

**LOWELL CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
PUBLIC WORKSHOP  
JANUARY 23, 2006**

**PRESENT:** Batchelor, Den Houter, Clements, Sanford, Simmonds

**ABSENT:** None

**PLANNER:** Tim Johnson – MainStreet Planning

The public workshop of the Lowell Charter Township Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Simmonds at 7:00 p.m. Chairman Simmonds introduced and welcomed Leonard Den Houter, the new Planning Commission member serving as representative from the Township Board.

**PRIVATE ROAD ORDINANCE:**

Draft #4 of the proposed Private Road Ordinance was presented by Tim Johnson, along with two pages of Kent County Road Commission 'Local Road Typical Sections', for inclusion in the proposed Ordinance.

In the course of discussions the following changes and issues were addressed:

Section 4.5.2.A – Tim Johnson will include previously agreed to language indicating that private roads must be improved to the owner's far property line, not just to the owner's driveway.

Section 4.5.3.A.3(v) – Substitute 'road' for 'street'.

Tim Johnson will amend the draft Ordinance to state that, when the upgrading of a private road from a gravel surface to a bituminous surface is required, a staff review process is required rather than a new hearing before the Planning Commission.

Section 4.5.8 – precede references to 'Planned Unit Development' (PUD) with 'Open Space' (OS-).

It was agreed that a public hearing on the proposed Private Road Ordinance shall be set for the March 2006 regular meeting of the Planning Commission (March 13, 2006).

**WORK PROGRAM IDEAS FOR 2006**

At 7:45 p.m. the Planning Commission took up the required Work Program Ideas for 2006. After discussion, it was decided to make a review of the current Billboard Ordinance the first priority, with Tim Johnson to present at the February 2006 Regular Planning Commission Meeting proposed language to further limit billboards to within 200 feet of the right of way of the US-96 highway in allowed zoning districts. A public hearing on the proposed amendment to the Billboard Ordinance shall be set for the February 2006 Workshop meeting of the Planning Commission (February 27<sup>th</sup>).

Second priority was assigned to the Private Road Ordinance, which is well underway already.

Third and fourth priorities are updating the portable sign regulations in conjunction with the City of Lowell Planning Commission, and preparation of an M-21 Corridor Plan in conjunction with the City of Lowell Planning Commission, respectively.

Fifth priority was assigned to revision of the Industrial District chapter to better specify uses allowed by right and by special land use, in particular to limit the provision which allows any use permitted in the General Commercial zone to be permitted in the Industrial zone as a special land use.

It was decided that remaining possible projects would be re-assessed later in the year. Sanford offered to do some preliminary work on an update to mineral mining regulations, and Clements offered to do some preliminary work on amending Ag-1, Ag-2 and R-1 district language to reflect State of Michigan Agricultural Commission regulation of intensive farming operations and manure storage lots, and broader tourism uses of Ag-1 districts to allow activities suitable to the operation of a farm on the land. Batchelor suggested that Tim Johnson might at a future date provide proposed regulations applicable to landscaping and parking.

#### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**

Chairman Simmonds opened the workshop to Commissioner comments at 8:23 p.m.

Simmonds reminded the Planning Commission of four upcoming annual Special Use Permit reviews, and indicated that he would arrange for notice to the involved persons. Batchelor suggested specific requirements be included in the notices so those appearing would know what the Planning Commission was looking for from them at the annual review.

Batchelor provided a copy of the January 12, 2006 Minutes of the Bowne Township Planning Commission meeting at which they discussed their Master Planning.

Batchelor further noted a recent court decision on cell towers, indicating that disapproval cannot be based solely on appearances of the tower. Given the co-location requirements in our Ordinance, this case did not seem to raise any current issues for our township.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT/OTHER:**

The meeting was opened to public comment at 8:30 pm.

Paula Blum inquired about use of the phrase 'private street system' in the Private Road Ordinance. It was decided that this might be replaced with the phrase 'connected private streets'.

Carlton Blough discussed 79 acres of land on Segwun Avenue for sale, and restrictions on the number of occupied homes in an Ag-1 district.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Clements moved to adjourn. Seconded by Batchelor. All in favor and the workshop meeting of the Lowell Charter Township Planning Commission was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Submitted \_\_\_\_\_ Secretary  
Timothy Clements