

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PLANNING COMMISSION
WORK SESSION MINUTES
July 11, 2011
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
853-4560, Town Hall Room, 7:00 P.M.**

APPROVED

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

1. Call meeting to order

Secretary Beyea called the work session meeting to order at approximately 7:05 P.M.

2. Approval of agenda

3. Public Remarks

None

4. Discussion

A. 2005 Master Plan Update

- Recap of last meeting's discussion of contiguous boundaries
- Explanation of the map prepared by staff—1993 Comprehensive Plan urban service boundary line, Ember Oaks and Georgetown approved with developer financed extensions of public water and sewer east of the 1993 urban service boundary line
- Any opposition to continuing the development as they were originally approved.
- Ember Oaks is zoned RR and approved as a PRD allowing clustering of lots. Density is consistent with the RR zoning district.
- Less opposition from the Planning Commission to extend service boundary for contiguous approved areas that have already been approved for water and sewer extension by the Township Board
- No support for including St. Martha or the plats along Grand River with public water service
- Planning Commission does not support expanding the urban service area beyond those sites contiguous to the 1993 line.
- Tri-County report listed criteria for deciding on the location of an urban service boundary
- History of the 1993 urban service boundary reviewed.
- Tri-County Regional Planning Commission initiated the request for an urban service boundary.
- Purpose of the urban service boundary: use the infrastructure in the ground and control services by allowing development where utilities already exist.
- No specific time line to complete; the line does not have to be static.
- Sufficient land available in 1993 for expected growth within the time horizon of the Plan
- Planning Commission making a recommendation on the boundary by amending the Master Plan
- Wait until the 20-year time horizon to change the urban service boundary
- Adjust the line as conditions change—not a specific time.
- Avoid leap-frogging into areas without services when unused services are available inside the service area.
- To approve a boundary without an expiration date gives very little teeth.
- Identify a valid reason to move the boundary and amend the Master Plan
- The process to amend the boundary the same as establishing it
- Typical process: collect data and analyze, set goals, put together future land use map showing an urban service boundary.
- The 1993 boundary seems to be logical.

- Construction of single family homes is brisk right now; sale of existing single-family homes is slow.
- Are there areas that need to be retracted due to the current market trends
- Impact of floodplain and wetland on undeveloped land
- Expiration of Altman rezoning located on Haslett Road; a portion is zoned RA, remainder reverted to RR.
- More important to update the Master Plan or the map?
- Sign off on Tri-County request for urban service boundary, then complete Master Plan update.
- Major overhaul of the Master Plan not planned at this time.
- State says look at the Master Plan at least every five years; not required to actually make changes unless needed.
- Consistency in application necessary for Master Plan to be effective
- Land use designations must be consistent with the placement of the urban service boundary line
- Possibly move RA zoned Altman property to the east side of the line.
- Resistance to down zone based on Master Plan designations
- Discussion of zoning: Identify areas west of the urban service boundary that are designated for low density development, areas of Industrial
- Identify areas where zoning is lower density than underlying Master Plan designations
- To justify boundary, determine the amount of vacant land within the urban service boundary, number of existing and potential lots
- Show unbuildable areas along the fringe of the line.
- Impact on land value
- Master Plan designations consistent with extension of utilities: 1.25-3.5 and higher density.
- Locations where master plan and/or zoning consistent with restricting extension of public utilities
- Property owner could install private on-site systems
- May not take away all viable use of the land
- Denial will not be based on lack of capacity; capacity is available
- Influence the location of development with an urban service boundary line, does not prevent development
- Poor soils limit density by increasing the amount of land needed for septic systems
- Can't purchase land and expect utilities if shown on the Future Land Use Map and Zoning Map as low density.
- Urban Service Boundary line a policy line/guideline, real eligibility is in the zoning and where public water and sewer can be extended.
- Potentially risky to move the urban service boundary westward
- Market has postponed pressure to develop land east of the boundary
- Consensus to create a new urban service area by moving line shown in the Tri-County report to encompass sites that have been approved and/or built with public water and sewer taking in some unserved properties within 200 feet of existing service
- Send to Board with rationale: contiguous, rough estimate of vacant developable land to the west
- Only residential development has breached the 1993 urban service boundary line
- Commercial development east of the boundary such as trailer park, gas station, restaurant, pre-dated the 1993 urban service boundary
- Identify appropriate locations within urban services area for mix of housing options
- Evaluate methods and locations (mall) to optimize land use within the service area
- Okemos Schools' plans to re-use existing buildings rather than selling land
- At the next work session finish the goals and objectives to send to the Township Board
- If authorized by the state, Transfer of Development Rights with Meridian Township as receiving zone and Williamstown Township as sending zone

5. Public remarks

None

6. Adjournment

Secretary Beyea adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gail Oranchak, AICP
Principal Planner