

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PLANNING COMMISSION
WORK SESSION MINUTES
September 12, 2011
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
853-4560, Town Hall Room, 7:00 P.M.**

APPROVED

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

1. Call meeting to order

Vice-Chair Jackson called the work session meeting to order at approximately 9:45 P.M.

2. Approval of agenda

3. Public Remarks

None

4. Discussion

A. 2005 Master Plan Update

- In the short term of five years, demographics of an aging population will result in more nursing homes and extended care facilities resulting in a need for service workers' housing. No growth in four person families or need for four-person family housing
- Satisfy the Township Board by completing goals and support for the urban service boundary
- Relief strategy for people outside the urban services area with failed septic or bad wells
- Rather than extending capacity east of the urban service boundary, can available capacity be diverted to areas within the urban services area
- Within the urban services area infill and redevelop with increased density and intensity to create walkable and sustainable land use
- Staff provide information about utility extension process
- Basis for the urban service boundary proposed by the Planning Commission from contemporary demographics and economic realities; existing zoning and density; accommodating approved projects that may not be built out at this time
- May be necessary to upzone areas to increase density within the urban services area
- Tri-County request individual communities set the line based on criteria
- Urban service boundary in the report a starting point
- Adding text to the Master Plan to support the proposed boundary
- Incorporate resolution of support, language from the Tri-County report, not intended to slow growth or stop growth but to redirect into urbanized area based on demographic changes
- Incorporate concepts of sustainability, focused growth, smart growth, Township goals, Tri-County planning goals.
- Density/compact development and walkability
- Demographics of walkability—age, ability, desired lifestyle all support higher densities
- Explain the meaning of “walkable” and “sustainable”
- Uncertain future demographically. Right now no growth but aging population; prepare for impact of FRIB and other economic development initiatives as drivers in the future
- Walkability for all age groups as Master Plan principle consistent with State's Complete Streets initiative
- Rethink land use and density for infill and redevelopment areas
- Would not have planned for the effects of the economic downturn even if knew five years ago this was the future

- Urban Land Institute training focused on what the markets want and it's all about being walkable
- Look at Smart Growth principles
- New economy and market demand going for place-making—cultural amenities and density
- Focus on redevelopment within the urban services area; locate people where the infrastructure is, preserve open space and natural areas
- Township's "crown jewels" are open spaces and park land translates into home sales premiums
- Okemos downtown as walkable and sustainable
- Defining downtown Okemos with Will White's project on one corner and a community grocery such as a home-grown Whole Foods or Trader Joe's anchoring the opposite corner
- Okemos/Hamilton roundabout on the Tri-County Transportation Improvement Program for construction in 2013
- ICRC thinks a roundabout will work others are skeptical
- Completing the package: Support from the Tri-County report; look at sustainable information from other groups; tie urban service boundary to new ideas
- In sync with new state leadership, consider Governor's "dashboard"
- Complete remaining goals
- Campus planning group has good studies with counter arguments
- Next work session scheduled for September 26 after the regular meeting night. Staff to poll all Commissioners to see if support for additional or alternate meeting date of Tuesday September 27 at 6:00 p.m.
- Chair Deits will represent the Planning Commission at the Omega Architects appeal hearing (SUP #11031) scheduled for the Township Board's October 4, 2011 meeting

5. Public remarks

None

6. Adjournment

Vice-Chair Jackson adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gail Oranchak, AICP
Principal Planner