

ROBINSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
February 8, 2022

The special meeting of the Robinson Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 PM at the Robinson Township Hall.

| Present   | Absent |
|---|--------|
| Shawn Martinie<br>Bill Maschewske<br>Travis Vugteveen<br>Anne Goede<br>Lydia Brown<br>Steve Young<br>Michelle Gillespie | None   |

Also present was contracted planner Gregory Ransford of Fresh Coast Planning. The attendance sheet is not included since there were no signatures on the sheet.

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

The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Michelle Gillespie and seconded by Travis Vugteveen to approve the Planning Commission minutes of the January 25, 2022 meeting as written.

The motion carried unanimously.

Master Planning

Chairperson Martinie requested that Planning Consultant Gregory Ransford introduce the subjects for the meeting.

Gregory Ransford stated the items to be reviewed tonight include the revisions requested to Chapter 2, Agricultural Uses and Chapter 3, Residential Uses, in addition to Chapter 4, Environmental, which is new for this meeting. Revisions were made to Chapter 2, and Chapter 3 was separated into the three types of Residential Uses corresponding to the RR, R-1, and R-2 Zoning Districts as requested by the Planning Commission.

Chairperson Martinie requested any comments regarding Chapter 2 and there were none.

Chairperson Martinie then requested comments on revised Chapter 3.

Bill Maschewske – Noted that “varietyof” was not corrected to “variety of” in one place. This was noted to be corrected.

Anne Goede – Medium Density Residential, Strategies, Bullet 2 – requested that “minimally” be changed to “at a minimum”. This change also applied to Low Density and High Density Residential Strategies as well.

The change was accepted.

Chairperson Martinie requested comments regarding Chapter 4, Environmental.

A revised version of Chapter 4, Environmental, was distributed by Steve Young for review. A copy is attached to these minutes. The majority of changes were in the first three paragraphs of the introduction. This text was generally accepted and any changes noted below apply to the text provided by Steve Young.

Bill Maschewske – Requested that Citizen Survey information relevant to the Chapter 4 be included in the Introduction as done in the preceding Chapters.

The change was accepted.

Following review and discussion, the following additional changes were generally accepted:

1. Introduction – Change Bass Creek to Bass River, delete Wolf Creek, and add “reducing carbon footprint” following “absorbing stormwater”.
2. Text needs to be added to include the Pigeon River Watershed in Robinson Township.
3. Noted that Goals, Bullet 3 also included minor revisions in his draft compared to the Gregory Ransford draft.
4. Goals, Bullet 4, following discussion, it was agreed to eliminate “driveways and parking lots”. The elimination followed a discussion of whether these features should be permeable.
5. Goals, Bullet 5 – Noted his draft changes “affects” to “effects” along with other changes.
6. Recommendations, Bullet 2 – Add “including excavation and/or fill” per the Steve Young text.

Bill Maschewske – Goals, Bullet 5 – What is “proper use”?

It was agreed to remove “proper use of” from the text.

Chairperson Martinie – Recommendations, Bullet 1 – Recommended revising the text to read “Protect wetlands from development, including excavation and/or fill.” Delete the rest of Bullet 1 and all of Bullet 2.

Steve Young – Wished to further revise Recommendations, Bullets 1 and 2 to read “Protect wetlands by prohibiting excavation and/or fill consistent with state and Federal law.”

A discussion followed and it was decided to get legal interpretation of Recommendations, Bullets 1 and 2 as proposed for revision prior to finalizing the text. Travis Vugteveen and Bill Maschewske are to discuss this issue with Township Attorney Bultje either before or following the February 9, 2022 Township Board meeting.

Bill Maschewske – Are there other Environmental issues that belong in this Chapter not relating specifically to the floodplain?

The above question was discussed and it was agreed to change the title of Chapter 4 to “Lowland Resource Conservation Areas”

Anne Goede -- Goals, Bullet 4 – Add the word “permitted” to uses.  
This change was accepted.

Chairperson Martinie noted the next planning meeting would be March 8, 2022 at which time Gregory Ransford would supply a rewrite of Chapter 4 per the above requested changes along with a new Chapter or Chapters covering Commercial Uses and the M-231 Overlay District. Also discussed was the proper location for uses in the A-2 Zoning District.

New Business – None

Old Business – None

Lydia Brown – Inquired what the Township is doing regarding a permanent Zoning Administrator.

Travis Vugteveen reported that proposals have been received from both PCI and Fresh Coast Planning which will be discussed at the February 9, 2022 Township Board meeting.

Pay Bills

A motion was made by Lydia Brown and seconded by Michelle Gillespie to pay Planning Commission salaries for the February 8, 2022 meeting (one meeting, all members present). The motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Steve Young to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 8:55 PM.  
The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Maschewske, Secretary  
Robinson Township Planning Commission

## **Chapter Four (Steve Young Text)**

### Environmental

#### **Introduction**

Waterways, wetlands, and forests are important natural resources within the Township. These ecosystems are vulnerable to impact from development and require significant protection. Many of these areas are protected by State and Federal statute and are not conducive to development. The most well-known waterway in Robinson Township is the Grand River, which flows from east to west across the entire width of the Township eventually discharging to Lake Michigan at Grand Haven. The Grand River drainage basin includes tributaries, regulated wetlands and flood plains, which are home to many varieties of flora and fauna. Stearns Creek flows into Stearns Bayou, which is located within at the northwest part of the Township. Other tributaries include Little Robinson, Wolf Creek, Bear Creek, and Bass Creek. The drainage system includes many other drains under the control of the Ottawa County Water Resources Drain Commissioner.

The majority of wetlands within the Township are contiguous to the Grand River, the Township its' tributaries and County drains. There are, however, several scattered areas of wooded wetlands, wet meadows, submergent and emergent wetlands throughout the Township. Along with wetlands, forests play a significant role in the environment by providing a habitat for wildlife, stabilizing soil, preventing erosion, absorbing storm water, and providing a visual screen. (Moved from Chapter 2, page 18)

Proper regulation of these areas will serve to maintain and improve groundwater and surface water quality; preserve wildlife habitat; protect natural watersheds; protect water-based recreational resources of the Township; minimize flood damage to land, buildings and structures; and protect the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the Township. (Copied from Chapter 9 of the Zoning Ordinance)

As a result of public workshops, the Master Plan Update Community Survey, and various planning meetings we have concluded that the following goals are paramount for the protection of the environment within Robinson Township. In addition, through the use of modern planning principles, where applicable, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies to achieve success are provided below.

#### **Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies**

##### *Goals*

- Protect wetlands from development

- Preserve and protect the natural resources of the area that enhance the rural character of the Township. (Previously moved from Chapter 4, page 29)
- Protect and preserve floodplains and wetlands to minimize property damage as well as to maintain environmental interests, including water retention and groundwater recharge areas, which have important ecological and aesthetic scenic value (Previously moved from Chapter 4, page 29)
- Limit property use in areas of frequent flooding should be used for to agriculture, recreation, driveways, parking lots and other open spaces, or uses that would not be subject to flood damage (Moved from Chapter 4, page 32)

As the Grand River is an area wide resource that can seriously affect downstream and upstream conditions, Protect proper use of this resource the Grand River to prevent negative effects downstream should be encouraged (Moved from Chapter 4, page 32)

Provide protection of groundwater sources, particularly within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative (Duplicated from previous chapters)

#### *Recommendations*

- Protect wetlands to ensure that they are not encroached by development (Previously moved from Chapter 2, page 18)
- Development including excavation and/or fill in wetland areas should be discouraged prohibited (Moved from Chapter 4, page 32)
- Wooded areas of the Township are considered an asset and efforts should be made to protect them from unnecessary destruction (Previously moved from Chapter 2, page 18)
- Building construction in the floodplain should be discouraged to avoid damage and health hazards created by flood conditions (Moved from Chapter 4, page 32)
- Flood Plains of the Grand River and its' tributaries should be protected to eliminate obstructions to flow and navigability, and should not be developed except for marine purposes (Moved from Chapter 4, page 32)
- Encourage groundwater preservation practices for new developments in accordance with Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative (Duplicated from previous chapters)

#### *Strategies*

- Adopt or enhance policies and regulations in the floodplain area should be consistent with State of Michigan and Federal guidelines (Moved from Chapter 4, page 32)
- Conduct a hydrogeological study, if existing evidence reveals water quality and or quantity concerns (Duplicated from previous chapters)
- Limit development within the Aquifer Recharge Area identified by Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative, which would negatively impact the Recharge Area (Duplicated from previous chapters)