

Minutes of  
**PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
January 25, 2022**



**Call to Order:** Chairperson Baker called the January 25, 2022, Regular Meeting of the Springfield Township Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Springfield Township Civic Center, 12000 Davisburg Rd, Davisburg, MI 48350.

**Commissioners**

**in Attendance:** Dean Baker, Chairperson  
George Mansour, Vice Chair  
Jamie Costigan  
Ruth Ann Hines  
Dave Hopper  
Kevin Sclesky

**Absent:** Terry Rusnell

**Staff Present:**

Laura Moreau, Supervisor  
Joan Rusch, Planning Administrator

**Approval of Agenda:**

**Commissioner Sclesky moved to proceed with the agenda as presented. Supported by Commissioner Hopper. Vote: Yes: Baker, Costigan, Hopper, Hines, Mansour, Sclesky. No: None. Absent: Rusnell. Motion approved.**

**Public Comment:**

None

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

**Commissioner Hines moved to approve the minutes of the December 28, 2021, Regular Meeting as presented. Supported by Commissioner Sclesky. Vote: Yes: Baker, Costigan, Hopper, Hines, Mansour, Sclesky. No: None. Absent: Rusnell. Motion approved.**

**Public Hearing:** Amendments to Code of Ordinances to amend Chapter 40, Sections 40- 276 and 40-649.

**Hearing Opened at 7:03 p.m.**

**Public Comment:** None

**Hearing Closed at 7:04 p.m.**

**New Business:**



1. Accessory Buildings – Proposed amendments to Code of Ordinances Chapter 40, 40-276 and 40-649.

Chairperson Baker explained that this amendment is to clarify the accessory ordinance to make sure it is understood in all zoning districts where a residence must be built, and one cannot have just an accessory structure.

Supervisor Moreau explained that in the future we will be looking at the definitions of farm and agricultural in the ordinance. Agriculture is listed as a principal use permitted and there is an allowance for a barn or outbuilding associated with a principal use. This may also present some confusion. If farming is a principal use, then a barn may be allowed without a residence. This is explained in the ordinance, but the definitions could be clearer. She is hoping that our new planning consultant will be able to help with this.

Chairperson Baker stated that the Planning Commission would have to make a recommendation to the Township Board for their consideration on this.

Commissioner Mansour asked if this issue is related to requests for marijuana caregiver operations.

Supervisor Moreau stated that the interest in building an accessory structure without a principal residence on the property has been going on for some time. Other ordinances address the marijuana caregiver operations.

**Commissioner Hopper moved that in the Planning Commission held a public hearing on this matter, it is recommended to the Township Board to amend Springfield Township code of ordinances Chapter 40, Section 40-276 and 40-649 as presented this evening. Supported by Commissioner Sclesky. Vote: Yes: Baker, Costigan, Hopper, Hines, Mansour, Sclesky. No: None. Absent: Rusnell. Motion approved.**

2. Planning Consultant Presentations.

Supervisor Moreau explained the planner presentation process that would take place. She commented on the schedule that had been handed out to the Commissioners and the format of the presentations. She explained that the Planner Consultant Search Committee consisting of Dave Hopper, Dean Baker, Joan Rusch, and herself, will review each proposal thoroughly, take into consideration tonight's presentations and the Planning Commission's feedback, and then recommend at the Township Board February meeting the firm or firms for the Township Board to interview.

Chairperson Baker explained the process the search committee used to evaluate the candidates. He explained what the RFP submissions consisted of and how this was used to determine which firms to invite to present tonight. He stated that the rate structures for each firm varied, and these will need to be more thoroughly reviewed.



a. Rowe Professional Services Company

Presenters Jason Ball, AICP, Senior Planner and Co-Project Manager and Leanne Panduren, PE, Principal in charge, President, CEO, explained that their niche is smaller communities. Half of their clients are mostly rural townships. Their approach is to be available, responsive, and to partner with their clients. The Master Plan approach is to focus on the outcomes desired and assist townships in the process. They do not require a retainer and support clients on an as-needed basis. They tailor their services and plans to the community.

During the question-and-answer session the representatives from Rowe discussed their continuing education requirements and the training provided for clients, how many other communities they serve, their experience with Master Plans, what percentage of their clientele use their planning services, and what they have learned about Springfield Township during this process.

After the presentation the Commissioners discussed Rowe's staff dedicated to planning services, the firm's experience and number of years in planning, and the as-needed service format.

b. McKenna

Presenters John Jackson, AICP, President, Community Manager, R. James Gorenflo, ASLA, Principal Planner, Project Manager, Landscape Architect, and Nani Wolf, Assistant Planner, Project Planner, Mapping and Spatial Analysis, explained that they serve several communities like Springfield and have a commitment to good planning. They have a staff of 25 planners. They understand that Springfield is dedicated to natural resources preservation. A wholistic approach is taken to planning with the realization that the master plan is a living document. They explained master plan implementation and how every development is reviewed with the master plan in mind.

During the question-and-answer session the representatives from McKenna explained their experience with similar townships, the number of master plans their firm handles regularly, and that they are expanding their planning services.

After the presentation the Commissioners discussed that the firm tailored the presentation to Springfield and recognized the Township's concern for natural resources. The firm is focused on providing planning services; however, the planner assigned to Springfield is a certified landscape architect, not a planner.

c. Giffels Webster

Presenters Matt Wojciechowski, AICP, Senior Planner and Stephanie Osborn, Staff Planner, explained that they have a staff of ten on their planning team. They provide zoning audits and make sure zoning aligns with the master plan. They discussed the ClearZoning product and how it makes ordinances easier to understand. They discussed their development plan review, recreation planning, training and education, and public outreach methods.



During the question-and-answer session the presenters commented on the other townships they serve and that 50% of their clients are municipalities. They understand that Springfield has immense natural resources, and that growth strategies are concerned with preservation. A team approach is used. They further explained zoning audits and the ClearZoning product.

After the presentation the Commissioners discussed that the firm is proactive, and that the audit would identify issues in the zoning ordinance and address them. The quality of services, experience, and enthusiasm for planning was evident in the presentation.

The Commissioners discussed the three presentations, the impressions they had, and the costs of each firm.

Chairperson Baker stated that the Township Board ultimately makes the decision of which planning firm to hire based on the recommendation of the search committee. He explained that the purpose of these presentations was to decide which firm we would trust to assist us in our pursuit of planning. The cost was not the primary concern at this point. Instead, the question is which firm is best suited to serve the community. It is up to the Township Board to discuss the costs and compare to our previous costs. The objective of gaining a clarity on planners was achieved tonight.

### 3. Proposed Amendments to Code of Ordinances Chapter 40, Section 40-642 – Minimum frontage on a public road.

Chairperson Baker explained the background of these proposed amendments. The Zoning Board was presented with a request to divide a parcel because this division would require an access strip to the parcel. The parcel did not meet the minimum frontage on a public road. Although the applicants met all the elements required, the ordinance said that the applicants had to come to the Zoning Board because that is one of the elements stated in the ordinance. After the meeting the ZBA discussed if the Planning Commission could take a look at this ordinance. It seems as if this type of request would be something that could be done administratively. In tonight's packet is a proposed markup of the ordinance that would amend Section 40-642. In almost every instance the reference to the Zoning Board has been replaced with Zoning Administrator. The attorney's review suggested that subsection (b)(4)(b) be omitted because it creates a discretionary element if it is left there. He explained the rewording of (b)(4)(a) would make the ordinance clearer.

Supervisor Moreau explained that the newly created lot accessed by the access strip would need to be a minimum of five acres. The other remaining parcel which meets the minimum frontage requirements on the road would have to meet the minimum lot size of the zoning district.

Commissioner Hines asked why the five-acre minimum since no residential district requires a five-acre minimum.



Supervisor Moreau stated this is because of the access strip. This five-acre minimum was established years ago. She suggested the reasoning behind this was that the Township didn't want a five-acre parcel that gets split in half. Then access strips are allowed for a very small piece. Currently, only a single parcel can be accessed by an access strip. It would be possible to explore private road agreements and how many land divisions could be possible on a parcel. This could be discussed in the master plan update. Amending this ordinance would streamline the process and allow residents reasonable use of their property.

**Commissioner Hopper moved to set the proposed changes to Springfield Township Code of Ordinances Chapter 40, Section 40-642 Minimum frontage on a public road, as discussed tonight for the next available public hearing date. Supported by Commissioner Sclesky. Vote: Yes: Baker, Costigan, Hopper, Hines, Mansour, Sclesky. No: None. Absent: Rusnell. Motion approved.**

4. Correction of P.I. Number in the motion in approving the Final Site Plan for Feldman Jeep.

Chairperson Baker explained that in the motion at the PC meeting on May 25, 2021, the P.I. number of the current dealership was noted, and not the P.I. of the parcel that was the intent of the motion. This can be corrected with a motion acknowledging the error and reference the correct P.I. number as noted on the site plan.

Supervisor Moreau explained that correcting this motion will not change the minutes. The new motion will go on the record of formally acknowledging the correct P.I. number.

**Commissioner Hopper moved that at the May 25, 2021, Planning Commission meeting the Feldman Jeep Dealership project was approved; however, the motion included the P.I. number that was stated incorrectly. The actual number should be 07-24-101-011. The address referenced was correct. Supported by Commissioner Hines. Vote: Yes: Baker, Costigan, Hopper, Hines, Mansour, Sclesky. No: None. Absent: Rusnell. Motion approved.**

**Old Business:**

None

**Public Comment:**

None

**Adjournment:**

**Commissioner Hines moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 p.m. Supported by Commissioner Sclesky. Vote: Yes: Baker, Hopper, Hines, Sclesky. No: None. Absent: Rusnell. Motion approved.**

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Joan Rusch, Recording Secretary