

**Pennfield Charter Township**

**Planning Commission Meeting**

**Minutes of May 6, 2013**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm at the Pennfield Middle School cafeteria. Members present were Paul Anderson, Jon Bartlett, Curtis Whitaker, Tammi Damerow, Brad Messenger, Jack Pooler and Elaine Walter. A quorum was met.

Others present: Deputy Supervisor Barbara Darlington, Township Planner Russ Wicklund, Recording Secretary Sandra Cummings and one resident.

All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA**

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda. Brad Messenger made a motion, seconded by Elaine Walter, to accept the agenda as written. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF THE MEETING MINUTES**

Brad Messenger made a motion, seconded by Curtis Whitaker, to approve the meeting minutes of March 4, 2013. The motion carried. Brad Messenger added a statement regarding the previous Planning Commission Meeting on March 4, 2013. He wished to clarify that if two members have a dispute during a meeting, they must respect the Chairperson's call to order immediately or risk being asked to leave the premises.

**CONTINUED DISCUSSION ON TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN**

Township Planner Russ Wicklund continued the discussion pertaining to updates of the Township Master Plan. On a map of the Township he identified the designated Future Land Use areas and pointed out updates to the areas of Open Space Preservation, wetlands and floodplains. He indicated that the general intent of the Master Plan is to provide support for future development. By updating the boundaries of designated land

uses, we may avoid the need for rezoning requests for special land uses, which is a lengthy process and may hinder new development.

Mr. Wicklund discussed the need to protect the primary drainage areas of the township, and the importance of a Capital Improvement Program, which is required in order to be considered for state recreation grants. He indicated there are funds available to qualified jurisdictions through the Michigan DNR, but that will require a 5 year Recreation Plan.

He also indicated there are acquisition funds available which could be used to purchase easements and/or right-of- way land to make it more feasible to construct trails and parks adjacent to privately owned property. The Township is in a good position to receive recreation grants due to the close proximity to existing Linear Trails from Bailey Park to the Battle Creek River and the Pennfield School facilities. The board discussed the possibility of constructing a park with a picnic pavilion or an area to be used as a farmers market on some of the land owned by the township. The Board discussed utilizing the Battle Creek River as a Parks and Recreation area. Again, the Capital Improvement Plan is essential to have in place prior to constructing any of these proposed facilities.

Paul Anderson made a motion, seconded by Brad Messenger, to forward the Master Plan to the Township Board, with a recommendation that the Township set aside funds in the amount of \$5000 to go forward with the 5 year Recreation Plan. The motion carried.

#### **OLD BUSINESS / NEW BUSINESS**

None

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Alice Godde stated that the Neighborhood Watch meeting will be May 9, 2013 at the Grace Community Church. Barbara Darlington stated that there may be a public right of way along the Battle Creek River at the back of the MHP land owned by CP Limited Partnership which could be used for a river front trail.

#### **COMMISSION MEMBERS COMMENTS**

Brad Messenger and Paul Anderson reminded everyone to get out and vote in the election on May 7, 2013. Tammi Damerow and Elaine Walter expressed an interest in creating recreation trails and possibly a canoe launch along the river. Jon Bartlett stated that any plans for river clean-up have to be coordinated with the Michigan DNR, as they will not allow the removal of fallen trees in the river ways without their permission.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The next scheduled Planning Commission meeting will be June 3, 2013.

There will be a Public Hearing held on May 21, 2013 with the Zoning Board of Appeals to consider a Use Variance Request from A Forever Recovery, owned by TIA Corporation. There will be a Public Hearing held on May 28, 2013 with the Zoning Board of Appeals to consider a variance request from O'Reillys Auto Parts.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Paul Anderson made a motion, seconded by Brad Messenger to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 pm. The motion carried.

Sandra Cummings, Recording Secretary