

**EATON COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
July 11, 2023**

Call to Order: Brian Ross, Chair of the Eaton County Planning Commission called the special meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Board of Commissioners Room, Eaton County Courthouse, 1045 Independence Blvd., Charlotte, MI.

Pledge: The Pledge of Allegiance was given by all.

Roll Call: Brian Ross, Tim Cattron Michael Hosey, Frank Holmes, Ben Tirrell, Scott Hansen, Zachary Dillinger, Bruce Porter and Lisa Lawitzke

Staff Present: Claudine Williams and Brandy Miller

Agenda Approval: A motion was made by **Commissioner Hosey** to approve the agenda for the July 11, 2023 meeting. **Commissioner Cattron** supported. Motion carried.

Minutes Approval: **Commission Lawitzke** mentioned an error in the minutes; they state the meeting was called to order by Commissioner Ross, but he was not at the meeting. She asked that the minutes be changed to reflect that the meeting was called to order by Commissioner Tirrell. A motion was made by **Commissioner Cattron** to approve the May 23, 2023 minutes with the amendment. **Commissioner Hosey** supported. Motion carried.

Master Plan Presentation: Mr. Jason Ball went through the Master Plan Survey results with the Planning Commission. He stated two-hundred, forty-three responses were received; only fifty responses were received during the last Master Plan update.

Commissioner Dillinger stated he found it interesting that some responses reflect that we have enough trails, while other reflect that we need more. **Commissioner Dillinger** asked if the survey is a self-selecting survey that should be taken with a grain of salt. Mr. Ball explained the demographics of the survey; he stated if we were to look at the only the responses from the zoning jurisdiction it would probably be more representative.

Commission Ross stated a lot of the questions ask about adorable housing and farm land preservation; he understands the answers, but wonders if people will really invest. Mr. Ball stated there are different ways to invest in agricultural land such as the PDR program; he stated the Zoning Ordinance also does a fairly good job, with the exception of land divisions. **Commissioner Ross** stated he wonders if the participants would be okay with tax dollars being used for agricultural preservation.

Commissioner Hosey stated he heard the main feedback was to keep the housing near the cities and villages. Mr. Ball stated that is how the standards are written; the county does not build the housing but sets the standards.

Commission Ross stated he would like to make sure any changes respect the rights of the property owner; a lot of the responses are indicating what the respondents want or do not want. He stated he does not want to take away the rights of the property owners. **Commissioner Ross** stated twenty years ago the Planning Commission tried to require larger parcels for a land division; many farmers showed up in opposition. **Commissioner Cattron** stated he agrees, we don't want to take away people rights, but can encourage development where it is more appropriate.

Commissioner Lawitzke stated the wording is Objective 2.2 could be better; she suggested it could say control the rate of new development. **Commissioner Hosey** stated the use of the word control could be problematic. Mr. Ball suggested using the word manage.

Mr. Ball discussed page 10.7; he asked if the objectives seem reasonable and if the priorities are right. Ms. Williams stated the State of Michigan Housing Plan is not mentioned. Mr. Ball stated the information may be included in another chapter.

Commission Dillinger asked what objective 6.1 means to the Planning Commission. Mr. Ball stated the county could assist local governments with grants.

Ms. Williams stated objective 4.1 mentions a Parks Commission, Eaton County does not have a Parks Commission. She suggested to change the language to indicate working with the Parks Department.

The Planning Commission held a brief discussion regarding the action points, specifically as they relate to water systems in Eaton County.

Ms. Ball stated the next section to be reviewed by the Planning Commission is the zoning plan, which will be included in the land use section and will come along with a future land use map. He stated following will be the transportation plan and open houses. Mr. Ball stated we planning to host four open houses to gain feedback. He stated the locations will be spread throughout the county.

Ms. Williams stated Mr. Chris Garrison is present this evening due to some internal shifting of department functions through the Eaton County Offices. She stated Mr. Garrison is the Eaton County Building Official and Director of Eaton County Department of Construction Codes & Planning and Zoning. She stated Planning and Zoning is not combined with Construction Codes. Ms. Williams stated Ms. Miller is now the Planning and Zoning Administrator and Ms. Tammy Alger, who is also present is cross training as the Planning and Zoning Assistant.

A motion was made by **Commissioner Hosey** to adjourn the meeting. **Commissioner Cattron** supported. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.