

SAUGATUCK TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

June 25, 2012

The Saugatuck Township Planning Commission met on June 25, 2012, at the township hall on Blue Star Highway, Saugatuck, Michigan 49453.

Present: Conklin, Hanson, Harrison, Milauckas, Rausch and Rowe

Absent: Edris

Also present: Two members of the general public

In the absence of Chair Edris, Vice Chair Rowe opened the meeting at 7:05 P.M. Two items were added to the agenda: Private drives and consolidation/Tri-Community Plan.

Minutes of April 23, 2012, were approved as presented (Hanson/Rausch).

Public Comment: Martha Tucker, 6948 Colver, voiced a concern about the need for signage on a dangerous S-curve in a gully on Lakeshore Drive which says "Stay in your own lane." Hanson gave her information about how to contact the Director of the Allegan County Road Commission and asked her to let him know the result of her request.

Rowe called on Hanson to give an up-date on the Joint Planning Committee's review of the Tri-Community Plan which was begun 2 years ago. Hanson has compiled this Commission's review and suggested additions and corrections, recorded in minutes beginning in August, 2010. He said he didn't think the other two municipalities had done much in the way of a review and any changes would have to come from this Commission because there have been lapses between meetings of the Joint Planning Committee. Hanson said the other two entities seemed to think the demographics should be up-dated, which would require experts, but he thought all that was needed was a decision that the Plan still satisfies the needs for the area. Milauckas added that the Douglas City Manager offered the idea that the city managers review the Plan instead of the Committee members, which the latter accepted gladly. At the last meeting of the JPC Milauckas said the members seemed to get serious about completing this review, and there is a meeting next month. However, if it bogs down again, he said the Township should up-date the Plan as it relates to the Township. Milauckas, Rowe and Hanson all agreed the Township should have a vote on whether the Plan is adequate, or if it isn't, vote on needed changes. Conklin said she hoped the other two entities would come up with original ideas. Consensus was the PC should hold off on sharing Hanson's compilation of the PC's review. Edris, Hanson and Milauckas, who are on the Joint Planning Committee, will up-date this Commission.

Harrison brought up the Harbor Authority and its taxing abilities in regards to the Township, which is not represented on it. Milauckas said, when he was attending the initial meetings of the Harbor Committee, the final taxing decision was to be left with the individual municipality, and he thought this was included in the Authority. There was

some discussion about whether the Township should be involved because there is a lot of shoreline in the township.

Rowe introduced the subject of Fleming's "Marathon" sign on property near the Douglas interchange and Al Ellingsen's letter to Mr. Fleming, dated May 14, about the complaints and possible solutions. Rowe said the top of the sign has been removed, leaving only the two tall posts. He said he called Mr. Fleming wanting to ask him if he would object to a citizen's group footing the bill to remove those posts, but Mr. Fleming did not return his call. In the past, Fleming has refused access to the property. Milauckas reviewed all the complaints about what's left of the sign, and he asked are (1) we satisfied with how Ellingsen has handled the issue so far, and (2) is our ordinance sufficient, since Ellingsen says it is no longer a sign so the sign ordinance does not apply. Milauckas said he thought Ellingsen should attend a PC meeting to review the ordinance. Rowe suggested asking for advice from the Township Attorney. Conklin asked if the sign has changed, is it no longer grand-fathered. Hanson said Ellingsen is enforcing the Building Ordinance, not the Zoning Ordinance, in this instance, so that to see if a structure is derelict, it must be inspected.

Hanson made a motion that Rowe will contact the Township Attorney to request his opinion about the enforcement of any of our ordinances on the problem of Fleming's sign structure. Conklin seconded and the motion carried.

Rowe brought up the issue of Private Drives and Corner Lots, referring specifically to several places off Lakeshore Drive where long 12-foot-wide drives access several homes. Because of the definition for Private Road in Sec. 40-22 which includes "private access drive," corner lots are being created which are non-conforming and unbuildable since a 40-foot set-back is required. Hanson said he thought Ellingsen was reading the definition wrong. It was suggested to consult Planner Sisson.

Harrison wondered what happens to the Tri-Community Plan if the consolidation of the two cities takes place, and Hanson replied if that is the result of the election, the Township would then have to react.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 P.M. The next meeting is July 23 at 7:00 P.M.

Betty A. White, Recording Secretary

Sandra Rausch, Secretary

MOTIONS

1. Motion by Hanson/Rausch to approve minutes of April 23, 2012.
2. Motion by Hanson/Conklin that Rowe contact Township Attorney for advice on whether Township Ordinances can be enforced in relation to problem of Fleming's "Marathon" sign.

