

**HOPE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINTUES**  
**October 21, 2021**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Norton at 6:30 pm at the Hope Township Hall, 5463 S M43 Hwy, Hastings, MI. Pledge of allegiance to the flag.

**Members Present:** Bob Norton, Junior Homister, Craig Jenkins

**Members Absent:** Roger Pashby, Jim McKelvey

**Others Present:** Planning Consultant/Zoning Administrator Nathan Mehmed and approximately 24 individuals at the Township Hall.

**Agenda:** Motion by Homister, second by Jenkins to approve the agenda as presented. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Meeting Minutes:** Motion by Jenkins, support by Homister to approve September 16, 2021 meeting minutes. All ayes. Motion carried.

**General Public Comment:** Norton opened up the floor for general public comment. He requested that comments be limited to three minutes.

Don Sklenka, 8445 Wilkinson Lake

Don explained that he has been to many of these meetings and that the Planning Commission has listened to the public. We are all still here working on the mining operation because you have listened to the public. He indicated that he has a copy of the property transfer affidavit showing transfer of the Miller Road property. He noted that this is a long process and we are a year into it; rumors are spreading; all homeowners make investments based on current conditions and current climates. It is difficult to not know what the future holds. As property ownership has changed hands, it is no longer Smith's property. He questioned why Trevor Smith would be involved if he is not the property owner. He asked at what point does Hope Township say it is no longer his property. He reiterated that we have been sitting here for a year and the community wants to know what to do. Michigan Aggregates and Trevor Smith need to get their application together. Thank you.

Jill Steele, Long Lake

Jill indicated that she is at the meeting to talk about changing the zoning ordinance to allow for temporary RVs. She indicated that she is concerned and questions why the Planning Commission would do that. Jill explained that there are RV parks, which is where RVs are supposed to be. She explained that she doesn't want her neighborhood to become an RV park. She noted that the intent of the RL district is to allow for single-family homes in a lakefront setting. She explained that she couldn't find anything in other zoning ordinances that allows RV use for more than 30 days and indicated that the Township should leave it as it is. Folks can temporarily live in RV while building a home and that makes sense. She reiterated that it doesn't make sense to allow temporary RVs for any reason for this length of time. She stated that she doesn't necessarily want neighbors whose homes are on wheels and we can't take into consideration the individual people. She stated that she is opposed to it. She thinks it will impact the Township. RVs can't be taxed so there is no revenue benefit. She urged the Planning Commission to reconsider.

**Public Hearing: Delton Venture LLC Rezoning Request:**

- a. Introductory comments. Norton asked Mehmed to give an overview of the project. Mehmed explained that Delton Ventures had submitted an application for the rezoning of property located at 277 Lakeside Drive in Delton, MI 49046, with a property ID of 08-07-020-029-00. Mehmed indicated that the property is approximately 3.24 acres and is located immediately adjacent to the Guernsey Lake Mobile Home Park. He explained that the applicant's request was to rezone the property from RL, Residential Lake to MHC, Manufactured Housing Community. The applicant intends to expand the existing mobile home park into this property in the future. Mehmed noted that his staff report addresses the applicable factors that the Planning Commission should consider as part of a rezoning request. Norton asked the applicant's representative Karen (last name?) if she had anything else to add. Karen indicated that Mehmed covered everything.
- b. Acknowledge written comments received. Norton announced that the following written comments were received.
  1. Doug Rich email 10-17-21
  2. Patti Ann McNulty email 10-19-21
  3. Joel DeMaagd email 10-20-21
  4. John Machinchick email 10-20-21
  5. Katie McGuire email 10-20-21

6. Lisa Link letter received 10-21-21
7. Jill Armstrong email 10-21-21
8. Ananda Jenkins email 10-21-21
9. James and Amanda Bowerman letter 10-21-21
10. Mike and Pam Garver letter 10-21-21

- c. Open public hearing to receive comments. Norton opened the public hearing at 6:41pm. He requested that comments be limited to three minutes.

Cathy Finch, 6128 Oakwood Drive.

Cathy indicated that she is the president of the lake association. She explained that she met Karen (the property manager) when the park was purchased. Cathy explained that Karen told them about what they wanted to do, including replacing trailers with new ones and having ownership opportunities. Cathy further explained that the lakeshore parcel owned by the trailer park looks terrible with docks and garbage everywhere; there are dead boats, trailers, junk, all sorts of stuff. Cathy mentioned that the new trailers in the existing park look like they are about to be occupied and do look nice, but that she doesn't want anything else added. She would like to see the new trailers filled up first. Cathy also explained that there is a lot of drug and mental health issues. People scream and yell and the police are there all the time. She explained that the neighbors on that road do not want to see the increased traffic. They've done a great job of bringing in new trailers, but there are still issues. The lake access is used as a public boat launch and it shouldn't be.

Ben Zaccanelli, 5990 Lakeside Drive.

Ben explained that he bought his parent's house and has lived there for 30 years. He indicated that the trailer park results in nonstop traffic going up and down, and you can tell who is renter at the trailer park by how they drive and act. Ben mentioned that he hears swearing in front of kids and that the clientele that rents from there is not the most ideal. He noted that the speed limit is posted at 25 miles per hour, and they are going near 50 miles per hour disturbing everyone that lives on the south side of that road. He expressed that it is disgusting and it impacts everyone's property value. He explained that he and his neighbors take pride in their homes, and that he is remodeling his house and he doesn't want more trailers. He believes that property values would go up if the trailer park was shut down.

Adam Hodges, 296 Lakeside Drive.

Adam indicated that he bought his house about 5 years ago. He has had multiple encounters with the trailer park and not one of them has been good. He explained that having another 150 vehicles up and down the road would allow it to deteriorate. He also explained that the boat launch is next to the channel and they have to ask or go around people swimming there. The kids from the park swim out there unsupervised. He does not agree with expanding the trailer park.

Jeri Menck, Pike Road.

Jeri explained that that her property backs up to where they want to put these trailers. She stated that years ago there were two major washouts on that road. She spoke to the manager at that time and they were going to do something about it but never have. She explained that he had a lot of rocks and gravel dumped into the road to prevent deterioration. She stated that the trailer park has not been a good neighbor at all.

Cathy Weir, 354 Lakeside Drive.

Cathy exclaimed that that this isn't news to you, but there has been a long history of broken promises. She explained that the park is an environmental hazard and people shouldn't live there. She doesn't know how many units will be added. She mentioned that past owners have said they would repair it but that nothing positive has come from it. She stated that the park is a hotbed of crime and an environmental hazard.

David Wilson, 278 Lakeside Drive.

David indicated that he would like someone to clarify which property would be the expansion of the park; the land by the water or the land up on the hill. He stated that they have made improvements and have put some new trailers in the trailer park, but there are many that are not updated and some empty lots. He explained that he believes that the empty lots should be filled first. He is also concerned about sewer capacity and what effect this would have on the system. He wanted to know if it is based on the number of trailers already there or if they would need to double the pressure. He noted that traffic would also be an issue and the trailer park has not provided sufficient off-street parking. He also indicated that there has been a lot of drug use and that there are child sex offenders living in the trailer park full of children. He explained that he is also concerned that renters never treat property

as their own because it isn't. The trailer park should be filled in before expanded.

Josh Link, 320 Lakeside Drive.

Josh indicated that his property is directly adjacent to the proposed property. He explained that traffic on the road is a problem and that there are kids. He stated that the windows on his building have been boarded up because kids in the trailer park have smashed windows out. He asked if the drain field was stable and buildable. He stated that there is not room for ten more units on the street, it is too full.

Ralph Tanner, 294 Lakeside Drive.

Ralph noted that maybe 60 years ago the property was rezoned to MHP. He stated that part of the reason the trailer park was approved was to help upkeep the road, so everyone was supportive. He explained that there was a requirement on the land so that it wouldn't be up to the owner's goodwill to maintain the road. He indicated that the trailer park participated in upkeeping the road as four units instead of all the trailers, which isn't fair since they produce the most traffic. He stated that the owner needs to be responsible to maintain the road. They are putting the wear and tear on the road. He also stated that he did not receive notice because he is not within 300 feet. He explained that this project would impact keyholing at the property. He spoke of people going up and down the boat ramp; it could not be used as a boat ramp per the original agreement.

Bill Rose, 342 Lakeside Drive.

Bill stated that he agreed with everything that has been said. He shared the concerns about the increased traffic and road in poor condition with most other speakers. He noted that additional traffic will only make it worse. He is concerned about safety since the road is a one-way dead end and there is no other way for safety vehicles to get in. He explained that the Guernsey Lake and Lakeside intersection is dangerous; there is a hill immediately to the west. He explained that more people using that intersection will make it worse. Finally, he noted that zoning was done in its current form with a lot of careful thought, perhaps by you, perhaps by others. There is a reason for it. He asked if zoning matters if it is constantly changed. He stated that he bought into areas because of the zoning and he expects it to be maintained. He didn't buy into the expansion.

Mike Garver, 292 Lakeside Drive.

Mike stated that his family has owned their property since 1953, before there was a trailer park. He exclaimed that it is one of the worst parks in State of Michigan with terrible conditions, no screening, and no separation. He explained that the only access to the park is on Lakeside Drive, which isn't big enough. He noted that the keyhole lots directly abut their property. There are broken down boats, tires, and garbage everywhere. He explained that over the two years it hasn't changed since the new owners bought it. He noted that the request could potentially double the size of the trailer park. He explained that he has been harmed by trailer park for decades due to decreased property taxes, littering, and trespassing. Adding more trailers would be adding insult to injury. He mentioned that the current section is grandfathered in, but that the current code, Section 20.3, requires a minimum of ten acres. He explained that there are 3.98 acres for current park, the proposed rezoning would be 3.24 acres, totaling 7.22 acres. The keyhole lots on Guernsey Lake are 1.68 acres, which would not equal ten acres. He explained that there would need to be a carrying capacity study for Guernsey Lake if the expanded portion were to be allowed access. Progressive AE has done this for other local lakes, including fuel emissions, boats, decreased water transparency, wildlife habitat, etc. He asked how many trailers can be put on one acre of land. He explained that the industry standard is seven to 15 trailers per acre. Other local places allow up to eight trailers per acre. He further explained that there are 41 existing lots existing parcel at about ten mobile homes per acre. If they put ten per acre on the parcel to be rezoned, it would mean 32 mobile homes, nearly doubling the trailer park. He stated that Michigan code allows two people per bedroom in a mobile home with up to 438 people that could be living there with the expansion. Imagine the strain on the infrastructure and reject the proposal.

- d. Close public hearing. Hearing no more comments, Norton closed the public hearing at 7:22pm.
- e. Deliberation and motion. Norton noted that it was time for the Planning Commission to deliberate the request before them. Mehmed explained that the Planning Commission should consider the applicable factors from Section 30.7 outlined in his memo. Norton and Homister stated that the request largely

complies with the 2012 Master Plan, zoning plan, and future land use map. Jenkins agreed that wasn't an issue. Mehmed explained that the zoning plan indicates that the MHC district is considered to be potentially compatible if public sewer is provided and new development includes open space and pedestrian amenities. He noted that some of these are site plan review type issues, but that the Planning Commission should consider them. Norton explained that this wasn't a spot zone since it would be an expansion of an exiting adjacent district. Jenkins and Homister agreed. Mehmed indicated that comments from the public combined with other aspects of the Master Plan may be helpful in determining compatibility with adjacent uses. The Commissioners noted that there were existing issues with traffic and screening. Mehmed indicated that solutions to those issues could be addressed during a site plan review should the rezoning be approved, but is also important in considering compatibility, especially with access. Jenkins mentioned Section 20.3, B, which requires that all manufactured housing communities have a minimum of ten acres. Mehmed confirmed that is the standard, but that it is a use standard for approving a new or expanded park, not necessarily a rezoning. Mehmed further explained that the applicant would need to purchase additional adjacent property before they could get to the ten acres required to grant site plan approval. He noted that the existing trailer park is a nonconforming use or "grandfathered in." The Zoning Ordinance allows for some flexibility for the expansion of a nonconforming use as part of a site plan review, but the expansion may have trouble meeting those standards. Homister agreed that it didn't make sense to approve the rezoning if the applicant cannot be granted site plan review for the expansion. The Commission agreed that the applicant could come back with another rezoning application should they acquire more land to meet the minimum requirement.

Motion by Homister, second by Jenkins, to recommend denial of the application to the Township Board due to the applicant's inability to comply with Section 20.3, B of the Zoning Ordinance regarding the minimum area required for the establishment of a manufactured housing community. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Further consideration of amendment to Section 10.25 Temporary Residential Uses and Recreational Vehicles:** Norton stated that Mehmed has provided a draft with the updates as were discussed at the September meeting. Mehmed gave an overview of the changes, including modifications to subsection B, 3, e and g. Norton explained that the existing language about RVs during home construction remained and that the items added address campgrounds, family staying on your property for

ten days, and seasonal temporary lodging. Norton asked the Planning Commission members if they thought anything else needed to be addressed. Homister and Jenkins both agreed that most recent draft addressed the items that they had issues with. Mehmed reminded the Planning Commission that the draft is based on Barry County's current provisions. Norton and Homister indicated that they would like to hold off on holding a public hearing until McKelvey and Pashby have an opportunity to review. Mehmed agreed that they could hold off for now. Norton agreed.

**Continue discussion of tiny homes and resorts:** Norton asked the Planning Commission which topic they would like to start with. Homister indicated that he was absent at the last meeting. Norton mentioned that Homister was the most interested in tiny homes. Homister agreed. Norton and Mehmed gave a brief update regarding the last meeting and the tiny home discussion. Norton indicated that the gentleman (Dan Buerge), who originally asked about this is at the meeting. Buerge explained that he hasn't been able to do this on his other property yet either, and that he is still homeless. He is considering building a home that complies with the existing standards since this may take too long.

Mehmed reiterated that many communities get to this same point, and some will reduce their square footage, allow for accessory dwelling units, or permit temporary use of RVs, which is what the Planning Commission is currently considering. Norton reiterated that he isn't necessarily inclined to go smaller with minimum square footage. Jenkins agreed. Jenkins stated that some may belong in a mobile home community or similar. Norton stated that he wasn't sure how to make this fit in the Zoning Ordinance. Mehmed reminded the Planning Commission that a township near St. Joseph is working on creating a new sustainable district that would allow for them. The Commissioners asked Mehmed to look into that further and bring back an example from that township to consider. Mehmed acknowledged that he would come back with something.

Norton stated that it was time to discuss resorts. Mehmed recapped the discussion at the last meeting with the Planning Commission. Norton reiterated that an individual was interested in establishing a resort on one of the local lakes. Mehmed responded that several property owners have expressed interest in doing a resort-type use in the past few years, including on Long Lake and a lavender farm. He noted that he did not see any of those individuals at the meeting. Mehmed reminded the Planning Commission that the Zoning Ordinance currently only allows public and private campgrounds as well as hotels/motels. Jenkins asked Mehmed about examples from Barry County, since they just recently approved the expansion of a resort on Gun Lake. Mehmed indicated that he had a brief discussion with Jim McManus about



this, but that he would reach back out for more information. He said that he could also provide additional examples for lake-related resorts, since there is concern about keyholing and boating access. The Commission agreed to look at those examples at the next meeting.

**Zoning Administrator/Planning Consultant Nathan Mehmed**

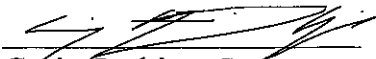
Mehmed noted that he does not have anything new on the radar for the Planning Commission. He explained that he is still waiting on updated information from Trevor Smith regarding amendments to the Miller Road gravel mining operation. Mehmed is expecting an update soon with an updated application and potential public hearing in November or December. Mehmed also gave a brief update regarding the Osgood/Otis Lake mining operation and indicated that he is still working with Trevor and EGLE on compliance. Trevor is supposed to be putting mulch blanket down on the last few areas of erosion. The bond has been renewed by Trevor but Mehmed is hoping for this to be closed out before winter.

Mehmed reminded the Planning Commission of a dimensional variance application that would be on the Zoning Board of Appeals' agenda next week. He explained that it is for a front, side, and rear setback variance to build a house on a nonconforming lot of record on Wall Lake. The previous house burned down and the lot is rather shallow.

Mehmed mentioned that the zoning compliance permits are still trickling in and that there is still quite a bit of interest regarding future projects.

**Adjournment**

Jenkins moved to adjourn meeting, support by Homister. All ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

  
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Craig Jenkins, Secretary

11.03.21

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Date