

SAUGATUCK TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

November 16, 2010

The Saugatuck Township Planning Commission held a workshop November 16, 2010, at the township hall on Blue Star Highway, Saugatuck, Michigan 49453.

Present: Conklin, Darpel, Edris, Hanson, Milauckas, Rausch and Rowe

Absent: None

Also present: Planner Sisson and two members of the general public

At 4:00 P.M. Chair Edris called the workshop to order and added to the agenda a discussion of the December meeting date (Hanson/Rausch, approved).

Public comment: Suzanne Dixon, Douglas, brought a document dated November 2 published by the Army Corps of Engineers which discusses an application after the fact by Atty Stephen Neumer for Singapore Dunes, LLC, for a bulkhead, backfill and discharge for a boat ramp in the Kalamazoo River. Dixon said it is a multi-phased project and looked like a marina to her. Hanson said he thought some of the work has already been done without a permit because it was an emergency. She wondered how to request a public hearing on this project. Copies were made and Edris asked the P. C. to review it before Monday's meeting. Hanson said he thought private citizens should request the hearing, not the township. Sisson said he thought it sounded like a tiered seawall to stabilize the shoreline, which he later in the meeting demonstrated with a drawing on the board.

Edris opened review of the Tri-Community Plan. Rowe distributed copies of "Complete Streets Initiative," which Edris said was reviewed by the Joint Planning Committee last week. That Committee will review the Tri-Community Plan section by section at Saugatuck City Hall January 11, 2011, at 7:00 P.M. Edris reported that neither Saugatuck nor Douglas has begun the review as yet.

Rowe said the report on "Complete Streets" emphasizes that streets should be accessible to everyone, bicycles, wheelchairs, etc. and how to make streets and intersections safer. Although it is better applied to urban areas, this area has a lot of places which are inaccessible, especially along Blue Star. Hanson wanted to include Safe Routes to School with the endorsement for "Complete Streets" in the Tri-Community Plan, Page 1-16. Edris asked Rowe to write up an insert to the Plan.

Milauckas discussed the treatment of the Harbor in the Tri-Community Plan by first reporting on what the Harbor Master Plan Committee has done in the two years of its existence, beginning with efforts to find money to dredge Lake Kalamazoo, failing in that, discovering it needed to become a separate governmental entity like a Port Authority or Harbor Commission to be able to apply for grants and assess marina owners and/or slip owners to fund the dredging. He also discussed R. J. Peterson's offer to sell his marina to Douglas. Hanson mentioned the JJR report and its emphasis on the importance

of the Harbor to the economic health of the area, but he said it did not deal with how toxic the dredged material might be. Edris said he thought the Harbor should have a higher profile in the Tri-Community Plan than it now does (Page 13-2 “All three jurisdictions together”).

Conklin listed different types of possible renewable energy sources, and stated that most of them would be difficult to govern. Wind turbines, tide turbines, solar panels, pellet stoves, heat exchangers, advanced vehicles and biomass could be regulated. More policies could be added to Page 1-18 under Energy.

Rausch said she didn't think guidelines on multi-family residences were necessary until the public utilities are extended. Sisson maintained that someone is going to bring a plan for multi-family development where the communities are not going to want it. A developer will sometimes pay for the extension of public utilities to his development. The P. C. seemed to have a hard time deciding where to encourage multi-family developments. Sisson asked if there is a program for the systematic extension of public utilities in the Plan. He was asked to draft language to cover these issues.

Hanson said the Blue Star Corridor commercial zone did not coincide with lot lines, so it brings on confusing applications. He suggested that all future zoning should follow property lines. Sisson suggested the property owner make a decision, based on what zone the majority of his property sits in, as to whether it will be commercial or residential. He was asked to write up an entry to reflect that, perhaps on Page 13-4 under Saugatuck Township.

Edris pointed out that the South Denison property is not listed in the Plan. There should be a statement supporting the City of Saugatuck's ownership of it and encouraging a conservation easement.

Edris said he would set up another workshop before January 11 and asked the Commissioners to read chapters 1 through 5. December meeting date will be set at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 P.M. The next regular meeting is November 22 at 7:00 P.M.

Betty A. White, Recording Secretary

Sandra Rausch, Secretary

