

**ROSS TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
November 23, 2009**

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE

Chairperson Lauderdale called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Ross Township Planning Commission to order at approximately 7:15 P.M. at the Ross Township Hall.

ROLL CALL

Those present were: Jim Lauderdale
 Robb Blain
 Jeff Price
 Jon Scott

Absent were: Russell Fry
 Rick Jones
 Sandra Kiger

Also present were: Rebecca Harvey, Planning Consultant
 Bruce Dean, AGS

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On a motion by Blain, seconded by Price, the agenda was unanimously approved as amended to add the 2010-2011 PC budget as new business.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES: **October 27, 2009**

On a motion by Price, seconded by Blain, the minutes of **10/27/2009** were unanimously approved as prepared.

PUBLIC COMMENTS on non-agenda items - none

NEW BUSINESS

Lauderdale summarized the proposed Planning Commission budget for 2010-2011, with a total of \$16,190.00. Blain moved that the 2010-2011 PC budget be recommended to the Township Board for approval, Price seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1) **Work Plan Topics**

Bay area zoning and future land use. A number of residents, property owners and business owners were present in response to the invitation from Ross Township to participate in discussions regarding the zoning of the Bay Area. The current zoning map was discussed and the various districts were pointed out to the members of the audience. There was discussion of the purpose and function of the "Zoning Map" and the "Future Land Use Map".

Harvey read the vision from the 2002 Master Plan for the Bay Area Commercial land use designation.

There was general discussion among the members of the "Village Center" concept and the "big picture" approach necessary to change the zoning to incorporate the concept into the ordinance. Some of the suggestions and comments were:

- New access road between, and parallel to, M-89 and D Avenue. Make D Avenue a walking street providing accessing the shoreline and the adjacent businesses.
- Restaurant with dockage on the water to serve residents of the lake.
- Gasoline supplier on the lake.
- Flexibility in uses and development is needed.
- The lake and the bay are moving back toward resort concentration, rather than year-round residency.
- Consistency of architecture within the commercial area is desirable.
- Walking paths are desirable.
- Mixed-use development is desirable.
- One-way traffic on the bay, with an alternate route as the opposite direction and pedestrian and bike traffic in the balance of the right-of-way.
- Changes to the zoning ordinance to allow the expansion of the existing uses.
- Hiking, walking paths all along the lake.
- Like it just the way it is – don't change anything.
- Common or public parking would be very useful.
- Noise control would be even more important in a mixed-use setting.
- Speed bumps would be useful in the D Avenue area.
- Tunnel system under M-89 to increase connectivity of the community.
- Continuation of existing residential uses.

- Addition of Off-Brothers and Franklin Beach Marina to new commercial district.

Lauderdale thanked those in attendance for their input and encouraged future participation.

FLOOD PLAIN DISTRICT

There was discussion of the fact that floodplain maps have now been published and distributed. Maps are available for review at the Township Hall, and will go into effect on February 17, 2010. It was the consensus of the members that the FEMA maps should be incorporated into the zoning ordinance by reference, rather than maintaining a distinct zoning district regulating flood plain and floodway. Each individual zoning district will make reference to standards that will be added in Section 9 – Supplemental Regulations.

RECREATION PLAN

Harvey is continuing to work with the Director of the Planning Department at WMU. Scott requested that he be included in any future meetings on this topic.

REPORT FROM TOWNSHIP BOARD

Scott stated that he appreciated the joint meeting (11-18-09) and the input and exchanges that took place at the meeting.

REPORT FROM ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS – no meeting in November 2009.

MEMBERS, CONSULTANTS AND ADVISORS TIME

Price indicated his belief that the members of the audience that participated in the Bay Area discussions still may not understand that the zoning ordinance is always “chasing” the master plan document. There was a short discussion regarding the relationship between the master plan and zoning ordinance.

ADJOURN

On motion by Blain seconded by Price and unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Dean, AGS