



Call to Order: Supervisor Walls called the December 19, 2017 Meeting of the Springfield Township Board and Springfield Township Planning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Springfield Township Civic Center, 12000 Davisburg Rd., Davisburg, MI 48350.

Roll Call:

Board Members Present

Collin W. Walls	Township Supervisor
Laura Moreau	Township Clerk
Jamie Dubre	Township Treasurer
Marc Cooper	Township Trustee
Judy Hensler	Township Trustee
David Hopper	Township Trustee
Dennis Vallad	Township Trustee

Planning Commissioners Present

Dean Baker
Kevin Sclesky
Linda Whiting
Jason Pliska

Planning Commissioners Absent

Ruth Ann Hines
George Mansour

New Business:

1. Draft Strategic Review

Clerk Moreau summarized the history behind and the current draft Strategic Plan. She explained that the Township has been discussing a Strategic Plan since May 2013. The Township has a Master Plan, Dixie Corridor Plan, Pathway Plan, Natural Resources Plan, Parks & Recreation Master Plan and other planning documents. A Strategic Plan is needed to coordinate and synthesize the various plans into an overall vision for the Township and outline the steps to implement that vision. In 2014, we faced some challenges with how a strategic planning process fits with the Master Plan and how to get this project off the ground. A Strategic Planning Subcommittee was established and it was determined that the group should first focus on strategic planning for the Dixie Corridor. Through the committee, the Dixie Highway Design Guidelines were developed, and the committee intended to also update the Dixie Corridor Plan, review the Overlay District and create a Developer's Guide. The Dixie Highway Design Guidelines established a shared vision for



the corridor that reflects the character and image of the Township and is a major part of the overall vision for the Township.

Clerk Moreau explained that in the past few years, the focus has been on the Dixie Corridor and Fire Department but recently the Board has refocused on the Township Strategic Plan. In May, the Board reviewed a proposal to develop a strategic plan and considered a “Guiding Principles and Objectives” format. The Board supported the proposal and expressed a preference for a simple, usable format with specific tasks. The intent would be to refer to the document annually during budget preparation and refocus or update objectives and strategies, as needed. The Board held a Priorities Meeting on September 11 to pull together goals and priorities; some were new but most were goals and priorities that we’ve discussed many times or are already on the Planning Commission Priority Task List. Clerk Moreau explained that following that meeting, she finalized the draft Strategic Plan using the goals and priorities identified and incorporated them into the Guiding Principles & Objectives format that Board reviewed earlier in the year. She asked the Board Members and Planning Commissioners for their feedback on the guiding principles and the overall functionality of the plan. She also asked if the draft guiding principles capture what the Township’s values and mission are.

Chairperson Baker stated that the plan includes the history of the community and he appreciated that the plan seemed to be succinct and presented the attributes that are important in the community and how the Boards and Commissions seek to manage those. He stated that it was easy to follow but also comprehensive.

Clerk Moreau stated that if anyone has a suggestion or edit, they could offer it at any time during the meeting. She provided an electronic presentation which showed the vision statement broken down into categories of Dixie Corridor, Fire Department and Public Safety, Pathways, Downtown Davisburg and Natural Resources which she noted have been the areas of focus in the Township.

Commissioner Whiting stated that she likes the Guiding Principles. She concurred with Chairperson Baker regarding the plan capturing the vision. However, she noted that community sewer was referenced in the vision statement; she thought that the possibility of redevelopment in downtown Davisburg was a dead issue and she asked if this is realistic.

Clerk Moreau stated that Mill Pond Park and downtown Davisburg is last on tonight’s agenda. She added that the Township adopted an ordinance and set aside land on the old lumberyard property for a discharge site for sewer but it is only applicable to two properties downtown plus the lumberyard property. Reconsidering how Township



property can improve the aesthetics and encourage redevelopment downtown is something that she would like to revisit.

Commissioner Whiting asked if there was a need to address residential development in the vision. There is nothing regarding residential development in the plan. She suggested that they talk about the variety of residential accommodations that might be available and she also suggested that with the aging population, senior housing might need to be addressed.

Clerk Moreau answered that this is a good suggestion and it fits with other priorities that Trustee Vallad and Supervisor Walls had mentioned at the priority meeting regarding a senior services master plan. They should seek to provide a variety of residential options to serve all age groups.

Commissioner Sclesky stated that he agrees with the document's vision showing where we are moving in ten years. The strategies can be ongoing and updated on an annual basis depending on what is going on within the Township. He asked which is the first priority pathway. If it is a Dixie Corridor, which side of the road is it going to be on so that the Planning Commission can follow through on any upcoming site plans. They should identify start and stop points so the path can be defined and consistent. He suggested that they should include a date for completion so it doesn't get passed along.

Treasurer Dubre stated that the Township Board discussed connectivity of pathways along Dixie Highway. She stated that the Township has worked with the Road Commission to have extended shoulders installed along Andersonville Road. This overlay was just approved at the last Board meeting. Sometimes priorities must be adjusted depending on what else comes along.

Commissioner Sclesky asked where the extended shoulders start and stop and do they stripe it with yellow to make it safe for pedestrians and bikers.

Treasurer Dubre answered no, it isn't striped. She suggested that the Township Board put money aside for pathways and they do not want paths that go to nowhere. They need to work on sections to promote connectivity and everyone, the Board, Planning Commission and developers, needs to be in sync with the plan.

Commissioner Pliska stated that the last two paragraphs predominately reference recreation and parks. He asked if there would be any value of pulling this information into a separate recreation plan.



Clerk Moreau stated that Parks and Recreation has their own Master Plan; the goals included in the Strategic Plan would be items that overlay or intersect with the overall Township priorities. Where and how the General Fund might support natural areas and pathways is what she was trying to address in the Strategic Plan. Natural Resources is primarily funded through the General Fund. The last paragraph is more Township than Parks and Recreation. There is a committee formed to review Mill Pond Park and other items related to this site. She stated that the Township Board also intends to have a joint meeting with the Park Commission to sync priorities and to think about how they are serving the residents. The Park Commission is updating their Master Plan in 2018 so the timing is excellent.

Clerk Moreau continued with the electronic presentation explaining the format of the document with a Guiding Principle, Objectives and Strategies for each category. The intent is to have dates and responsibilities assigned to each strategy and it is important to update these items during joint meetings and the budget planning process. She asked the Commissioners for comments on the format and if they believe it is important to have this overview.

Commissioner Sclesky commented that the fire item would not be on there long and suggested that it could be a timeline of items accomplished.

Treasurer Dubre stated that prior to receiving the bond, the Township had to provide a summary report of the General Fund and Fire Fund regarding what had been accomplished. This bond review is done on a biannual basis.

Mr. Lewan suggested that prior to the Guiding Principles page, there should be a written description of how the plan is to be used and how it is related to other plans in place and how it is different from other plans.

Commissioner Whiting asked who is going to be looking at the Strategic Plan.

Commissioner Sclesky suggested that this is an action plan to get things accomplished. The audience is the Boards and Commissions.

Treasurer Dubre stated that there needs to be specific people tied to each task so it gets done.

Commissioner Whiting confirmed that the document is to be used internally.

Clerk Moreau concurred.



2. Pathways – Master Plan vs. Strategic Plan

Supervisor Walls commented on the pathways portion of the Master Plan. He compared and commented on the section of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan for pathways, Priority Pathway Plan established by the Planning Commission and the Township Board in 2013 and the 2016 Master Plan document showing the Township Pathway Plan. He suggested that in moving forward we should work on an actual development plan establishing priorities. The Township Board has set aside money for pathways and we have enough for ¼ mile of pathway. He stated that the Planning Commission required a recent developer to set aside money for pathways and the amount as determined by Township Engineer, Randy Ford was vastly different depending on what type of pathway they were requiring. There is a Priority Pathway Plan in the Master Plan but the zoning ordinance calls it a “safety path.” The definition of pathway does not appear in the Code and the terms and definitions need to be coordinated among the plans and ordinance.

Supervisor Walls explained that Andersonville Road was not on the Road Commission’s plan for repaving in 2018, however after the Township agreed to contribute for the cost of paving the shoulders, the Road Commission moved the overlay project and shoulder paving to 2018. The paved shoulder will begin at the east Township line to the west along Andersonville Road, first to Northwest Court, then in three years’ time will reach Davisburg Road.

Supervisor Walls summarized that the ordinance requires that any property adjacent to the Priority Pathway Plan must construct, donate 125% of the current cost if they feel it will be connected to something in ten years and they must have a pathway easement as a recorded document in perpetuity. This should show on the site plan but it is not on the checklist or the site plan criteria.

Regarding priority areas for pathways, Supervisor Walls noted that the Strategic Plan includes improving the limestone loop around the Civic Center. He suggested raking the stones off of the path because it would be a vast improvement and suggested using the ballfield crusher dust material instead of asphalt. The other part of the Strategic Plan pathway is completing the path from the Civic Center down to Mill Pond Park and Hart Center.

Commissioners and Board members discussed the location of the “storybook trail” and the condition of the trail. It was noted that the condition of that path made it difficult to walk on for older residents and almost impossible to use with a stroller.



Supervisor Walls asked for some feedback from the Commission on continuing the loop around the Civic Center and connecting the Civic Center with downtown.

Chairperson Baker answered yes, they have talked about where they should locate a hub and they have discussed priority segments before. He agreed with the Civic Center being the beginning of the pathway. He would agree with an investment that continues that process and would agree with a circular opportunity.

Commissioner Hopper concurred. He also likes the King Road extension at the Dixie/Davisburg intersection and the pathway down Dixie to Kroger; he sees both segments getting used. He suggested that they could continue the path further down Dixie Highway.

Commissioner Sclesky agreed with the continuity of the plan down Dixie Highway.

Commissioners discussed the pathways that exist now and the desired pathways.

Commissioner Pliska stated that this would fulfill a need that exists in the Township for many residents. He does not feel safe walking on Clark Road with his children because there is no sidewalk, it is narrow, it is hilly and people drive 55 miles per hour. He stated that there is nowhere near his house that his family can go walk and feel safe. There are many areas of the Township that would benefit from having walking paths.

Commissioner Whiting commented about the difference between a safety path and a pathway or sidewalk. She stated that a safety path is something along Dixie Highway that would be for functionality to get from one place to another. The other type of pathways would be for recreation, like the loop around the Civic Center.

Supervisor Walls asked the Commissioners for their thoughts on continuing the pathway from the Davisburg and Dixie Highway intersection.

Commissioner Sclesky agreed that this is a good place to start because they are already seeing the use this intersection gets.

Commissioner Hopper stated that there is a sidewalk in his neighborhood in Kingston that goes out to Dixie Highway and would tie in to Oak Valley and Forest Ridge. This begins to create some connectivity.

Supervisor Walls indicated that there be a problem in front of the auto dealership because of the grade near the road right-of-way.



Commissioners and Board members discussed the interconnectivity of pathways along Dixie Highway.

Commissioner Sclesky asked about state funding for pathways.

Mr. Lewan replied that there are some monies available if you have an updated Recreation Master Plan and this is probably why some pathways are included in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

Commissioner Sclesky stated that it should be in their Master Plan update.

Clerk Moreau concurred and suggested that the Priority Pathway Plan also is integrated with the Parks & Recreation Master Plan so it is identified when applying for grants.

Mr. Lewan stated that you are more apt to get continued funding for a path after you get funding the first time as it moves along.

Trustee Hopper reviewed the pathway portion of the ordinance and what it entailed.

Supervisor Walls stated that estimating the cost of the path needs to be defined with established standards.

3. Dixie Corridor Planning

Supervisor Walls requested feedback on putting together a developer's guide.

Commissioners and Township Board members agreed with assembling a developer's guide. They agreed that all the pieces should be together in an easily readable and referenced form and agreed that it should outline Township expectations for the Dixie Corridor. They discussed previous applicants that have come before the Commission and how this guide and incentives would have helped the process and what documents should be included.

Supervisor Walls discussed the proposed clearing and maintenance of the Dixie Highway and Davisburg Road corners. He asked if the Commissioners thought this would be a good spot to embellish with some different kind of landscaping and streetscape improvements.

Trustee Hensler stated that the grass should be cut and she agreed that this corner is important.



Trustee Hopper agreed that they spent a lot of money on this corner and it is ideal for improvements.

Supervisor Walls asked if the Design Guidelines should be extended north beyond Davisburg Road.

Commissioner Whiting commented that the strip mall along northern Dixie is hurting badly. She suggested that maybe they should concentrate south of Davisburg Road.

Trustee Cooper commented that they shouldn't have a north and a south end; all of Dixie Highway should be included.

Commissioner Pliska stated that he likes the continuity of having the same criteria all along Dixie Highway.

Commissioner Whiting clarified that she is not against extending it, she does not want the Township to be spread too thin. She knows how much time was put into the Dixie Design Guidelines.

Commissioners and Township Board members discussed including the area to the north and determined that the Dixie Highway Strategic Planning Committee should consider how to address the north end.

Supervisor Walls asked if the members of the committee were willing to continue their service. All agreed to continue. Confirmed members of the Strategic Planning Committee are Linda Whiting, Dean Baker, Clerk Moreau and Supervisor Walls.

4. Downtown Davisburg and Mill Pond Park Planning – (Due to lack of time, this item was not discussed.)

5. Other items as unanimously agreed – None

Adjourned: 7:29 p.m.

Collin W. Walls, Supervisor

Laura Moreau, Clerk