

HOLLAND CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Special Meeting (via video conference)
June 16, 2020

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Marion Hoeve at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Marion Hoeve, Vice-Chairman/Secretary Jack Vander Meulen, Members Dennis Gebben, Randy Kortering, Norm Nykamp (joined meeting at 7:06 pm), Miska Rynsburger, and Ed Zylstra. Also present were Community Development Director John Said, Assistant Community Development Director Corey Broersma, Comprehensive Plan Consultants Christopher Khorey (McKenna), Danielle Bouchard (McKenna), Har Ye Kan (HYK Consulting), and Nick Rolinski (Main Street Studios)

Absent: None

Chairman Hoeve opened the Meeting by asking Staff and the consultant team to provide an introduction. The consultant team introduced themselves and provided an introduction to the draft Comprehensive Plan document and its structure. Mr. Khorey described the formatting, and the Commission asked to have one of the “Process” summarized into no more than 1-2 pages for the introduction and have the full section in the introduction area moved to the back of the document.

Mr. Khorey then provided some clarifications of language in the Plan. He specified that spending for public investment as noted in the Plan would be appropriate at such time that private investment and the resulting increased tax base allowed for it. Commissioners asked him to ensure that’s detailed in the document, and to keep descriptions of maintenance responsibility simple to avoid repetition.

Mr. Khorey then went on to review the draft document in more detail. Commissioners asked about use of the existing Plan and the new Plan once it’s approved; Staff responded that the existing Plan is used for consideration of rezoning requests, and was also a driving component of the 2018 Zoning Ordinance update. Staff further noted that the new Plan, in addition to assuming the role of the old Plan for rezoning reviews, will have more actionable language in it, and that it is probably a good idea to create a task force of Township officials and staff to help guide implementation steps from the new Plan, including overall items and the Subarea Plan steps.

Mr. Khorey then summarized the draft Future Land Use Plan (FLU) Map. He was asked about percentage changes in the types of land use designations; he responded that overall numbers will likely not change much. Agriculture, mixed-use, and industrial designation areas will increase somewhat, considering changes such as the land owner’s request for an Agricultural designation for the properties north of the Zeeland high schools. Single-family and community commercial areas will be slightly reduced. It was also recommended that a 1 or 2 page “fact sheet” with these components be provided as a Summary, both at the beginning of the Plan and as a separate document in the website during the comment period.

Staff then noted the request from a large landowner (Mr. John Jansen) concerning his request to have those parcels north of the Zeeland East and Zeeland West high school campus designated as agricultural. The Commission, Staff, and the consultants then discussed this matter, and ultimately the Commission

agreed to have these parcels shown as agricultural for continuity. The landowner or other future parties can always request an amendment should proposed land uses change.

Commissioners then discussed the Plan's language addressing housing, including 'affordable' or 'attainable' housing. Mr. Khorey noted that while the Plan does not focus on particular economics, it does include recommendations for a variety of housing types, such as multi-family, attached single-family, and detached single-family, which will help address the economic aspect.

Mr. Khorey then discussed the proposed land use categories, including the mixed-use category which does not yet have a zoning district attached to it. Mixed-use definitions were reviewed, as were the merits of new zoning districts vis-à-vis overlay districts.

Commissioners also asked that the Plan clarify the following:

- Eliminate the term 'Porches' and use 'Patios' in regards to commercial properties
- 'High quality' materials (change to address durability)
- Mixed-use language (identify residential and other uses, and only include industrial on a limited basis if done at appropriate scale and to address performance issues – such as parking)

Mr. Khorey next discussed the Transportation section of the Plan with the Commission. Commissioners asked for some minor changes, including adding 112th to the list of County Roads, and to adjust Quincy and New Holland to say "Street" not "Avenue". Commission, Staff, and the consultant next reviewed roundabouts, and concluded that it is appropriate to have the Plan retain them as a recommended traffic management improvement, as they will likely become more prevalent in the future. Rideshare options were also reviewed, as were possible Greenly Drive extensions, with the direction given that Greenly extension west of John F. Donnelly Drive should be eliminated, while Greenly extension east from US-31 to Beeline should remain.

The Commission then asked about the Gateway locations designated in the Plan, with a concern expressed about how they were more 'interior' to the Township than the boundaries. It was determined to leave the text as proposed given development potential and traffic volumes. The term for M21/Bus. I-196 was also reviewed, with the Commission asking the consultant to confirm the best name with MDOT.

Commissioners also asked if electric vehicles could be referenced in the Plan. One idea was to specify that future gas stations could be mandated to also provide electric charging facilities.

Bike paths were reviewed next, with some skepticism as to whether private property owners would actually 'partner' with the Township. A note will be added about the 144th Ave. bike path to note the Township cooperating with Park Twp. on the west side of 144th. The proposed natural beauty corridor was discussed, as was overall bike path funding. Commissioner Nykamp noted that the Township's current millage will not cover maintenance for all the current paths, which may result in a request for a millage increase.

Mr. Khorey presented the Plan Goals and Objectives to the Commission, which led to discussion of neighborhoods, cul-de-sacs, and connectivity between areas. While some Commissioners expressed support for cul-de-sacs, ultimately a consensus of the Commission noted that connectivity is an important component for neighborhood design, and that going forward this matter and the other aspects of the Plan will help equip the Commission in their reviews of future projects.

The Commission and the consultant next discussed the Plan's Sustainability goals. Comments were made about including a reference to the three P's (planet, people, profit) and native plantings, including those that assist with water absorption. Tree planting in Road Commission rights-of-way was then reviewed, and Staff noted that the Road Commission saw a draft of the Plan and has not objected to the planting objectives for right-of-way areas. The Commission recommended that Staff also send the draft Plan to the Water Resource Commissioner for review, including stormwater management design and recommendations.

The following additional items were noted in the Goals and Objectives section:

- Questions arose concerning the definition of "sufficient" in the Parks-Trails-Open Space recommendations (#4), with a recommendation to use more specific language for the guidelines overall.
- In the Economic Development recommendations, comments arose over how to say no to new retail, even in light of the vacant big box retail spaces. It was noted that the retail market continues to shrink, and that the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated that somewhat. The FLU Plan Map also reflects a slightly smaller retail area in an effort to have retail areas accurately correspond to the market area (i.e. "right-sizing").
- In discussion of the Infrastructure area, it was confirmed that the Township contributes funding to public road upkeep.
- In the Development Design section, questions arose concerning possible underutilized parking lots and where they are located. Har Ye Kan replied that the consultants completed analysis of several of the big box stores, which have an oversupply of parking, which could lead to opportunities as promoted in the Plan.

Mr. Khorey then discussed the schedule for the remaining steps of the Comprehensive Plan, including public comment period. It was determined by the Commission to schedule an additional Special Meeting on Wed. June 24. This will allow their review to continue and conclude prior to the official public comment period.

Public Comment: Meika Weiss of the group Pedal Holland provided some brief comments. She appreciated the Commission's support of the Plan process, and she likes the Township's Plan efforts. She also asked that the Township work with the OCRC to establish a 3-lane cross-section of the 8th Street corridor when it is repaved, with inclusion of bicycle lanes, and that funding sources may be available to assist.

Meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John D. Said, Community Development Director