



Minutes of JOINT WORKSHOP MEETING WITH PLANNING COMMISSION

Held September 10, 2012

Township of Springfield

Laura Moreau, Clerk

**Dixie Corridor Joint Workshop Meeting
Township Board and Planning Commission**

Call to Order: Supervisor Walls opened the September 10, 2012 joint workshop meeting of the Springfield Township Board and Planning Commission at 7:05 p.m. at the Springfield Township Civic Center, 12000 Davisburg Rd., Davisburg, MI 48350.

Board and Planning Commission Members Present

Judy Hensler	Township Trustee
Ruth Ann Hines	Planning Commissioner
David Hopper	Township Trustee, Planning Commissioner
Roger Lamont	Township Trustee
Bill Leddy	Planning Commissioner
Laura Moreau	Township Clerk
Kevin Sclesky	Planning Commissioner
Denny Vallad	Township Trustee
Collin Walls	Township Supervisor

Others Present

Dick Carlisle	Planning Consultant
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New Business:

1. Dixie Highway Corridor Plan Update Presentation

Supervisor Walls thanked those who worked on the 2010 update and introduced the background of Dixie planning by detailing the first corridor plan of 2000. He noted that a great deal of work went into the recent update but the plan faded away after the May 2010 draft and implementation was left undone.

Dick Carlisle provided additional background including the overlay district and summarized findings of the 2008-2009 steering committee and the November 4, 2009 joint workshop meeting. The information and feedback was used to create a vision for the corridor that included three development zones or “nodes” and also helped to create an



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Illustrative Sketch of the entry zone near I-75. The plan and overall goals of the three nodes were presented and discussed.

Dick Carlisle next explained that the plan update identified several key issues. He asked the participants to discuss those issues and what steps are needed to resolve them.

Commissioner Hines asked if the density from the illustrative sketch was agreed upon as a goal.

Clerk Moreau stated that her understanding is the sketch indicates planning goals—for example internal access roads, nature paths, residential uses fronting the natural areas, gathering spaces incorporated in the design, on-site sewage treatment and mixed uses—but the sketch did not indicate density. She stated that the plan stalled before it was determined how much density was even possible.

Supervisor Walls agreed that what was called the “septic reality” was not determined. However a sewer study was conducted in 2009 but it does not appear that the plan was forwarded to the Township Board or Planning Commission at the time. Meeting participants further discussed the need to explore all sewer options and not just the technology explored in the 2009 sewer study prepared by Hubbell, Roth & Clark.

Trustee Hopper added that in terms of a density goal, what is desired from a developer standpoint is not necessarily the same as the Township standpoint. But the septic options available and what the land can support should be looked at now.

Dick Carlisle agreed and noted that utility districts can dictate the development. In order to establish a goal and guide development you need to be prepared to be able to tell developers “we’ll work with you within our framework.”

Supervisor Walls questioned the need for a regional commercial zone. He noted that currently there is plenty of vacant and empty commercial property. Independence Township ended up with empty buildings in other parts of the Township when it developed the Sashabaw Corridor. He stressed that Springfield should be talking with surrounding communities if the goal is to develop a regional zone.

It was agreed that the focus should be on being prepared for development, not on creating or attracting a regional commercial district.



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The participants were then asked to review a set of goals and specific strategies outlined in the plan update. The goals related to: encouraging physical improvements to the district; managing access and traffic flow; promoting a safe and friendly environment for pedestrians; enhancing the visual appearance of the corridor; and developing a marketing and land use plan that will encourage economic health and redevelopment. Participants prioritized the goals, specifically noting which should be identified for implementation within the next year.

One top priority noted by several participants was to address the safety near the Kroger development. Supervisor Walls explained that there had been some very encouraging discussions with property and business owners but that he was just informed that Kroger was no longer “at the table” to consider the safety improvements.

Several other priorities were identified and Dick Carlisle indicated that he would summarize the key issues and priorities and provide a report to the Planning Commission and Township Board.

2. Plan of Action

Dick Carlisle concluded by requesting any final comments. He explained that his report would be in a format that would allow each body to prepare specific priorities and work items. Dick will also include some observations and suggestions of his own for how to move ahead.

Clerk Moreau asked for clarification if the participants support the update as it stands or if the intent is to continue the review process.

Dick Carlisle indicated that the plan would have to go to the Planning Commission and Township Board for additional consideration and ultimately be adopted as part of the Master Plan.

Supervisor Walls added that the process of incorporating the Dixie Corridor Plan into the Master Plan would require the Planning Commission and Board to review some of the long-standing Master Plan policies. For example, the Master Plan states that development in Springfield would be designed to serve the residents of Springfield. Obviously the



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corridor plan update takes a large step away from that and we need to have that discussion.

It was clarified that the Dixie Corridor Plan update would again be an active priority for the Township but it could be several months or even a year before the update is adopted. The process would include looking at utility options, reviewing the overlay districts, considering signage restrictions and the various goals and priorities identified at this workshop meeting.

Adjournment:

Supervisor Walls adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Collin Walls, Township Supervisor

Laura Moreau, Township Clerk