

**Clearwater Township**  
Planning Commission  
Special Meeting of October 15, 2019  
As approved November 4, 2019

**Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance:**

Chair Backers called the meeting to order at 7:08, and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call of Members and Recognition of Visitors:**

Commissioners present: Backers, Cassasa, Eldridge, Fields

Commissioners absent: Von See

Township officials: Deputy Clerk Moore

Public: Lynne Buday, Carol Backers, Karen Mackenzie, Mike Henderson, plus two who declined to sign in

**Approval of Agenda:**

**MOTION** by Casassa, second by Backers, to accept the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

**Call for Disclosure of Conflicts of Interests:**

Chair calls for commissioners to disclose any real or potential conflicts of interests. There were none.

**Approval of Minutes:**

**MOTION** by Casassa, second by Backers, to approve the minutes of October 7, 2019, as presented. Motion carried.

**Public Comment for Matters Not on the Agenda:** [10:19 in recording]

Jeff West – Expressed his concern that in future zoning decisions the continuing need for areas for growing crops and livestock might get overlooked. He commented that some families are reverting to growing some of their own food because of health hazards revealed in the prepared foods industry. Maybe not so much for profit, but subsistence farming for the individual family or community. He pleaded that the township should never forget about the need for areas to grow and enable the “farm to table” trends.

**Commissioner Comment for Matters Not on the Agenda:**

None.

**Correspondence:**

None.

**Review of Clearwater Township Master Plan:** [14:29 in recording]

As items were discussed and agreed upon, notes were contemporaneously made in the working copy of the Master Plan update draft document, which document is hereby incorporated into the record by reference [MasterPlan\_20191015].

Updates to dates, page numbers, etc. are housekeeping items not requiring further discussion.

**Section II – Population Characteristics:** Secretary Fields has obtained the data from the Census Bureau American Community Survey estimates of 2017, and the actual school figures.

**Land Use Trends**

A. – Housing Additions – Zoning Administrator Parzych has provided housing additions records for 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019. The Commission agreed that the current land use zoning is expected to remain in place for several years going forward, and modified the final sentence of this section to refer to the entire corridor of Rapid City Road.

B. – Commercial Additions – The text remains essentially the same – with the minor addition of reference to the ongoing effort to re-plat the village center.

C. – Industrial Additions – The language explains the rationale for not having heavy industry in the township, and remains unchanged.

D. – Agricultural/Timber Resource Uses – We discussed the idea raised by our Supervisor that perhaps we might want to combine our Agricultural District and our Recreational District to a single district with the best qualities of both. We didn’t find any reason to make changes to this text at this time.

E. – Recreational Land Uses – We reviewed this section thoroughly and found it to still be valid.

**Section III – Roads and Traffic**

We have the report booklet from the Kankaska County Road Commission, we will simply update the road projects that have been accomplished. The township’s road millage was renewed for three years, so there is just one year left on it. We think we should add the comment that the millage should be renewed for as long as the need exists. We are also adding recognition of the cooperation we had from both Whitewater Township and Grand Traverse County to repair Baggs Road.

**Section IV – Schools**

Secretary Fields has the population numbers for the school. We added a sentence about current growth in kindergarten population. Current population numbers will be added to update the chart.

**Section V – Fire, Police and Emergency Medical Services**

Secretary Fields has received the report from the Fire Department, for incorporation into the Master Plan document.

**Section VI – Other Pertinent Trends**

We concur that the number of boats on the Sandbar is often over 500 rather than 100. The spillover of parking from the DNR launch site, on Aarwood Trail is on all weekends – cross out the word “holiday.” The exercises are not limited to seniors, so we are changing that word to “public.” We added reference to the foot care clinic following the words “senior programs.” We added information about the Kalkaska library visiting branch that comes on the second and fourth Wednesdays except for holidays.

Reviewing the paragraph on the improved appearance of the downtown, we removed references to the road widening and the flowers, and replaced them with “updated street lights program, including promotional banners and seasonal decorations, enhanced by the efforts of the township residents who have volunteered their time and labor.”

**Section VII – Future Land Use Plans – The Master Plan “Vision Statement”**

We discussed whether this title dealt with two separate items or was a unit. The majority of the Commission found it to be a single unit. In the introductory paragraph we decided it was necessary to include the more recent body, the Planning Commission, and reference the Public Acts of 2006 and 2008 that mandated the constitution of a planning commission by ordinance.

**Objective 1. Protect the unique scenic and natural features of the township, including water quality**

Lots of discussion on how business could be incorporated into the township without destroying the scenic and natural features we value. We want to encourage some business while protecting the natural beauty of the place. We agreed that the Master Plan wording describes how the area should look, and does not dictate how it is zoned, and that we can incorporate rules about appearance into the Zoning Ordinance.

We kept the wording of paragraphs 1 through 4 in this Objective. For paragraph 5, we deleted the final sentence regarding county participation in Health Department District 10 rules on septic inspection at time of transfer of ownership.

***Objective 2. Provide for adequate public open space, access to water, and community services***

We added to paragraph 2 that the township now has 24/7 EMS coverage.

***Objective 3. Provide for a range of development types through appropriate land use distribution***

We struck the one sentence paragraph about growth of retail business in the village center. In the sentence about affordable housing, we added the reference to potentially including “tiny houses.” In the sentence about housing concepts that are attractive to senior citizens and retirees, we add the reference to young adults.

***Objective 4. Provide a safe and suitable transportation network for residents and visitors***

We discussed the current reality that there is no public transportation in place in our township, that there are some specialized services provided – such as transportation for cancer patients – and concluded that the objective is still valid for the future.

**Objective 5. Restore the village center to fundamental economic health by appropriate replatting.**

Chair Backers has submitted text on the process for replatting of the six township plats to clear away the issues of the abandoned and unopened alleyways and streets. This text will be inserted in Objective 5, just prior to the summary statement of the Master Plan.

**Closing Public Comment:**

There was none.

**Adjournment:**

**MOTION** by Backers, second by Eldridge, to adjourn. Adjournment at 9:08 p.m.

**Assignments:**

- Fields assigned to type the updates and additional content into the Master Plan document so that Chair Backers will have a draft to give to the Township Board on Thursday, October 17, 2019.

**Next Meeting:** November 4, 2019, at 7:00 p.m., in the Clearwater Township Community Center (aka the Little Red Schoolhouse).

Respectfully submitted,



Tina Norris Fields  
Secretary