

ROBINSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
October 12, 2021

The special meeting of the Robinson Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:07 PM at the Robinson Township Hall.

Present

Shawn Martinie
Bill Maschewske
Steve Young
Lydia Brown
Michelle Gillespie
Travis Vugteveen

Absent

One position vacant

Also present were Zoning Administrator Brian Werschem, Supervisor Frank Johnson, Deputy Supervisor Ernie Martin, and Planning Consultant Gregory Ransford of Fresh Coast Planning. The attendance sheet is not attached since it included no signatures.

A motion was made by Michelle Gillespie and seconded by Lydia Brown to approve the agenda as written.

The motion carried unanimously with one position vacant.

A motion was made by Michelle Gillespie and seconded by Lydia Brown to approve the Planning Commission minutes of the September 28, 2021 meeting as written.

The motion carried unanimously with one position vacant.

Master Planning

A short presentation was made by Gregory Ransford of Fresh Coast Planning. Fresh Coast Planning was selected by Robinson Township to update the Master Land Use Plan. The first two chapters (Preface and Chapter One -- Community Preferences) of the updated Master Plan were rewritten and recently distributed for Planning Commission review. These documents are the basis of the Plan and come from Citizen Input and the Workshops that were conducted. The Defined Terms are important since they will be used throughout the Master Plan. The Planning Commission should discuss these Chapters now, but can always come back to review them again as this will be temporary approval. Much of the information is better suited in the Appendix. Some terms from the current Master Plan are included in the updated Master Plan.

Lydia Brown – Are we going mostly by the Citizen Survey?

Gregory Ransford – We are going by the Citizen Survey, the Workshops, and the Planning Commission input.

Chairperson Martinie – Feels Chapter One is mostly from the 2021 Citizen Survey.

Gregory Ransford – Agrees.

Travis Vugteveen – Are you currently involved with other Townships and what type of Workshop participation have you experienced?

Gregory Ransford – Yes, I am involved with other townships, but there has always been at least 20 people at each Workshop.

There was a discussion regarding the low level of citizen participation in general and the very low level of Zoning Board of Appeals activity.

Chairperson Martinie – It is his opinion that the level of resident activity has not changed much.

A brief discussion was held regarding Agricultural and Residential land values based upon current tax assessments.

Chairperson Martinie – We need to determine if the text of the first two chapters represents the public input and review the definitions.

Bill Maschewske – Has several comments regarding the first two chapters.

1. Preface, Content. Request that the words “A Master Plan should minimally address...” be changed to “A Master Plan should at a minimum address...” Gregory Ransford agreed.
2. Preface, Intent and Purpose, third paragraph. Request that the word “accomplishes” be revised since a Master Plan does not accomplish development. It was agreed to delete the words “and accomplishes”.
3. Chapter One, Definition of Terms, Open Space. Questioned if the term “Open Space” was defined correctly since it appeared to be restricted to a development project when in the Findings on page 2 the term Open Space is used with reference to a single residential parcel.

Chairperson Martinie – Questioned what should or should not be considered “Open Space”.

It was finally agreed to delete “is not intended to” and replace with the word “may” in Chapter One, Definition of Terms, Open Space.

Bill Maschewske – The definition of “Agriculture” was taken from the first part of the definition in the Zoning Ordinance but should be clarified by including all of the definition from the Zoning Ordinance. An abbreviated definition created confusion in the past. The definition could possibly even include reference to the Right to Farm Act for additional clarification.

It was agreed to include all the text from the Zoning Ordinance definition.

Lydia Brown – Are wedding venues included in the Right to Farm Act?

Lydia Brown was given a copy of the Right to Farm Act to review.

Chairperson Martinie – What sections of the updated Master Plan will we receive next?

Gregory Ransford – The Agricultural and Residential chapters will be next. He will provide revised copies of the first two Chapters based upon the discussions in this meeting and will also provide the above two chapters for the next planning meeting.

Lydia Brown – Do we want to include “wedding venues” in the definition of Agriculture? It is not included in the Right to Farm Act.

Chairperson Martinie – His preference is to drop “wedding venues” from the definition of Agriculture and address this use in the Zoning Ordinance.

A discussion was held regarding the differences between the Zoning Ordinance and Police Power Ordinances.

The next special Planning Commission meeting for planning is scheduled for November 9, 2021 and the next regular Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for October 26, 2021.

New Business – None

Old Business – None

Pay Bills

A motion was made by Lydia Brown and seconded by Michelle Gillespie to pay Planning Commission salaries for the October 12, 2021 meeting (six present, one position vacant). The motion carried unanimously with one position vacant.

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Steve Young to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 8:07 PM. The motion carried unanimously with one position vacant.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Maschewske, Secretary
Robinson Township Planning Commission