

Holly Township
Planning Commission - Regular Meeting
Minutes of October 13, 2008

Call to Order: Chairperson George Barton called the October 13, 2008 regular meeting of the Holly Township Planning Commission to order at or about 7:00 p.m. at the Holly Township Hall, 102 Civic Drive, Holly, Michigan, 48442.

Roll Call:

Commissioners Present:

George Barton, Chairperson
Rick Stevens
Bill Angus
LaLaine Kilbourn
Ted Gurski
Steve Ruth

Commissioners Absent:

Mark McHalpine

Others Present:

Brian Oppmann, Carlisle/Wortman
Supervisor Dale Smith

- **Commissioner LaLaine Kilbourn moved to excuse Commissioner Mark McHalpine from the meeting. Commissioner Ted Gurski supported the motion. A voice vote was taken; all those present voted yes; the motion carried.**

Public Hearings: No public hearings.

Approval of Minutes:

- **Commissioner LaLaine Kilbourn moved to approve the minutes of September 8, 2008, as amended. Commissioner Bill Angus supported the motion. A voice vote was taken; all those present voted yes; the motion carried.**

Communications: No communications.

New Business: No new business.

Old Business:

1. Master Plan update

Chairperson Barton stated tonight the Planning Commission will work towards a vote to move the Master Plan update on to the Board so the 63-day time table will be started. During that 63-days, the Master Plan can still be reviewed and amended.

Mr. Brian Oppmann reviewed the proposed Master Plan material with the Planning Commission. An excerpt of the review follows. He indicated all maps have been updated.

Some items in the demographics and background studies have been changed based on new information, though some have not. With every chart and figure seen, efforts were made to pinpoint whether it's from 2000 or 2005. This is the most up-to-date information available.

The introduction to the proposed Master Plan update is basically the same as the current document. The only changes are the updated legislation for the Michigan Planning Act and the Zoning Enabling Act. There's a large section on a regional visioning session, or regional seminar, and that's been removed because it was from 1997 and out of date.

The background studies section is in the same order as the current Master Plan. In the previous plan Oakland County had provided the Township with maps. All the maps have been updated based on the most current geographic information available.

Under physical characteristics, some of the boundaries have changed slightly, resulting in a cleaner data set. The wetland information is based on Michigan Natural Features data, which the State of Michigan documents. There is a watershed map, Map 4. It covers the watersheds in the township. Map 5 is called a service model. It's part of a topographical map. You can see things like Mt. Holly in the northeast corner and other color elevations.

Page 15 begins the meat of the demographics, starting out with population. This is 2007 information from the U.S. Census Bureau. He received the mid-decade census number from the Township but never received one from the Village of Holly. When he gets that number, he will put in the hard number. Population is continuing to increase.

Page 16, Table 2, is 2000 information. That has not been updated and it probably won't be until about 2012. Page 17 is current information as of 2000. Page 18, you can see Figure C is the 2005 median income from Oakland County. The Grand Blanc and City of Fenton information remain with information from 2000.

Page 19 and 20 contain updated information. Page 21, Table 6, there was data received from Oakland County on selling price. This does not include sheriff's deeds and foreclosures and that is noted in the paragraph above Table 6. The end of Page 22 and the beginning of Page 23 contain updated building permit activity.

Commissioner Steve Ruth referred to Page 21, average selling price, questioning how "average" was determined in order to state the average selling price has gone up remarkably.

Mr. Oppmann stated it's the average of all selling prices, indicating the number is from 2005, which is before the big onslaught of sheriff's deeds and foreclosures.

Page 24 contains economic statistics, which the Census Bureau, unfortunately, had no updates on. A little bit of information was obtained from the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), though some of it was incomplete and difficult to put together.

Page 26 refers to tax base. This is information from the Equalization Department from Oakland County. Page 27 refers to SEV for the entire township, as opposed to neighboring communities.

Commissioner Ted Gurski questioned whether the numbers for the neighboring communities, especially those who are also redoing their Master Plans, matched up to those communities' numbers.

Mr. Oppmann stated they should match up because everyone works from the same data set.

Page 28 refers to community services. The school section has some updates and also the utilities, fire and police. Parks and Recreation remains the same, though it will be provided to Parks and Recreation people for them to review to confirm it is still current.

Some information was obtained from Building and Zoning Administrator Laura DeVault in terms of programming. The activities and events section has been removed.

The roadway section on Page 34 has been updated. Many maps from the current Master Plan were old and didn't use the current technology. The new maps are much easier to read. There is updated accident information from SEMCOG.

Page 37, regional context, is a discussion on other future land use plans for communities surrounding the township. When Oakland County reviews the proposed Master Plan, they will compare it to those of neighboring communities to ensure that everything is consistent. During the 63-day review period, a very thorough analysis will be done by Oakland County.

Page 39 reflects existing land use for 2007. This is Oakland County information. They look at existing land use through the use of aerial photography and also equalization information in terms of what the use is classified as to arrive at existing land use. It's extremely accurate, which is pretty impressive.

The chart on Page 41 is a review of 2007 information in terms of acreage compared to 2001, which is when it was done in the previous Master Plan.

Commissioner LaLaine Kilbourn questioned on Page 37 under Fenton Township, the last sentence says, "manufactured home residential is designated from Thompson Road north to the municipal line", questioning whether they were including an area which is no longer a ~~trailer park~~ designated as a manufactured home complex.

Mr. Oppmann stated he would review that item during the 63-day review.

Commissioner Rick Stevens indicated on Page 24 there is a material dealer listed under businesses in Holly Township and he didn't recognize it.

Mr. Oppmann stated it was information that Oakland County had in their community profiles.

Commissioner Stevens suggested until we know what it is, it shouldn't be used.

Mr. Oppmann stated he would try to get more information on the item during the 63-day review.

Commissioner Stevens noted he didn't notice that the Renaissance Festival was mentioned in the Master Plan.

Mr. Oppmann indicated it was in the section of activities and events, which was stricken.

Commissioner Stevens noted Huckleberry Campground is listed, which is not nearly as important as the Renaissance Festival. When someone refers to the Master Plan, the Renaissance Festival would reflect the fact there is a first-class event in the Township which draws a couple hundred thousand people to the township. That is not to say anything should be taken from Huckleberry Campground, but the Renaissance Festival is one of the township's jewels.

Mr. Oppmann referred to Page 45 and stated he explained to the subcommittee last week that some communities take soil information from Oakland County's soil survey and classify it under three groups based on how well-drained the soils are and how suitable they are for septic. There is a map on the next page. The dark brown areas generally are areas where the soils would not be suitable for septic uses. That doesn't mean they're not, but the map is a general guide of suitable areas for development where you wouldn't need any kind of septic. The white areas are okay to use for septic. Cream-colored areas are marginally acceptable and most of the time engineers can find a way to put a septic anywhere anymore. This is designed to be looked at as a general rule in terms of land use in the township. It appears there are not too many places you can go, but it's a general guide and gives the Township an idea of where higher density development would be more suitable. The information is taken from the soil survey.

Most of the goals and policies section remained the same, though it's reformatted. At the top of Page 57 a paragraph has been inserted after the bullet points where it talks about the conflict between the map and the text and that the map takes precedence. That is basically word for word right off of Attorney Greg Need's opinion. Most of the text is identical to the old plan.

Future land use has been updated. The current future land use map was done differently than the updated map. The old plan contains a lot of bubbles of resource conservation areas. Sometimes that can give confusing information to consultants when trying to make a recommendation on rezoning and can be confusing to the Planning Commissioners when making a decision. Attempt has been made to take the same information and put it into the new one. What's different is it's parcel by parcel based, not with graphic bubbles showing resource conservation. One reason is if you look at densities, the resource conservation is still one dwelling unit per five acres. AGRE, or low-density residential agricultural is equivalent to our AGRE so it's the same density. But if you read the section on resource conservation, it's meant to encourage cluster development, any kind of other alternatives to straight splitting of parcels and rezoning. Wetland information has been overlaid into the new update, pinpointing areas with a lot of wetlands and other natural features. Those areas have been highlighted as resource

conservation. It doesn't hurt to have more green; you're still looking at the same densities.

Commissioner Kilbourn noted she liked the fact the new map showed a lot of resource conservation. She questioned whether there could be an overlay page, a clear overlay page which shows the information.

Mr. Oppmann indicated that could be done at the next meeting. He could sit down with the Planning Commission and, after discussion, he could print some layers on clear acetate for different overlays.

Commissioner Kilbourn noted even if it wasn't incorporated into the Master Plan, there could be a map the Township could have and refer to with the overlays.

Mr. Oppmann noted the numbers at the end of the section reflect statistics in terms of how many acres are divvied out to each land use. At the subcommittee level the decision was made to change the future land use of the Academy property to residential. At the time the previous plan was written, it was unclear whether the Academy would close and it is now financially healthy.

The next map is future land uses from the Village of Holly Master Plan. It has been updated based on the Village's previous Master Plan and is up-to-date as of last year. Information has been updated on the Village of Holly statistics and their land use categories. When looking through the Village Master Plan, the Village didn't have any of the information. They didn't show a percentage of low-density residential as opposed to anything else.

Page 65 gets into special planning areas and corridors. There were eight different areas, which have now decreased to five. The areas struck were the National Cemetery and Holly High School, which are now concluded. The Genesys complex areas have been consolidated into North Holly Road.

Page 66 contains a map showing where those areas are. The East Holly Road and Rattalee wetlands areas haven't changed. The Grange Hall Road corridor hasn't changed. The Grange Hall/Fish Lake Road intersection has an overlay district in place and that language has been added. That doesn't mean the overlay district is finished; it is a work in progress.

Chairperson Barton noted the reason much of the Master Plan is in black and white is to keep the printing costs of the document down.

Commissioner Kilbourn indicated the first bullet point on Page 72, the last sentence includes if utilities became available, the Township could consider future development along the corridor and the language should be reviewed by Attorney Greg Need.

Mr. Oppmann suggested the Township may want to consider a community septic ordinance.

Commissioner Stevens questioned on Map 12, number 5, the Holly corridor, it looks like the numbers on Mitchell Road should be closer to the boundary. He may have misunderstood the map on Page 71.

Mr. Oppmann noted the map is hard to read. He tried to pinpoint with a dotted line the amount of area talked about. He'll work on it again.

Pages 73 and 74, the transportation section, some language has been changed in the rail transit center. Some things didn't apply anymore and have been stricken.

Written comments were received from Administrator DeVault that he will add.

The next section, the greenways plan, has several zones that are talked about. Safety paths have been added to the map and updated information from Oakland County on their trails system. If you look at the map, all the trails have been GPS'd. The trails planned by Headwaters Trails are in the layer in red. He will provide an 11-by-17 map which will show it clearer.

Woodlands and wetlands have been overlaid and also the lakes and streams, including the Oakland County trails and pathway plans and safety paths. The narrative contains information regarding the different zones with descriptions on each one. A utility corridor is also shown, looking at it from Oakland County's perspective as a viable option for trails some day.

Commissioner Kilbourn expressed concern that changes on the greenways plan were forwarded to Oakland County by Administrator DeVault.

Mr. Oppmann stated he didn't believe the process was over and it could be made an agenda item. He's certain Administrator DeVault can review the changes with the Planning Commission and provide them with the underlying reasons for the changes.

Commissioner Stevens questioned whether reflecting where cell towers are would be a helpful item in the Master Plan.

Mr. Oppmann indicated they could be included.

Commissioner Kilbourn suggested adding them to the road right-of-ways map.

Commissioner Kilbourn stated the Planning Commission never as a group took a look at the green infrastructure map provided by Oakland County in terms of whether changes should be made to the Master Plan. She indicated she will print the information off from the DVD and provide copies to the Planning Commission in November. The information can then be reviewed by Commission members before the December meeting.

Commissioner Bill Angus questioned why the map belonged in the Master Plan.

Mr. Oppmann indicated the intent of the green infrastructure project is to identify wetlands of the county, corridors that have ecological influence or natural feature influence in order to either preserve them or document and identify them for preservation or use as greenways.

A safety path ordinance was passed. Part of the ordinance was to tie into areas in the Master Plan that called for safety paths. The previous plan didn't call for safety paths and needed to be updated as to where safety paths should go. Page 86, Map 16, the green roads are where safety paths would be required if a developer came in and wanted to develop there.

Commissioner Stevens noted on reading it, it states, "Consumers utility easement, which runs north-south in the west portion of the township", etc., and questioned whether he was missing that on the map and whether they should have their own separate marking on the map to tie into it, as they're major corridors.

Mr. Oppmann agreed, stating it's identified as "This power line easement is identified on the greenways map", though it's not identified. Some of the language was a holdover from the previous plan. He stated Oakland County entered into negotiations with ITC, who does Detroit Edison towers. They were able to get some agreement to use the corridors some day. He doesn't know if ITC works with Consumers Energy.

Commissioner Kilbourn suggested they could be added to the map as potential or future plans.

Commissioner Angus noted some months ago there was discussion that having the plan opened doors for grants that could be sought.

Commissioner Kilbourn suggested Headwaters Trails should be added onto the map.

Commissioner Angus questioned whether the different sections of safety paths should be prioritized in the order they would be built.

Mr. Oppmann stated the corridors that should be done first could be listed.

Chairperson Barton stated the one to the high school should be done first, taking it to the township line, hoping Groveland Township would participate. He isn't sure if the Headwaters Trails information should be included, as it is already on the greenways. The whole purpose of this map is to show safety paths.

Mr. Oppmann noted comments would be received back from others, including Headwaters Trails. If they feel it needs to be included to help with grant opportunities, it can be added.

All Commissioners applauded the subcommittee and especially Mr. Oppmann for the excellent work on the Master Plan.

Commissioner Kilbourn suggested submitting something to the newspaper stating the Township is doing a nature photo contest of areas of the Township for including in the Master Plan.

Public Comments: No public comments.

Reports: No reports.

Adjournment: Chairperson George Barton, hearing no other business, adjourned the meeting.

Zo Turner, Recording Secretary
Holly Township