

Minutes of  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
October 26, 2021

SPRINGFIELD  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP



Sean R. Miller, Clerk

**Call to Order:** Chairperson Baker called the October 26, 2021, 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  
Dave Hopper  
Jamie Costigan  
Ruth Ann Hines  
Kevin Sclesky  
George Mansour

**Absent:** Terry Rusnell

**Consultant present:**

Sally Elmiger, Carlisle Wortman Associates

**Staff Present:**

Laura Moreau, Supervisor  
Joan Rusch, Planning Administrator

**Approval of Agenda:**

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

**Public Comment:**

None

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

- **Commissioner Hopper moved to approve the minutes of the July 27, 2021, Regular Meeting and the minutes of the August 24, 2021, Joint Meeting with the Township Board. Supported by Commissioner Hines. Discussion: None. Vote:**



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**Yes: Baker, Hopper, Costigan, Hines, Sclesky, Mansour. No: None. Absent: Rusnell. Motion approved.**

**Public Hearing:** Amendments to Code of Ordinances to amend sections 40-2 Definitions, 40-646 Outdoor Café Service.

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

**Comments:** None

**Hearing Closed at 7:05 p.m.**

**New Business:**

1. Amendments to Code of Ordinances to amend sections 40-2 Definitions, 40-646 Outdoor Café Service

Commissioner Baker commented on the memo provided by the Supervisor with suggested modifications to make the ordinance understandable without changing the content of the ordinance. The minor proposed language changes make the ordinance more clear.

Commissioner Hines stated that the suggested changes seem to be minor “housekeeping” items and proposed that they be accepted. Both Commissioner Hopper and Commissioner Baker agreed that the proposed language makes the ordinance clearer.

**Commissioner Hopper moved, in that the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed amendments to Chapter 40 Zoning by amending Section 40-2 Definitions and Section 40-646 Outdoor Café Service, to recommend the Township Board to adopt the said amendments specifically incorporating the proposed changes as presented tonight in the Supervisor’s memo dated 9-21-21. Supported by Commissioner Hines. Discussion: None. Vote: Yes: Hopper, Baker, Costigan, Sclesky, Hines, Mansour. No: None. Absent: Rusnell. Motion Approved.**

**Old Business:**

1. Master Plan – Background Studies



Ms. Elmiger explained that all the background studies have been updated and incorporate 2020 census data where available. Dick Carlisle prepared the Commercial Market Analysis.

Chairperson Baker commented that there was much good information and relevant content in these studies. This information will guide the Planning Commission and Township in making decisions about planning for the future.

Ms. Elmiger stated that these background studies are part of the appendix of the Master Plan. The summary of this information would appear in the main document of the Master Plan.

Commissioner Hines asked what the end date was for the Master Plan to be completed.

Ms. Elmiger stated that according to her revised schedule, the Master Plan should be completed by March 2023.

Supervisor Moreau asked if the next step was to take the Master Plan to a joint meeting with the Township Board to consider these background studies and other elements.

Ms. Elmiger explained that it may be more helpful at this point to develop an online survey to present to the community. If the survey is available starting in December, there would be data to work with in January. Then the Planning Commission could prepare for a joint meeting with the Township Board. Ms. Elmiger would like to prepare a transitional lands map. This map would help identify parcels in the Township that are not being used and are vacant or should have a use or are underutilized. Ms. Elmiger commented that there is no set way to produce the Master Plan as long as all of the steps are completed during the process.

Chairperson Baker commented that an in-person meeting to gather data may be challenging. One option would be to provide an online survey for input. Then the response can be assessed, and it can be determined if in-person sessions should be considered, as has been done in the past.

Commissioner Hines wondered what kind of traffic the Township would get on its website for this survey.



Supervisor Moreau stated that there would be residents who would not participate remotely. An online survey could make use of the distribution list that the Township has. Many residents have signed up to receive email notifications about Township events. She commented that some residents would expect in-person meetings, and we should offer those opportunities.

Ms. Elmiger stated that she could have a paper version of the survey available for distribution at the Township offices, library, and so forth.

Supervisor Moreau explained that it would be helpful to have the information available when residents come to the Township Offices, like at tax time. Display boards would also be helpful.

Supervisor Moreau requested Ms. Elmiger to have the revised schedule for the Master Plan available at the next meeting. She also commented that it would be helpful to start looking at other sections like goals and policies. She wondered if those sections are ones the Planning Commission might want to get public input on first.

Ms. Elmiger commented that goals and policies are formed by feedback from residents, but that doesn't mean they can't be looked at first. Consideration can be given to updating or determining for relevancy certain goals and policies. Some of this might be made apparent when looking at the survey. The rest of the document is a future land use section, which can be determined by goals and policies.

Commissioner Sclesky inquired on how much feedback to expect from the residents. He wanted to know how big of a sample is considered successful.

Ms. Elmiger stated that 200 responses would be a good number. It does take a lot of energy to get this information. The Township has many good ideas for ways to advertise this survey and make people aware of it.

Supervisor Moreau commented that the Commission should think about how to use next month's meeting time. They should think about what types of questions to ask and to review the goals and policies sections. She suggested that perhaps questions could be arranged in categories.

Ms. Elmiger said that she will develop a draft survey to have ready for the Planning Commission next month.



Chairperson Baker suggested that the commissioners begin thinking about questions and issues that have been brought up. He expects that by next month the survey should be mostly completed and would only need a few modifications.

The Commissioners discussed the role of the Township Board regarding the Master Plan process. They concluded that the Planning Commission has full responsibility to undertake and complete all aspects of this project, although the Board can provide input.

Supervisor Moreau inquired what the next steps would be and when the public would get involved. The survey might be only one of multiple feedback opportunities.

Commissioner Hopper stated that the more information the Township can get out, the better. This is a good opportunity to educate the public on what a Master Plan is and how it affects the community.

Ms. Elmiger commented on the background studies. The information presented is the most updated information available from the American Community Survey resource, which is more detailed than the census information. Some of the 2020 census information is not available for these reports.

Chairperson Baker questioned the chart on page 102 that lists every ten-year increment until 2019, while referencing the decennial census. He expected to see the year 2020 instead. He also had questions regarding the chart and statement at the bottom of page 105. It looks like the chart refers to Springfield Township, but that the statement below references Oakland County. It was a bit confusing if the chart referred to Oakland County or not. He also noted typographical errors on pages 111, 123, and 130.

Commissioner Costigan commented that the chart on page 115 listing the largest private employers is incorrect. Several of the car dealerships listed no longer exist, and this chart needs to get updated.

The Commissioners discussed that this document would need to be reviewed before it is published, to make sure that the information is as current as possible.

**Public Comment:**



Chairperson Baker introduced a discussion regarding the last Zoning Board of Appeals meeting regarding Ordinance 40-642 – Minimum frontage on a road. He explained the situation of the applicants wanting to split a ten-acre parcel into two and that they met all the criteria necessary for this type of split. He was wondering if the ordinance could be changed to allow this type of situation to be approved administratively.

Supervisor Moreau was concerned that sometimes the Township places excessive limitations on how residents can split and develop property. She stated that if this were part of the goals and policies of the Township and part of the Master Plan, then that is what guides the ordinances and is enforced. However, this may be something to revisit. Supervisor Moreau would be in favor of finding ways that allow residents to better utilize their property.

Chairperson Baker stated that from the Zoning Board's perspective, this is something that could have been approved administratively. The Zoning Board thought that the Planning Commission may want to weigh in on this as well as consulting with the Township attorney.

Supervisor Moreau stated that she will speak with Greg Need to see how this ordinance can be amended to make it an administrative approval. This is similar to what is done with nonconforming lots. It may be possible to bring this before the Planning Commission in December.

Chairperson Baker commented that the Township may be overly burdensome on residents. He felt that there might be a way to guide them better by having processes in place that make things less difficult overall.

**Adjournment:**

- **Commissioner Hines moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 p.m. Supported by Commissioner Sclesky. Vote: Yes: Baker, Hopper, Costigan, Hines, Sclesky, Mansour. No: None. Absent: Rusnell. Motion approved.**