M.

2. Approval of agenda

Vice-Chair Jackson moved to approve the agenda with the insertion of “Public Remarks” after #2. Seconded by Commissioner Scales.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 8-0.

3. Public Remarks

None

4. Discussion

Chair Deits indicated 45 minutes would be spent on the discussion of each item.

Chair Deits opened the work session for discussion

A. 2005 Master Plan Goals and Objectives

- Use the same organization structure as the Board’s Policy Manual “Ends”
- Recognize the need for more diverse housing; single-family owner-occupied may be outdated
- Respond to the Township Board goal to minimize climate change
- Incorporate the Okemos Downtown Study
- Note items that have been accomplished to update or eliminate original goals
- Revise to incorporate actions that are not in the plan such as preparation of a Wind Energy ordinance
- Consider the change in demographics that may result in more concentrated economic groupings
- Lack of coherence between strip malls
- Broaden the types of uses permitted in malls
- Meridian Township is designed for strip malls on both sides of Grand River
- November 8th work session emphasized economic growth, sustainability, commercial re-use
- Master Plan goals reflect Township Board policies
- Conduct of review. On-line comment and input; round tables and town meetings
- Consider progress of implementing the Master Plan on an annual basis
- 2011 Board Policy Manual now available

- Review Master Plan Goals and Objectives at the beginning of each year
- Review on-line 2006 and 2009 surveys
- Convert links to “tiny urls”
- Below average street lighting and recycling; below average and losing ground in areas of street repair, snow plowing, and economic development
- Topics to add in a Master Plan update include Complete Streets (added to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act in 2010) and the Greenspace Plan
- Recommendation to possibly combine Goals #1, and Goals #2 and #3
- Add an environmental goal (sustainability, alternate energy, recycling, efficiency) in recognition of it as the Township Board’s highest priority
- Translate policies into action
- Marry Township Board policies and Master Plan goals
- Staff recommendation of Goals and Objectives weaknesses and strengths
- Identify accomplished and out-of-date goals and objectives
- What to add to the Master Plan should be the 8th goal
- Consensus for Planning Commissioners to review Goal #2 and Goal #4. Compare with the Township Board Policy Manual
- Goal #2 and Goal #4 will be discussed under “Other Business” during the February 28, 2011 regular meeting
- Contact Parks; request a staff person attend
- E-mail location of the Parks current 5-year plan and Parks budget

B. Medical Marihuana

- Purpose of the discussion is to decide whether or not to write an ordinance
- Child safety issue
- Attractive nuisance
- Regulate like fences around swimming pools and water towers
- Law already says a person may not smoke in a public place
- Draft a broad ordinance, address simple issues
- No dispensary next to school, no smoking clubs next to school or church
- Focus on land use issues
- Address second hand smoke, proximity to pediatrician’s office
- Don’t restrict activities in a private home
- Home occupation impacts on surrounding neighbors (traffic, noise, light, odors)
- Can sell, acquire and transfer
- Ordinance to identify permitted location
- It may be permissible to prohibit use in a dispensary
- How to address compassion clubs
- Ordinance interpretation dispensaries are permitted by right in commercial districts
- Rules should be written for the entire state not on a community-by-community basis
- Statewide groups should be elevating the discussion for action to a higher level than municipal legislative bodies
- Where does the Michigan Association of Planning stand?
- Consideration of political ramifications
- Protect against negative impacts such as affect of proximity to children and seniors, potential for criminal element involvement
- Issue of security
- No intention to over-regulate

- Responsible for resulting problems if sit on hands
- Continuum of actions—information discussions, resolution, ordinance recommendation
- 6-2 consensus to move forward
- Commissioners crystallize individual thoughts within the next two weeks, transmit via e-mail to staff to compile and distribute for next meeting,

5. Public remarks

Andrew Settimi, Clare, Michigan suggested the Planning Commission include alternate energy as a topic in the Master Plan. He reported in Midland, Michigan recycling is mandatory. He also supported regulation of medical marihuana facilities indicating without regulation the land use could “get out of hand in a hurry.”

6. Adjournment

Chair Deits adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:15 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gail Oranchak, AICP
Principal Planner