

Hope Township Planning Commission

Meeting Minutes

August 15, 2024

The meeting was called to order by Chair Norton at 6:30 pm at the Hope Township Hall, 5463 S. M-43, Hastings, MI 49058. Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Members present: Bob Norton, Junior Homister, Craig Jenkins.

Members absent: Jim McKelvey, Roger Pashby.

Others Present: Township Planner/Zoning Administrator Nathan Mehmed, Larry & Barb Heslinga, and Don Sklenka.

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

Meeting minutes: Motion by Homister, supported by Jenkins to approve the June 20, 2024 meeting minutes. All ayes. Motion carried.

General Public Comment:

The following general public comments were received:

Larry Heslinga, 8202 Nadell Street: Larry indicated that he is interested in the Master Plan process. We know that the Planning Commission's plate has been full, and glad to see the Master Plan moving forward. More importantly, Larry noted that he is familiar with the letter that was submitted by the three lake associations in the Township. He supports it and thinks that Hope Township's Zoning Ordinance can be improved. He has seen planning commissions in other communities make mistakes, but Hope Township's did great. However, the members of this Planning Commission may not always be here and amendments could make it an easier process next time. The Zoning Ordinance not only offers guidance to the decisionmakers, but also for the gravel miners as well. A zoning ordinance should send a message that a local government has its act together. Certain areas may be targeted because they think a process may be easier or the local unit doesn't necessarily know what it is doing.

Don Sklenka, 8345 Wilkinson Lake Drive: Don noted that Hope Township has about 25 or so decent lakes. These lakes are mostly fronted by houses which is where a significant portion of the Township's population lives. This also makes up

a large portion of the tax revenue. What more can we do to make sure that we are protecting the water and lakes of the Township? We need to ensure that we are doing everything that we can.

Public Hearing: Zoning Ordinance Amendment Section 10.8, A:

- a. Introductory comments. Mehmed briefly explained the proposed amendment. The draft is identical to what the Planning Commission discussed at the June meeting. The amendment would permit power safety pool covers in lieu of a fence if technical specifications are met, specifically ASTM F1346 and the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code.
- b. Acknowledge written comments received. Norton acknowledged that no written comments were received.
- c. Open public hearing to receive comments. Norton opened the public hearing.
- d. Close public hearing. Hearing no comments, Norton closed the public hearing.
- e. Deliberation and motion. Norton mentioned that he wasn't initially convinced that this was necessary, but after learning more, he thinks that it is a good amendment. Jenkins agreed, and noted that the covers are an additional barrier to potential drownings.

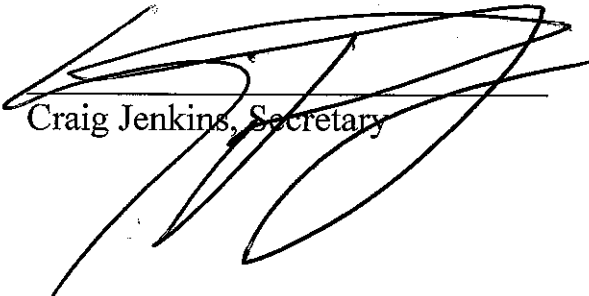
Motion by Homister, support by Jenkins to recommend the amendments to the Hope Township Board for approval. Roll call vote. Ayes: Norton, Homister, Jenkins. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Master Plan Discussion and Review: Mehmed explained that he has provided a track changes copy of the edits and modifications that he has made to the existing conditions and background chapters of the Township's Master Plan. He reminded the Planning Commission that he provided updated and expanded maps at the last meeting. Those maps are associated with the updates in this chapter. He explained that the natural features inventory has been expanded and community facts and figures have been reviewed and updated with new data. The Planning Commission went through the updated chapters page-by-page and asked Mehmed questions. There was discussion regarding the new maps, some of the idiosyncrasies with the housing and population data, and next steps in the process. The Planning Commission asked Mehmed to look into some of the housing and population data

figures, and directed Mehmed to modify some of the prescriptive language that should go in the goals and objectives chapter. Mehmed explained that the next workshop would address future land use and the associated descriptions.

Zoning Administrator: Mehmed noted that there will likely be two special exception use applications on the September agenda. Permits and inquiries are still up and things have not slowed down in planning and zoning. Due to the number of items on the agenda already, Mehmed suggested that the Planning Commission hold off on the Master Plan discussion until the regularly scheduled October meeting, or have a special meeting so that Master Plan business can be focused on. It was decided that the Planning Commission would reevaluate at the September meeting whether or not a special meeting would be necessary.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Homister. Second by Jenkins. All Ayes. Motion carried. Meeting concluded at 8:03 p.m.


Craig Jenkins, Secretary

9.19.24
Date