

# PENINSULA TOWNSHIP

13235 Center Road, Traverse City MI 49686  
Ph: 231.223.7322 Fax: 231.223.7117 [www.peninsulatownship.com](http://www.peninsulatownship.com)

**Minutes Corrected by Shaina LaFond September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
Planning Office**

## PENINSULA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES July 2nd, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

1. **Call to Order** by Hall at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Pledge**
3. **Roll Call**

**Present:** Dloski, Hall, Hornberger, Shipman; **Absent/Excused:** Shanafelt, Beard, Alexander

4. **Approve Agenda**

**Motion made to approve agenda with additional item (introduction of new Planning & Zoning Administrator, Tori Westmoreland) by Dloski, seconded by Hornberger.**

**Motion passed by consensus**

**Cram:** Introduces Tori Westmoreland who speaks briefly about her background. Explains the specific duties of each office she has held to the Planning Commission and public.

5. **Brief Citizen Comments (For Agenda Items Not Scheduled for Public Hearing):** Hall notes that public comment will be allowed during business item **8b** on Master Plan.

6. **Conflict of Interest:** none

7. **Consent Agenda**

a. Approval of Meeting Minutes: Planning Commission Regular Meeting, June 4th, 2024

**Hornberger moved to approve the consent agenda as submitted, with second by Dloski.**

**Motion passed by consensus**

8. **Business**

a. Special Use Permit (SUP) #138 Old Mission Lavender Farm dba Lightwell Lavender, Amendment #1 - Public Hearing

**Jenn Cram, Director of Planning and Zoning for Peninsula Township: Recaps proposed Amendment #1 for Planning Commission** - Clarifies the name being used in the amendment language is tied to the original SUP, though the applicant is doing business under a different name. The farm operation, located at 2150 Carroll Road, is 10.3 acres and zoned A-1 Agricultural. A SUP was approved on March 9, 2021, which authorized the property as a place to grow, process and sell lavender, lavender-related goods, and associated agricultural products. At the time of application, there was a 576 sq ft structure that was under construction which has since been completed. The SUP also allowed for the construction of a connected 2,400 sq ft building to expand space for retail sales and processing. That building was not constructed within

the year following the approval and so the approval to construct that building has since expired. It was discussed during the introduction that the approval conflicted with a deed restriction on the property, which limits only the size of future structures. The applicant/property owner is requesting the first amendment to SUP #138 to allow for additional value-added agricultural uses accessory to the production and processing of lavender, as well as for additional off-premises signage. Off-premises signage cannot be approved with this request until such a time as the zoning ordinance is updated. Requested value-added uses are as follows: aromatherapy sauna and cold plunge, curated picnics, yoga, sound baths, qigong and other seasonal group exercise classes, lavender-based classes/workshops (wreath- and centerpiece-making), farm tours, and photography sessions. Summarizes some of the General Standard requirements and noting that most of the proposed uses appear to meet said requirements. Requested uses that are accessory to active production or processing of lavender conform to the regulations within the A-1 zone district and are consistent with uses deemed appropriate for agricultural uses within the 2024 Farm Market GAAMPs.

**Hall requests questions or comments from the Commission members:**

**Dloski:** I'm referring to page 3, subparagraph B - the first paragraph above paragraph C. In that we talk about substantial improvement and the Planning Commission - and I'm sure the Township Board has kind of dealt with this issue, considerably. We've gone around and around on it. The thing I'm concerned about: it appears that we're tying substantial improvement to generating income resources. I think that could be a dangerous slope.

**Cram:** Understood.

**Dloski:** If I'm an applicant, I will come in and say "any development that I need an SUP for is going to generate resources and income, and therefore I qualify." Which isn't always true.

**Cram:** I think that's a relevant observation and I think that the findings of facts would be adjusted to note that the value-added uses that do not negatively impact surrounding properties, that the entire community can enjoy, we can come up with different language that still gets us to demonstrating that it is a substantial improvement to the community and to the operation as a whole, without opening up that can of worms. So, thank you for bringing that to my attention.

**Hall:** I have a question: in your introductory remarks you mentioned a private easement.

**Cram:** No private easement. During the introduction back in April, a deed restriction came up and we were wondering if it was a conservation easement or just a deed restriction, and it is a deed restriction that just limits the size of buildings that can be located on the property. We put that question to rest by finding it, reading it, and making sure that what is happening now is in compliance and that any future amendment that we're now discussing would also comply with that. There are no exterior changes to the building proposed as (part of) the request for these amendments. The existing planting areas will not be disturbed.

**Cram:** Just to be clear, for everybody, the Planning Commission does not have the authority to alter private real estate rights.

**Hornberger:** I happened to be on the Planning Commission when we approved that building that never got built. Did that slip through, then? Or was that building small enough...

**Cram:** Had that building been built as approved, it would have violated that deed restriction.

**Hornberger:** Oops. Thank you.

**Dloski:** Reviewing the approval conditions and safeguards from what you said tonight, it looks like we're going to have to amend that section to add additional conditions and safeguards.

**Cram:** Correct. I put some placeholders in there for talking points, and so that I would keep track of them, but yes, we do need work on conditions of approval.

**Dloski:** So, this is not ready to go tonight.

**Cram:** Correct. Generally speaking, per Section 8.7, the Planning Commission normally does not take action the night of a public hearing. They consider the public hearing and then come back. I wanted to give you as much information so that we can move this application forward as quickly as possible, but yes, there are still a few things we need, questions we need answered, and conditions drafted, etc...

**Shipman:** The Record Eagle article that refers to the owner of the sauna unit - is there any reason that that impacts our process? If it's a partnership or a lease of that piece of equipment? Is there any issue that we need to consider?

**Cram:** I do think that the conditions of approval should specify that. I would like to give the property owner the flexibility - hopefully the partnership between them is successful and grows into the future. A special use permit runs with the land and so we want to make sure that we have enough detail around it so that, in the future, if that partnership isn't working or they decide to go separate ways, Erin would still have a good framework to locate another sauna - something similar. It would be helpful to understand the details. We don't need to get into the business plan, but to understand how that relationship is going to work so that we can identify it in this SUP approval for the condition now, and perhaps in the future.

**Dloski:** Will this sauna be a portable sauna similar to the one that sets up on East Bay by the park?

**Cram:** I believe so...

**Dloski:** It has wheels on it? Is that what it's going to be?

**Nick Olsen (Hearth Sauna property owner, from audience):** Similar but different. It does lift down to the ground so that it sits more like a permanent structure but it is on wheels and so can be lifted up and taken out of there.

**Shipman:** I had put a star next to photography, just as something I wanted to follow up on in this discussion with the Commission, and just deciding what's appropriate and not appropriate. It just kind of jumped out at me, as it's a little different. I'm not trying to suggest that it's incompatible but it's just a different sort of phrasing than I've seen before.

**Cram:** In my mind, when I thought about it, if people were coming to the farm to do a photography session, they would be taking photos of the farm that people would see. That would then help people to come back and participate in the farm. If it was generating income - not that that's a standard we should consider for approval - but that would be beneficial to the farm operation. That was how I thought about it. I didn't think that it was necessarily specifically accessory to active production, but there's a relationship there. The Zoning Ordinance does allow for those special open space uses and this is something where people would be outside photographing the farm and people on the farm. I'm happy to discuss it further and I'm Erin can provide us with more information about her vision for that use.

**Shipman:** I, personally, like it but I'm also cognizant of what that may bring down the road. So, I'm wondering if it's worth exploring it a little more with, perhaps, examples that really flesh out that position. That it does have that relationship. You have, certainly a little bit here, by that example you just gave - using an example might demonstrate more what we meant by appropriate.

**Cram:** Understood. Another example I thought of is that (neither) our Zoning Ordinance or our Police Power Ordinances talk about filming or photography on the Peninsula. We do get phone calls and requests from time to time. Recently they wanted to film at Pelizzari Natural Area or on Bluff Road and we have no process or permit for that. We haven't received any complaints about it so that was the other bit of experience that I used in analyzing this particular accessory use to the farm.

**No further Commission comments at this time. The applicant has an opportunity to speak.**

**Erin Hafeli, 13387 Blue Shore Drive: Introduces self as owner of Lightwell Lavender Farm (referred to in original SUP as Old Mission Lavender Farm) at 2150 Carroll Road.** I would like to share some updates since we last met. I have completed the MAEAP (Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program) reverification for the farm. This farm has been environmentally verified dating back to 2017. I've also had a

proactive Right to Farm inspection by MDARD to confirm compliance with GAAMPs on site. I'd also like to highlight that during the MDARD inspection I was informed that the u-pick area is considered retail floor space under the Michigan Right to Farm Act, and I don't know that my SUP goes into that, but just in terms of additional consideration... we do have over two acres of active u-pick lavender right now - you don't even need to pick it, you could just come to look at it, it's in perfect season - but with that the total retail floor space for this farm it helps to add that square footage into the compliance under GAAMPs. I briefly talked with Jenn, upon entering, that in review of the Farm Market GAAMPs that were included in the packet against the language in the SUP amendment that there are a few inconsistencies to the GAAMPs with respect to, for instance, the volume of the picnic basket, volume of charcuterie, the 50% of that, as it relates to how GAAMPs talks about 50% of gross sales or 50% of retail floor space. I've made a note, as we look to make any final edits to this amendment for future consideration, just to review those compliance so that I'm not put in a more restrictive space in the use permit that would ordinarily be allowed under the Michigan Right to Farm Act. (I) just want to make sure that - obviously I'm not here with an agricultural attorney to advise on these matters or land use permit - but I don't want to put myself in a position where I've over restricted myself by putting language in here that I would have ordinarily been able to do otherwise, according to the Right to Farm Act. I did have two specific comments as to the amendment. The first is reconsideration of the seasonal group exercise classes as an allowable use, as we've discussed tonight, especially as it's in conjunction with an aromatherapy sauna farm tour or incidental to the sale of farm products. It would be wonderful, I think, to be able to have a small group yoga or meditation class alongside the aromatherapy offering or a sound bath qigong at sunset when you're harvesting lavender u-pick. I think that there is a complementary use there, so I would like reconsideration of that piece. With regard to the septic trigger, the language in the use permit, as drafted, talking about certain capacity seems a little bit vague. I did go back and review the prior owner's septic plans and have identified that the place that they originally wanted to put the septic field is actually in an area with very high-quality pastureland where we've located a community garden, and so I'm also concerned that that trigger might conflict with other parts of the SUP regarding the impact on plants that are already planted. In general, I'm happy to answer any questions that you have this evening. Nick Olson, owner of Hearth Sauna and my partner on this project is present, so we're here to answer any questions that the board or the community has as well. Thank you.

**Hornberger:** So, the septic position that was recommended before is not something that you would be able to complete now?

**Hafeli:** My preference would be, and Jenn also alluded to potentially transitioning the existing portable toilet to an ADA, I think that's fine. I would look for an identified number...if it's 20 people that you have an additional portalet, or if we were to have some type of an addition or a larger activity. The actual significant financial impact of having the septic installation, the impact to the farm operations, as well as having that trigger/liability in the SUP, I'm not sure I'm comfortable signing off on the SUP amendment with the septic trigger. My preference would be to look at the portable toilets and talk about capacity and ratios and compliance with OSHA.

**Motion to move from regular session to a public hearing made by Hornberger, supported by Shipman.**

**Motion passed by consensus.**

**Peter Trucco, 2443 Carroll Road:** I am a member of Hearth Sauna which is located up on Mt. Holiday. It's a fantastic operation, very clean, very organized. The idea of having an operation such as Hearth on Carroll Road would only enhance the area, is very low impact, and will give people an opportunity for healthier

lifestyle options on the Peninsula other than what we currently have. So, that's it. It's a well-run business, it's good for your health, and I highly recommend it. That's all I have to say.

**Nick Olson, 635 W. 12th Street:** I'll just introduce myself. I don't reside on the Peninsula, but I did grow up in (the) Quaker Valley North subdivision which my grandparents founded many, many years ago. I went to church at St. Joe's when it was across the street. I've worked in various orchards and vineyards as a kid and as an adult up here, so this place does hold a strong place in my heart. I'm happy to answer any questions you guys have about the sauna operation, the aromatherapy component to it is phenomenal. It's rooted in culture and traditions, in many cultures and traditions, and I think it's a really beautiful piece.

**Cram:** So, with that, are you comfortable with your business plan in this partnership that this sauna location would be, perhaps, different than other locations, and that there would always be a lavender component with sauna experience.

**Olson:** Yes. Erin and I talked about that early on, that there might just have to be some things we do very different at this one, and I'm comfortable with that.

**Cram:** Wonderful. Thank you.

**Jeremiah Edson, 1808 Timber Lane Drive:** I live right at the edge of the Township. I just came to support this application. I think the act of having a sauna available out on the Peninsula would be amazing. Obviously, it's going to be a small operation, but it will still be a great opportunity for people in the area to experience it. I also think, as the other gentlemen alluded to, it's a great change of pace from the other special uses we see with farmlands around here like alcohol.

**Motion to close the public hearing and re-open regular meeting made by Dloski, with support by Shipman.**

**Motion passed by consensus.**

**Hall:** This is, to me, an interesting application because as a policy matter, we are open to ideas about agri-business and generally supportive of the concept. The question is: how do we do that with the resources and also the limitations that we have in Peninsula Township - the roads being a major limitation. I find this an interesting topic in this case because some of these uses we're stretching a bit. I'm not saying it's inappropriate, but we are stretching to find ways to get this project approved. Not only from a policy matter, but applicable GAAMPs. I was re-reading that (GAAMPs) as we were talking about photography, for example. First, I want to compliment you on your thorough approach and for explaining the justification of why we're doing this. It's not that we should have a generally negative reaction to new types of businesses, but always lurking in the background are the unintended consequences. Photography is one that might have one of those unintended consequences. I just find it an interesting challenge to help agri-business, in general, and this one in particular, and to do it the right way.

**Cram:** Understood.

**Hall:** We'll be looking to see what conditions you draft for this.

**Cram:** With that, I would like your permission to continue to work with the application to flush out location, capacity, hours of operation, to address comments made - those types of things. If you're comfortable, I'd like to bring this back at the next meeting to discuss it further and potentially take action. In the meantime, this is a lot of information. These are new concepts. As you re-read the GAAMPs and other policies that we have in the Zoning Ordinance from Amendment 201 or even the amendments that we made to farm stands under Amendment 203, those were the areas that I looked to for guidance. I'm excited that Erin is trying these things and it is my hope that while working with the Agricultural Advisory Committee that some of these uses - the farm tours, the workshops - will be established as uses-by right. They are truly accessory to agriculture, similar to u-pick operations. U-picks aren't noted as an accessory use in our Zoning Ordinance

but they've been happening for many years as part of the value-added ag experience. It will be really helpful for the community to have these conversations and become comfortable with these things. They help to make our farmer's operations more viable and also develop standards and conditions that help to mitigate any negative impacts for residents.

**Hall:** Well said. Part of that is continually educating ourselves about the GAAMPs - in fact, I'm going to ask a question now. As I was reading it for this application, the definition of farm market: 'a farm market is a year-round or seasonal location where transactions and marketing activities between farm market operators and customers take place'. When you (then) read the definition of marketing it says (paraphrased) promotional and educational activities which include farm-to-table dinners. So, the way I read this, we think of a farm market as a shack out there on the road, but in fact, it says this could be a location on the property where farm-to-table dinners are classified as marketing activities. Am I reading this correctly?

**Cram:** You are. I would say that the GAAMPs are vague. They don't give us a lot of information around that, but with regard to it being a location, that is absolutely correct. That is why we recently amended our farm stand - formerly roadside stand - ordinance to be consistent with the GAAMPs. You no longer have to have a structure and you're not limited to 150 sq ft. It can be an area where the transaction takes place. That was clarified by Amendment 203.

**Hall:** We need to understand the GAAMPs. Not only as the Planning Commission but also the agricultural community needs to put their creative brains to work. This is a lot broader.

**Cram:** There is still a need - and a requirement - for us to have a zoning ordinance as well as regulations for these types of uses because not every farm operation is going to comply with MAEAP and the GAAMPs. There are other farm operations that could be happening alongside operations that are GAAMPs compliant that these would not apply to. If a farm isn't complying, our zoning ordinance does apply.

**Hall:** The way forward for agri-business is not just finding authorization under the farm market GAAMPs. I'll remind everyone on the Commission that the genesis of Right to Farm was, as Jenn mentioned, giving farmers protection against nuisance actions, either private or governmental. It's gotten a lot broader and there is now explicit preemption language in the GAAMPs. What that means is that if we enact an ordinance that is inconsistent or conflicts with the GAAMPs, the latter control and override that.

**Cram:** The GAAMPs are updated every year so at our last meeting we talked about changes that will be happening next year and one of the things we discussed was putting more clarity around the vagueness of the GAAMPs (language).

**Motion to table SUP #138 Old Mission Lavender dba Lightwell Lavender, Amendment #1 (subject to further investigation and clarification by Cram and applicant) by Dloski, seconded by Shipman.**

**Motion passed by consensus.**

b. Draft Master Plan - Final Review of Clean Version and Process Update

**Cram:** At the June 4th Planning Commission meeting we conducted a public hearing for the Draft Master Plan. At that time, the PC took a leap of faith and trusted that staff would work behind the scenes to make all the revisions discussed at previous meetings. I want to remind everyone that the Draft Master Plan was released on December 8th, 2021 and has been on the website since that date. The Master Plan, at that time, needed to go out to all of the regional jurisdictions for review and comment. That comment period ended in February of 2022. I received comments from Laura Serocki. Those comments were considered and we were ready to make those amendments, then other things took priority. I am delighted that the Master

Plan has been on every agenda of the PC since January and that we have gone through and discussed some minor changes, for the most part, to move the Master Plan across the finish line. In February, the PC provided us with their comments and redlines, then myself, Kevin Beard, Sara Kopriva, Randy Hall, and Maura Sanders reviewed those comments and agreed that they fell into three categories: minor typos and grammatical errors, desired changes to bring the Master Plan from 2021 to 2024 (added to the document in the form of a prologue), and ensuring that the vision statements and action steps were clear. The biggest changes occur to the existing land use map and the future land use map. What we found in the original draft - based on comments submitted - was that the existing land use map was confusing and believed to be inaccurate because it was so similar to the unofficial zoning district map that was included in the Master Plan. The other thing noted is that the existing land use map, which should represent how land is currently being used at a snapshot in time, gives us guidance and predicts a direction for the future. The existing land use map did not include the agricultural preservation area and all the acres conserved. That is a huge part of how land is used on the peninsula. There is a new land use that now shows up as value-added agriculture. Once we added the agricultural preservation area outline and those with conservation easements, as well as other uses, and in our talks with Township Assessor, Sally Murray, to see how land is taxed. Sally noted that there are no specific agriculture, residential, or commercial taxes assessed - however, there are exemptions. From the 18 mills of some school operating tax which property owners can enjoy in whole or in part. The two primary exemption examples are: the pre-principal residence exemption (formerly the homestead exemption) and the agriculture exemption. Parcels that are predominantly used for agriculture can take advantage of the latter exemption. The winery parcels in Peninsula Township benefit from the agricultural exemption due to the agricultural use occurring on the property. However, because there are also commercial or industrial uses occurring on those properties (tasting rooms, processing facilities) they receive a partial exemption. This partial exemption is calculated by subtracting the value of the commercial buildings from the total value of the property. For example, if the winery building represents 50% of the total value of the property, the property would receive a 50% exemption. This would equate to a savings of 9 mills on the property tax bill. When Sara Kopriva at Beckett and Raeder took a look at the assessing data, those parcels that are receiving the partial ag exemption showed up as commercial. One version of the existing land use map that came before the PC showed several parcels that were in red for commercial use and that made us uncomfortable. Thus, the existing land use map evolved to not show the parcels that have the partial exemption as commercial, but as value-added agriculture. There has been an evolution of those maps based on how land is currently used. The way that land is used is sometimes different than how it is zoned. Looking at the existing land use map helps us to identify where we have non-conforming uses or uses predominant in the Township that perhaps need to be considered under a different zone district. It's valuable information for us to consider. In moving from the existing land use map to the future land use map, we talked about the vision statements. What we heard from the community was that maintaining the rural, agricultural character and minimizing commercial businesses, outside of those which support residents and visitors here, were of highest importance. With that, we wouldn't see any large-scale rezonings on the peninsula. We want to minimize the full build-out potential. Thus, the future land use map shows additional agricultural land preserved over the existing land use map. With the PDR program and millage being renewed there is the potential for additional agricultural land to be preserved. (round 5, with 10 applications received for approximately 700 additional acres of land preserved alone with future rounds to follow). This is the methodology that was taken and discussed, leading to subsequent revisions of the

existing land use map and the future land use map that you have seen. It does take time to make these changes and even more time to properly vet those changes. I want all to know that many hours were spent between the planning, zoning, and assessing department to isolate and review the different layers. Parcels with conservation easements were looked at, as well as commercial parcels, and those that are predominantly used as residential on parcels greater than five acres. All of these things were broken out and looked at to ensure that there was confidence in the accuracy of the maps. We also need to talk about the process, because there have been suggestions that we have not been following it. I can assure you that we are. During the stage of the process where the Planning Commission recommended to the Board that this go out to neighboring jurisdictions for the comment period, the only other requirement of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act was that the PC conduct one additional public hearing before approval. I want to note, also, that in 2021 the Township Board approved a resolution (#2021-11-18 #4) to approve the distribution of the Draft Master Plan for review and comment to the entities described in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. In addition, the Township Board asserted their authority to approve the Master Plan. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act authorizes the PC to approve a Master Plan, unless the Board asserts their authority. At the June 4th meeting, the PC recommended approval to the Board, which has the final authority. However, the Board cannot make changes to the Master Plan. It was wonderful that the PC felt comfortable and able to move this to the Board on June 4<sup>th</sup>. If the Board, on July 9th has any requested changes, they will be required to come back to the Planning Commission or review and approve the document. The timing of the board public hearing on July 9th also gave us (Cram and Kopriva) the opportunity to bring the clean version back to the PC on July 2nd. The typographical changes necessary (particularly those that were causing design issues, such as spacing and page breaks) were postponed until final revisions occurred, due to the difficulty working between two different software programs. Additional comments and changes necessary since the June 4th meeting should be reviewed here before they go to the Board on July 9th. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act and Zoning Enabling Act require us to provide 15 days of public notice in a newspaper of record (Record-Eagle) and those requirements have been met. Offers to answer any policy or procedure questions for the Commission.

**Hall:** I have a question regarding language in the resolution authorizing edits to be made. Are you certain that would include the edits that you are going to review with us shortly, and are you anticipating any further edits to the documents other than what is reviewed tonight?

**Cram:** Staff is not authorized to make revisions that are not authorized by the PC. Neither Sara or myself have made any changes that have not been presented to you, as we do not have the authority. I have asked Sara that the redlines discussed this evening are included in the redline version, to be held accountable to the community and to the PC, to show the changes from the 2021 document to the 2024 document. There will also be a clean version that goes to the Board on the 9th.

**Hall:** What is currently viewable on the website for the public?

**Cram:** The original 2021 Draft Master Plan, the Draft that came before the PC during the public hearing, a redline draft with changes made since June 4th, and a clean version. Once I am authorized to make additional changes to be discussed this evening, Sara and I will be working tomorrow to get those included in what's on the website and what goes into the Packet for the Town Board meeting. Becky Chown (Township Clerk) and I would like to have it on the website on Wednesday, ahead of the holiday. Worst case scenario, those new changes will be available to the public on Friday.



**Cram expresses gratitude to the Master Plan Steering Committee for their comprehensive and thoughtful work and for all the hard work put into accomplishing the goals set forth to date. Cram then goes page-by-page with the PC, correcting grammatical and punctuation issues, beginning with the acknowledgement section. Of note:** the Zoning Rewrite was paused temporarily but will be used for further zoning amendments. Acknowledges comments from Dave Murphy who added to the prologue regarding consultant work by Maner-Costerisan and Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes and the governance study group, as well as highlighted the significant improvements to Bowers Harbor Park and the Kelley Park boat launch grant funding, and requests permission from PC to add those comments to the prologue. Acknowledges the section which details local Native American history needs clarification and requests permission to amend. Other changes are largely clarification of acreage, punctuation needed, updates due to the passage of time between original draft and the present, etc. Staff and Commission members find consensus in each line item.

**Public Comment Section:**

**Andris Valdmanis, 1484 Chimney Ridge Drive:** I think we're almost there. Thank you for all the hard work. It dates back to Susie Shipman and 2019, Dave Murphy - thank you because you were at every meeting, too, weren't you? The four of us went through the early stages and here we are now. There's a lot of really good things about it and I'm happy I stomped my feet in November and happy that the process started in January and carried on. I do have some concerns I want to note, and it's not on grammar or punctuation but on content. It didn't occur to me maybe even until I got the May 30th packet with maps. On June 4th - the date of the meeting where you approved the Draft Master Plan - seven hours before that I got another map which basically took 20 commercially-appearing properties down to 2. Then I started re-reading the Master Plan that I was a part of and found items on page 71 that became very disturbing to me, because it looked like target zoning or rezoning. I'll read to you specifically from page 71 it says "the Master Plan does, however, recognize that some small scale rezonings involving only a few acres." When I looked at the map between May 30th and June 4th, a few acres disappeared and went from commercial to residential, so again I'm not the owner of that property, just the observer. On behalf of the owners I said take a look, what do you think? I asked questions. Then another map came out on June 10 and another on June 24th. I'm just a guy. You guys are professionals. It's hard for us as the general public - I mean, people are involved, they're out farming, they're working, they're running their businesses - and we just can't keep up with all of this. So, we have to trust you and I really want to do that. Basically, that was the red flag and why I had asked Randy and he agreed that we could meet just to talk about those questions and get them out there. So, yesterday - again, thank you for coordinating that, Jenn, for being there - we brought in ten property owners/residents of the Township and two other members of the original Master Plan Steering Committee - Jen Bramer and Mary Beth Milliken were there. We posed our questions and listened - it was one hour - and I'm not sure that we resolved anything but we did get some conversation going. I realize that it's very unlikely that you're going to rescind your recommendation to - well, I shouldn't assume that, I shouldn't assume anything - I just don't think that it's ready. I don't think it's complete, and I think that the things that came up because of the map changes are serious issues. There's so much good stuff in this Master Plan and it is amazing, but again, I'm telling you why I'm here still talking about this. That trail of map changes happened in a period of 24 days, four times...compare that with "rezoning a few acres", it just feels really awkward. I'm going to say one other thing and that is that I know we're really looking for money and trying to figure out how we're going to run this Township and talked about the Headlee, which again, wisely you decided

not to go forward with that at this time, about (the) charter that might happen. As related to money, I asked this question of everybody on the PC, everybody on the Town Board: how much have we spent? How much are we continuing to spend on the Master Plan? I happen to know - because I've talked to other Master Planners and other townships - and I know that it's a low of \$50,000, maybe. For a larger township you could spend a quarter of a million dollars on a Master Plan. Now that we've kind of done it twice, I'm really curious and I think it would be transparent - and it's due diligence - to reveal those numbers. So, I asked Isaiah and I asked Becky, I asked Marge, and I got a response with a FOIA request and I said "look, why should I do a FOIA request when this should be public information, public knowledge." We're all talking about not having enough money in the township, so are we spending our money wisely and have we, on this process? Again, we've spent it. We continue to spend it on consultants. When I got that FOIA form I also got a comment that the township is not required to assemble a package price. It's kind of like "we're not required to do that, but here's the form, and in case we run into overtime you'll have to pay for that as well." I felt a little put off by that so I talked to Isaiah and two days later I got two invoices: one for about \$19,000 and, I think, one for \$12,000 which totals about \$31,000 in expenses. I still feel that we've spent \$100-150,000, 250,000 and no one has argued that number against me, so I think at some point in time - it's not going to hold up anything as far as the Master Plan - but I think you need to know and I think you need to say how much was spent on this over the last five years. I think we need to know that so we can budget for the next one and I think we need to know that so we can, again, according to Armen Shanafelt at the last meeting he said - that survey is five years old, we need a new one. How much is that survey? I think we need to have those numbers revealed, and so I'm asking for that again without a FOIA request, without overtime. Please, let's talk money. Out of that whole pile, thank you for the time and carry on.

**Hornberger:** The invoices you got were from money spent on creating the Master Plan?

**Valdmanis:** Well, that's what I asked for. One invoice was for the survey, and I don't have it committed to memory, but the other invoice was, I think, for the original consultants that Randy Mielnik was working with on a regular basis. We know that Randy's salary was not reflected, even though that's his job, and it's Jenn's job as a Planner. A portion of that, whether it's 5% or 20% or 1%, I mean - if you want a full accounting of how much a Master Plan costs, you should know that and we should know that so we can budget for it next time around.

**Hornberger:** It's awfully hard when a person is salaried to figure out what percentage of that salary is...

**Valdmanis:** Well, it's an estimate and you should know that. Jenn would know how much time she's spent on this Master Plan. We can't leave that number out. We need to know that number.

**Hall:** We don't make budgeting decisions at the Planning Commission, so I understand the question but it's misdirected to this group.

**Valdmanis:** So, maybe you want to ask for your awareness?

**Hall:** Thank you.

**Alan Kostrzewa, 7447 Logan Lane:** Reads verbatim from an email sent to Randy Hall, and forwarded to all members of the Planning Commission by resident, Marty Lagina - *See Attached, in Full [Enclosure #1]*

**Dave Murphy, 6943 East Shore Road:** First of all, you wore me out. Congratulations. I'll sleep well tonight. I was asked to serve on a kind of undefined body back in late 90s, early 2000. It was (formed to) look at Master Planning and what was concluded after several years of work was just to compile the zoning ordinances and put a preface to it and call it a Master Plan. It was well-intended and a lot of people put a lot of time into it. I wasn't involved in the 2011 iteration but I know it was a big upgrade. We used that as a

springboard as we started on this work in 2019. It was over two years of work by a bunch of good people (mentions Andy, Nancy, and Susie specifically). We poured a ton of time into it. Where you're at now - this kind of hybrid that you have - I understand the certain level of discomfort that you (have with) a locked-in-time document, then you're trying to make sure it's accurate when it wasn't - that's largely the maps. Then you have the prologue. As a lot of people have pointed out: the survey is now five years old. I do urge that this move forward. I think it's your best hybrid plan to get it done. My understanding is that a few people - including Town Board candidates are looking at another survey as promptly as possible. You clearly have people who have stayed with this issue: myself, Andy, Mary Beth Milliken... I don't know if it made it in, but I had suggested that it be part of the Master Plan to say that we shouldn't lose track of the citizens who served. We should bring them back every six months, or at least annually, and get some feedback, see if there's new blood that wants to get in on it. This is a living document. You can see the adjustments you've had to make already in two years. So, thank you for getting it over the finish line. I think you're there with what's being suggested and a few other considerations, but let's get it done and set the new Town Board up. Some candidates are calling for a survey (now). We don't have to wait ten years to do another one. I think we need to recognize that the primary work was done in 2019 to 2021. Let's move it forward. Thanks.

**Dennis Arouca, 850 Ne Ah Ta Wanta Road:** Introduces himself as a member of the Purchase of Development Rights Selection Committee for the Township, and a former member of the Grand Traverse Economic Development Corporation. Offers a special statement to be read to the Planning Commission - *See Attached, in Full [Enclosure #2]*

**Dloski:** Requests that the Commission moves on if there are no further comments.

**The Planning Commission discusses specific language for the motion necessary, in order to accurately describe the resolution adoption process, with legal representatives present at the meeting. The resolution number needs to be confirmed with the Clerk's office.**

**Motion to adopt the resolution contained in the Board Packet, recommending the approval of the Master Plan to the Township Board, as amended by edits discussed by the Township Planner to Planning Commission, made by Dloski and seconded by Hornberger.**

**Roll Call Vote: Hornberger: Yes; Hall: Yes; Shipman: Yes; Dloski: Yes**

## 9. Reports and Updates

### a. Shoreline Regulations Study Group - Verbal Update

**Cram:** Study Group continues to make progress. A policy recommendation will be coming forward for single and shared ownership. The Shoreline Regulations Study Group has been meeting every other Monday since January. Discussions related to shoreline development and protection of natural resources will be a longer discussion. Guest speakers will be coming to educate us on best management practices and the importance of protecting the natural resource that we have - 42 miles of shoreline. Notes that there has been tremendous turnout from the community and it is a diverse group of participants. Public comment is always allowed at the end of the meetings. A complete update to shoreline regulations will be released in time for the next summer season.

### b. Agricultural Advisory Committee - Verbal Update

**Cram:** Interviews were originally scheduled for Monday, June 24th, but a decision was made to hold off until the Committee responsibilities were better outlined. Interviews will likely occur sometime in August.

**10. Public Comments** none

**11. Other Matters or Comments by Planning Commission Members** none

**12. Adjournment**

Planning Commission Regular Meeting  
July 2nd, 2024  
Recording Secretary: Shaina LaFond

**Dloski moved to adjourn at 9:47 p.m. with a second by Hall.**

**Motion passed by consensus.**