

**Marquette Township Planning Commission – Regular Meeting
Wednesday, September 14, 2011 – 6:30 p.m.
Marquette Township Community Center**

Chairperson Sargent called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lyn Durant (Late) Ellen Sargent, Judy Boyle, Steve Pelto
MEMBERS ABSENT: Mike Springer (Excused)
STAFF PRESENT: Jason McCarthy, Planner/Zoning Administrator, Krystal Foreman,
Recording Secretary
STAFF ABSENT: None
OTHERS PRESENT: Pat Coleman, UPEA

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

**MOTION: To approve the agenda.
Pelto, Moved
Boyle, Supported**

Carried: Unanimously

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING – August 24, 2011: Page 3, first paragraph, second sentence, revise to read: “Under the current...”

**MOTION: To approve the minutes as amended.
Boyle, Moved
Durant, Supported**

Carried: Unanimously

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

OLD BUSINESS:

Sign Ordinance Update and Review Schedule – Discussion. Due to the absence of Ruff, Springer, and Durant, the Commissioners postponed discussion until the September 28th meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Master Plan Update – Discussion. Coleman distributed the first five chapters of the draft Master Plan update and the advertisement for the Open House to be held on October 12th. The draft Master Plan was discussed. The census data was updated and the results were discussed.

Coleman will put together a presentation to show the planning process and schedule for the Open House. Comments and suggestions on future land use will be requested from the public. The survey results may also be available for discussion at the Open House.

Durant arrived at 6:50 p.m. (She was in a closed meeting with the Township Board).

The future land use map was discussed. The areas of concern include: Brickyard Road, south of Huron Woods, Heartwood Forest Land Property, Forestville, just above Partridge Bay Trail area, Eagle’s Nest, and south of Co. Rd. 492. A suggestion was made to have the future land use map on display, at the Open House, highlighting the areas of concern and allowing the residents to make notes on the map. A suggestion was made to show what is allowed in each district; to show the purpose of the district at the Open House. McCarthy and Coleman will work together and will discuss with Sargent.

Coleman will revise the Open House advertisement to read “Attention: Marquette Township Residents and Businesses”. Both residents and businesses are encouraged to participate.

Township Facility Recommendation – Discussion. Liimatta discussed. The Township has talked about a new township facility for 12 years; it is time to start planning and move forward. The census of the Board is the three (3) viable sites are: Commerce, Co. Rd. 492, and Vandeenboom School. Commerce will satisfy the needs of the administration, fire department, and public works as public works would move into the current fire department. The Vandeenboom School is not an adequate location for the fire station.

McCarthy discussed. It is unclear if public works can move into the fire department building because it is zoned as Urban Residential (UR) and it is unclear what constitutes a public service. The definitions of “Colocation” and “Friction of Distance” were discussed.

Durant informed that two members of the Business Association questioned why the Township Hall can not remain where it is. They suggested holding meetings at Lost Creek and opening up the hall for administrative offices. If two-story, have the offices on the second floor. The Business Association members are concerned about the millions of dollars being spent on a new township building. One member of the Business Association suggested turning the current hall into a museum, linking it to the trailhead and having concessions, vending machines, and vendors within the building.

Comments were heard from each Planning Commissioner. The consolidated comments include:

Commerce:

- Best place for the fire hall.

Co. Rd. 492:

- Appealing because of the connection with the Heritage Trail and Schwemwood Park.
- We should utilize the property because the land was initially given to the Township, for a small amount, for the purpose of a new township facility.
- There is no clear road across the highway for fire trucks.

Vandeenboom School:

- Not an ideal place for the fire department training.
- Residential roads are not ideal for fire trucks to be driving when an emergency calls is received.
- The age of the building will result in large maintenance and repair costs.
- The YMCA can not find a different building to accommodate their needs. Previous discussions were held on the Township taking half of the building and the YMCA having the other half; however, both the Township and the YMCA would need the same half of the building as it meets their needs.

The Existing Township Hall:

- Does not have adequate parking.
- If someone is willing to purchase the current building, the Township should sell it.

The staff is running out of office space in the current building. Several employees are working in the rooms with the vaults; which makes for a noisy office setting. There is currently no privacy in the offices. The Commissioners agree that there is a need for a new township facility.

Discussion was held on how to convince the township residents of the need for a new township hall and how to explain how the new facility will affect them. Most of the tax dollars goes to the schools; the Township receives a small portion. A suggestion was made to present a pie chart to the residents to show how their tax dollars are distributed.

MOTION: The Planning Commission recommends the Commerce and Co. Rd. 492 sites. We believe the construction of the facilities is warranted.

Boyle, Moved

Pelto, Supported

Carried: Unanimously

Property Maintenance Ordinance – Discussion. Discussion was moved to a future meeting.

Accessory Structures – Discussion. Discussion was moved to a future meeting.

Working Recreation Facilities Development Map – Discussion. Presented to the Commissioners for verbal approval; it looks good. Durant’s previous suggestion will appear on the final map.

Discussion was held on the Heartwood Forest Land with Liimatta.

Michigan Planning Conference Recommendation – Discussion.

MOTION: Recommend that we send Jason McCarthy to the MI Planning Conference in Grand Rapids, with all expenses paid.

Boyle, Moved

Pelto, Supported

Carried: Unanimously

Township Attorney Opinion – Urban Chickens – Discussion. Discussed the Attorney’s opinion. McCarthy will try to contact the writer of the Farm Act Bill and see if he will attend the September 28th meeting or at least meet by telephone.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

REPORTS:

O’Dovero (Dr. Karr Office Building) Plot Plan Approval. McCarthy informed that a small medical office was approved by staff. It did not require a site plan review.

Complete Streets Ordinance. A suggestion was made to have the Recreation Committee draft the ordinance language with staff, then forward it to the Road Committee and Planning Commission for approval and possible referral to the Township Board.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS PLANNING COMMISSIONERS WISH TO MAKE: Pelto is excused from the September 28th meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: Chairperson Sargent adjourned the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

MOTION: To adjourn the Planning Commission meeting.

Pelto, Moved

Durant, Supported

Carried: Unanimously

Judith A. Boyle, Secretary