

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF CHOCOLAY
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, MARCH, 1, 2010**

I. Meeting Called to Order at 7:30pm/Roll Call

Present: Chairman Al Denton, Andy Sikkema, Kendell Milton, Estelle De Vooght

Absent – Excused, Dr. Ken Tabor, Steve Kinnunen

Unexcused: Andy Smith

Staff Present: Jennifer B. Thum, Planner/Zoning Administrator

II. Approval of February 1, 2010 Minutes

Estelle De Vooght moved, Andy Sikkema, Seconded, to approve the February 1, 2010 Planning Commission meeting minutes. Andy Sikkema stated that on pages 4 and 5 Brower property was spelled incorrectly. Staff will make the corrections.

III. Additional items/approval of Agenda

Kendell Milton moved, Andy Sikkema, Seconded to approve the March 1, 2010 Planning Commission Agenda as presented.

IV. Public Hearings

A. Proposed Zoning Amendment 34-10-02, Section IV. Zoning Districts

Jennifer Thum, Planner/Zoning Administrator explained what the proposed zoning amendment was for. The background to the proposed Zoning Amendment was that under the old Zoning District, R-3, nursing homes and medical clinics were a conditional use. When the Township updated our Zoning Ordinance in 2008, those uses were omitted from the Conditional Use section. The Township needs to explore adding those uses back in and might want to explore Veterinary Clinics and General Office as potential Conditional Uses as well.

No Public Comment was made.

B. Proposed Sign Ordinance

Jennifer Thum, Planner/Zoning Administrator explained that after past discussion about the current Sign Ordinance, Section 18 in the Township Zoning Ordinance, staff and the PC decided that it should be updated. Staff worked on a new Sign Ordinance, one that includes definitions, and permit, violation and appeal process. Ms. Thum went over that this Ordinance update will take a while, as she wants to discuss it with various groups in Chocolay Township.

No Public Comment

Public Hearing was closed for both items.

V. Public Comment

No Public Comment

VI. Presentations

None were scheduled

VII. Old Business

None

VII. New Business

A. Proposed Zoning Amendment #34-10-02, Section IV of the Township Zoning Ordinance.

REASON FOR PROPOSED AMENDMENT

This proposed zoning amendment is being recommended because the language concerning nursing homes and clinics was intended, but inadvertently left out of the new Zoning Ordinance.

IV. Zoning District Regulations

BACKGROUND

Add to Zoning District, High Density Residential District (R-2) (Harvey), as a Conditional Use Permit the following;

- #8 Nursing Homes
- #9 Clinics, medical and veterinary
- #10 General offices

Estelle De Vooght questioned if a Veterinary Clinic would be compatible with a Residential District.

Kendell Milton questioned if the dogs would be too noisy or if they would be kenneled outside.

Sikkema was wondering if we needed to explore definitions for a veterinary clinic and go from there.

Al Denton was thinking that nursing homes require a large building and decent amount of parking.

The Planning Commission directed staff to look into definitions for veterinary clinics and general office and then to bring those to next month's meeting. Ms. Thum also stated that she will have maps printed out so the Commissioners could see what areas in Harvey are specifically zoned as Commercial.

Andy Sikkema, moved, Seconded by Al Denton to hold another public hearing next month and to discuss possible definitions for veterinary clinics and general office.

B. Proposed Sign Ordinance

The Commissioners and staff went through the proposed Sign Ordinance page-by-page and staff had the proposed Ordinances on the screen.

Page 1:

The intent looked good.

Page 2:

The Commissioners wanted to change the time that abandoned conforming and non-conforming signs were permitted to stay up. Al Denton suggested that abandoned conforming signs be given 90 days and signs be given 30 days. Mr. Denton also suggested that staff work on some language that allowed people to get a waiver if they needed more time for either conforming or non-conforming.

Page 3:

The Commissioners were wondering if we should add language about the number of times the electronic signs could change if we do end up allowing them. Also, to explore language about TV's and video monitors in windows, which constitute as signage.

Page 4:

Andy Sikkema had a question on what "internally illuminated" meant. Staff will explore the current definition and see if it needs to be adjusted.

Page 5:

The Commissioners brought up the wording for Wall Sign and thought that it might be confusing with the last paragraph on page 6. Staff will work on the wording to make sure it's clearer to the public.

Page 6:

The Commissioners made a note of the letter and numbering conflict under Section 18.5. Staff will change this. The Commissioners also noted that under Abandonment, the number of days needs to be changed to 30.

Page 7:

Al Denton, noted that under height of signs, the sign should not exceed the length of the building.

Page 8:

Kendell Milton and Estelle DeVooght asked about regulations for residential neighborhoods. Wanted to make sure that you could still have signage, but wanted to make sure the lighting was soft. Ms. Thum stated that she would work on some language that would allow for the address number to be lighted and the possibility of a home occupation sign being lighted.

The Commissioners also questions video signs. Andy Sikkema will check with MDOT to see what regulations they have on billboards. Ms. Thum stated that regulating billboards might be something to look into as well.

Andy Sikkema made a comment concerning signs in the right-of-way. There should be a sentence included in Section 18.5 #6 to state that signs could be permitted, as long as they get a permit from the road jurisdiction.

Page 9:

Ms. Thum stated that she would have to change the number of days under abandoned sign.

Al Denton made the suggestion that Section 18.4 # 5, Permanent Window Signs, include specific language that states "That the window sign may not occupy not more than 25% of an individual window"

Page 10:

No Comment

Page 11:

The Commissioners pointed out that under Section 18.5 #3, there should be some mention of MCRC/MDOT jurisdiction.

Page 12:

No Comment

Page 13:

Ms. Thum stated that she was not sure if they needed Section 18.6 #3, as it's already stated in Section 18.5. She will double check with our attorney.

Page 14:

No Comment

Page 15:

No Comment

XI. Public Comment

No Comment

X. Commissioners Comment

Ms. DeVoght and Mr. Denton inquired about the definition for natural grade and that Marquette Township is having a problem with their definition. Ms. Thum stated she will check into the Marquette Township issue.

Mr. Sikkema wanted to make sure the Township moves forward on the alternative energy ordinance, as windmills and solar energy are becoming quite popular.

XI. Directors Report

Ms. Thum informed the Planning Commission about the upcoming website changes.

XII. Informational Items and Correspondence

A. City of Marquette Planning Commission Minutes, February 2, 2010

B. Planning and Zoning News, February 2010

XIII. Adjournment

Al Denton, Chairman