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PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
November 20th, 2019

The Leoni Township Planning Commission held a meeting Wednesday, November 20th, 2019 @ 6:30 p.m. 913 Fifth Street, Leoni Township Meeting Hall, Michigan Center, Michigan.

Meeting opened to call of the Chair: 6:30 pm

Members Present: V. Beckwith, J. Southworth, L Maurer, D. Helmlinger, B. Lester, J. Spencer and K. Cole

Members absent: 0

Persons in attendance: 3

Purpose of Planning Commission read by J. Spencer

Motion by V. Beckwith supported by D. Helmlinger to approve the Agenda as written.

Motion adopted by voice vote

Motion by V. Beckwith and supported by J. Southworth to approve the November 6th minutes as written.

Motion adopted by voice vote

Public Comment: **Open at 6:32 pm.**
 Closed at 6:55 pm.

OLD BUSINESS:

Master Plan

Discussion:

J. Chambers – Spoke about what he had just learned at the MTA classes he attended on 11/19 on land use planning. Mr. Chambers shared how a Master Plan can be updated at any time rather than wait to do it every 5 years. Mr. Chambers also shared that if the board votes for a rezone and they are not in continuity, if someone should abstain from the vote, then it has to be documented for future reference. If you rezone then you must document why there was not continuity and it gets added to the Master Plan so if there is any need in the future for a court case hearing you have the documentation to explain what the township has done and why.

B. Lester – I have noticed in other townships that along the interstate it is zoned commercial.

J. Chambers – Want to share from the MTA class that if anyone comes in with questions in the future about a re-zone, they should be sent to the zoning administrator rather than the township staff trying to answer them on their own. The reason is for consistency purposes, so that if anyone were to ask 5 different people, they would not get 5 different answers.

J. Spencer – We should be looking at goals, objectives and strategies for the Master Plan.

K. Cole – What if we have a list of ongoing goals and objectives and incorporate them in.

V. Beckwith – Didn't we bring up going with someone else for our Master Planning?

J. Spencer – A motion was made and voted on to ask the Board of Trustees to consider removing Region 2 with an Attorney from MTA to help with our Master Plan. The Board of Trustees took no action. After discussing the matter with our Township Supervisor it was decided to continue with Region 2 as we are more than 75-80 percent done.

K. Cole – The person they wanted doesn't do it anymore. But they may have someone else in mind.

J. Spencer – We are at the point where we can take ownership of the Master Plan, so believe the Board of Trustees didn't think moving at this point would be the right thing to do.

K. Cole – Want to let B. Lester know that the Master Plan talks about 127 & I-94 corridors and what they are zoned.

D. Helmlinger – When you look down the I-94 corridor there are a lot of diverse zones along it.

J. Chambers – Up by Tenneco Research Center there will be a rezone for the next board. Seffernick property that is currently zoned as RS and they are going to ML.

D. Helmlinger – Don't know if we can talk about this at this meeting but the easement is only 33 ft and they cannot use it because it is supposed to be at least 66 ft.

J. Chambers – I asked for a deed from the realtor and was told I would get it.

K. Cole – In the Master Plan on page 13 under Natural Features my goal is to promote clean up of lakes, rivers & wetlands for outdoor activities. The objective is to explore and create walking trails and water trails.

L. Maurer – Who pays for that.

K. Cole – Another goal is to clean up, develop and expansion of public parks. The objective and strategy would be to purchase land around the public parks and it would come from grants.

J. Spencer – That objective may need to be expanded to cover the Shared Use Path on Ann Arbor Rd. to extend to Waterloo Recreation Area at Race Rd.

D. Helmlinger – We could have Grant Baumann help with writing grants for us since we have money available with the Region II to cover it.

J. Spencer – In the Master Plan on page 15 under Agriculture I would like to continue to Encourage the preservation of farms and farmland.

J. Southworth – Do we need to put in something for micro grows and indoor farms. There are too many limitations.

J. Spencer – I agree we should encourage small farms. Like for instance my property is on 10 acres but I cannot even have a Greenhouse because it is zoned Residential.

D. Helmlinger – Farmers are getting beat up. Because of rain, no rain, and pesticides. We need to look at ways to improve on indoor farming.

B. Lester – We should make the goal to Encourage alternative Farm methods in Agricultural.

K. Cole – That is a really good goal. We need to put an objective and strategy with it. Our population has flat lined.

J. Spencer – On page 16 in the Master Plan under encourage the development of residential areas to meet population increases. We should look at our age demographics and where it is going. The City of Jackson is doing a really good job of attracting young people to the City but some day the people will marry and want to move out of the city and that is where we should look for our growth.

K. Cole – On page 16 in the Master Plan I think we need to add a goal of encouraging single and two-family housing development.

J. Spencer – We have a good sewer system to accommodate housing.

L. Maurer – Is that really true because they keep bringing up issues in the Board of Trustee meetings.

J. Spencer – I don't believe we have a bad system past regular repair. It is not falling apart.

K. Cole – If our system is so bad why do all the other municipalities want it so badly? We need to add a goal to update the Sewer and Water system. We also need to add a goal to promote new hook ups.

B. Lester – What about adding infrastructure to transportation, and making it transportation and infrastructure. Can we put sewer and water in that category?

Cole and Spencer – That is a very good idea.

V. Beckwith – What about the old Clark Equipment building. Could hydroponics go in that building.

B. Lester – Think the residential objective is to keep the elderly people happy and we need to consider single people also. What can we do to bring more young people into our township?

Motion by J. Southworth supported by J. Spencer to adjourn the meeting.

Motion adopted by voice vote.

Adjourn 8:35 pm.

Next meeting: December 4, 2019