

Watertown Township
Planning commission
Special Meeting
June 16, 2016

Members Present: Dale Schoen, Ed Budzinski, , Mark Batkie, Gary Fetting, William Dixon and Sheila Coats, also present Zoning Administrator, Richard Honaman.

Members Absent: Al Stoutenburg

Guests: Robert Eggers of Spicer Group

Meeting called to order at 6:02 pm by Gary Fetting, Vice Chairman. All present rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda: No additions or corrections to agenda.

Minutes: Motion to approve minutes of last meeting dated May 19, 2016 by William Dixon, support by Sheila Coats, motion carried.

Business before the Planning Commission – Robert Eggers from the Spicer Group working on revising our Master Plan. Mr Eggers stated we would need 4 meetings to complete. He presented us with a summary in a more professional format.

1. How long lived in Watertown Township, majority over 21 years.
2. Occupations: mostly farmers.
3. Many retired.
4. 67% unchanged in future.
5. Why do they live in Township – small community atmosphere and family.
6. Rate quality of life in Township – majority Okay to excellent.
7. Rate Services – mostly 1's and 2's but some 3's.
8. Improvements to Township - Internet was #1, 2nd blacktop roads, 3rd bikepath/walkway.
9. Own a computer – 81.5%
10. 73.9% did not know we had a website!
11. Social media – 50/50

Document from existing Master Plan and have a few questions. Goals and objectives are basically good. In 1980's and 1990's concern about subdivisions taking up a lot of farmland. Goal under Growth Management – not hard to keep in. Mark stated it is hard to control.

Community Character and Environment: Small commercial and rural character also in survey. Farmland: 80% acreage is in agricultural use.

County is working on GIS mapping, probability more now than previously. Actively encourage continuation of local farming operations and protection of farmland resources. Gary asked if that would encourage wind turbine development. Robert Eggers thinks we should remove #7.

Residential Development: Potential to be significant land use change in the coming years, 2 points; #5 discourage strip development along frontage. Bill Dixon said 150 homes for sale in school district, and have only sold 30.

Roads: Maintain transportation network, objective 3: Portion cannot do, objective 5: roads heavy residential – i.e., Cooper Road

Discussion of Right to Farm issues: Gary Fetting thinks we should make it less of a negative statement. Manure haulers are the issue. 1000 mailboxes should not have to pave 14 miles of road for the next 10 years because of 5 people, stated Bill Dixon.

Commercial & Industrial Development: Add vacant land prior to development. We supply sewer in township, but not water. Rich stated relationship between City and Township is strained. Maintain our sovereignty, Bill stated.

Regional Coordination: Vet hospital has added to tax base and has sewer, but has their own well.

Next meeting – Future Land Use Map, and plans for growth in the future, Robert Eggers will have a map and will be able to mark it up with future plans. September 15, 2016 is next scheduled meeting at 6:00 pm. Robert asked whether board approved Recreation Plan. Rich stated will put to a vote at the next Board Meeting. DNR Passport, Trust Fund Grant Land and Water Transportation Funds; only way to get funds is to have Recreation Plan in the Master Plan.

Motion to adjourn by William Dixon, support by Dale Schoen, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Sheila Coats

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