

**Minutes**

Cascade Charter Township  
Planning Commission  
Monday January 3, 2022  
7:00 P.M.  
2870 Jacksmith Ave SE

- ARTICLE 1.** Chairman Rissi called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.  
Members Present: Noordhoek, Moxley, Deering, Rissi, Rapin, Noordyke and Korstange and Meurlin  
Members Absent:  
Others Present: Interim Planning Director Brian Hilbrands and those listed on the sign-in sheet
- ARTICLE 2. Pledge of Allegiance**
- ARTICLE 3. Approve the current Agenda**  
**Motion was made by Member Noordyke to approve the current Agenda. Supported by Member Rapin. Motion carried 6 to 0.**
- ARTICLE 4. Disclose any Conflicts of Interest**  
There weren't any conflicts of interest.
- ARTICLE 5. Approve the Minutes of the December 6, 2021 Meeting**  
**Motion was made by Member Noordyke to approve the December 6, 2021 meeting minutes as written. Supported by Member Deering. Motion carried 8 to 0.**
- ARTICLE 6. Approve the Minutes of the December 14, 2021 Special Meeting**  
Member Deering pointed out a typographical error where 'it' needed to be changed to 'if' on page eight, half way down the page, in the sentence that begins "Korstange asked it".  
**Motion was made by Member Noordyke to approve the December 14, 2021 meeting minutes with Member Deering's typographical change. Supported by Member Rapin. Motion carried 8 to 0.**
- ARTICLE 7. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak on non-agenda items.**  
There was no one who wished to speak to non-agenda items.
- ARTICLE 8. Election of Officers**  
Chair Rissi explained that the positions to be filled were Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, the Planning Commission Representative to the ZBA, and the Planning Commission Representative to the Village Design Review Board. The Planning Commission has a term limit of two consecutive years for the officer positions and this was the end of Chair Rissi's two years. He said that the positions will often shift when

the Chair's term ends and the Vicechair will move up to Chairperson and the Secretary up to Vicechair, but this year was a bit different as both the Vice Chair and Secretary had only been in the position for part of a year due to the previous members in their positions resigning from the commission. Trustee Noordhoek is the one member who cannot serve in these positions as he is on the Board of Directors.

**Motion was made by Member Meurlin to appoint Member Noordyke as Planning Commission Chair, Member Moxley as Vice Chairman, and for Member Deering to continue as Secretary.** He put forth Member Moxley as Vice Chairman because he is one of the more tenured members of the Planning Commission and Member Deering to continue in the Secretary position as she is quite new to it. All three members accepted the nominations. **Supported by Member Rapin. Motion carried 8 to 0.**

**Motion was made by Member Noordyke to appoint Chair Rissi as the Planning Commission Representative to the Village Design Review Board. Supported by Member Meurlin. Motion carried 8 to 0.**

Member Moxley wished to continue on the ZBA as he is currently Vice Chairman of the ZBA and has chaired some meetings in the last year. Member Meurlin asked if members were allowed to hold executive positions on both the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals and Chair Rissi and Member Noordyke said that the ordinance doesn't preclude it.

**Motion was made by Member Meurlin to appoint Member Moxley as the Planning Commission Representative to the ZBA. Supported by Member Deering. Motion carried 8 to 0.**

#### **ARTICLE 9. 2021 Planning Commission Report**

Chair Rissi read aloud his 2021 Planning Commission report. In previous years, the Community Development report was provided but earlier in year Member Meurlin pointed out that it was supposed to be the Planning Commission's report and was the responsibility of the Planning Commission Chairperson.

Member Meurlin suggested some changes to Chair Rissi's report. He suggested changing the word 'contributions' near the end of the report to 'contributions of time and talent'. 'Various process' was changed to 'various processes' in the second paragraph, and in the fourth line in the long paragraph in the middle, 'improve process' was changed to 'improve processes'.

Member Meurlin also asked the Planning Commission if they thought there was a need to add a section about their belief that oversight and enforcement of development need to be increased, in reference to the Roundhill report. Chair Rissi said that he did not want to get that descriptive with this report. Member Meurlin said that a meeting held discussing the Planning Commission's role in the strategic plan also needed to be added into the account of meetings and accomplishments of the Planning Commission.

Member Moxley thanked Chair Rissi for his leadership over the last two years.

Chair Rissi also included a document in this section of the packet to assist new members and executives of the Planning Commission with tips and processes when they first join. He hopes this becomes a tradition for outgoing executive members.

**ARTICLE 10. Rules of Conduct**

Interim Planning Director Hilbrands said that this document is generally included at the first meeting of each year so that returning members can brush up on the rules and new members can learn them. He said that members should pay specific attention to the ex parte communications section and the article from the MSU Extension that state any discourse pertaining to cases should take place only in the public sphere, at the meetings.

Member Meurlin brought up item 'c' of 2, saying it should say, "if a Planning Commission member is a close friend" instead of 'if the Planning Commission is a close friend'. Chair Rissi pointed out that it says 'member' on items a, b, and d but not on c.

Amendment of the ex parte rules and rules of conduct was also brought up by Member Meurlin. He stated that the rule currently refers to a conflict of interest with regard to a member of the Planning Commission and does not address relationships between family of Planning Commission members and cases that they may have a conflict of interest to.

Member Korstange clarified with Interim Planning Director Hilbrands that the Rules of Conduct were in the packet not to be amended, but instead just as a reference document and reminder to the Planning Commission members the rules and procedures at the beginning of the new year. He said that the commission can work on amending the Rules of Conduct later if that is something they decide to do in the future.

**ARTICLE 11. Planning Principles**

This document was provided by Interim Planning Director Hilbrands as an informational reference that reminds Planning Commission members of their purpose and standards.

**ARTICLE 12. 2022 Calendar**

This calendar is approved by the Board of Directors and lists all of the regularly scheduled board, commission, and committee meetings for the 2022 year. It was provided at this meeting for Planning Commission member reference.

**ARTICLE 13. Old Business**

**Review Revisions to the Planning Commission Bylaws:** Interim Planning Director Hilbrands typed up the changes made at the previous Planning Commission meeting and provided it at this meeting so the members could look it over to verify that everything matched the changes discussed.

Member Deering brought up the date with the signature at the end of the document still reading as 2021 while the title of the document had been updated to 2022.

Member Meurlin brought up 5G on page eight of the bylaws as he did not agree with how it read; this section had been one that inspired discussion at the previous meeting concerning the bylaws. This says, “The Planning Commission will generally not respond to public comment but reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to make inquiries, correct factual errors, and provide other information it deems appropriate. Where appropriate, the Planning Commission will make a good faith effort to respond to questions in a timely manner, at its discretion.” He saw this as a way for the Planning Commission to excuse not answering questions and providing the citizens with the information they requested.

Member Korstange understood the wording they had decided on at the previous meeting differently and thought everything was struck from that paragraph. 5G written as, “Where appropriate, the Planning Commission will make a good faith effort to respond to questions in a timely manner, at its discretion.” She had all of the original text in that section struck, including its first three sentences, and only the quoted sentence remaining. This turned the “will not generally respond” into a positive rather than a negative.

Member Rapin thought that removal of the first sentence made the scope of topic too broad; he requested a qualifier be added that states this is in reference specifically to public comment.

Interim Planning Director Hilbrands suggested keeping the first sentence and striking “the Planning Commission generally will not respond to public comment.” This would change the text to, “The Planning Commission reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to make inquiries, correct factual errors, and provide other information it deems appropriate. Where appropriate, the Planning Commission will make a good faith effort to respond to questions in a timely manner, at its discretion.” This was accepted by the Planning Commission.

#### **ARTICLE 14. Any Other Business**

**December 6th additional minute amendments:** Member Meurlin pointed out that in the second line of the second paragraph on page 11 that starts with “Member Rapin” and says “are a separate document” has “separate” spelled incorrectly.

Member Deering said that on page five, the second line from the end of the second paragraph said, “Member Korstange recommended” and it should say, “Member Deering recommended”. She also suggested an apostrophe in the following paragraph could be removed but it was later determined that that apostrophe was designating a portion of text that was quoted and shouldn’t be removed.

**December 14th additional minute amendments:** There were questions as to if the numbering was correct in page five, paragraph two, of the minutes but it was later determined that the reason the order was confusing was because the document was

condensed from “12 recommendations” to “8 numbers”. A section stating that the change occurred was then added to the December 14th meeting minutes.

Member Rapin motioned to accept these changes to the December 6 and December 14 meeting minutes. Supported by Member Korstange. Motion carried.

**APA Classes:** Member Rapin brought up a class he took through the APA that he found very useful when starting on the Planning Commission, asking if Cascade Township is still a member of the organization and if that was a class other Planning Commission members would be interested in. Interim Planning Commission Director Hilbrands said that he believes they are still part of the APA as well as the Michigan Association of Planning and he can work on sharing these types of opportunities with Planning Commission members.

**Revised Roundhill Recommendations:** The Township Board did not want to hear the recommendations at the December 15 meeting as they wanted to read and digest them before they were presented. This gave Chair Rissi and Member Moxley time to meet with Township Manager Swayze and discuss the recommendations and get his opinion. Member Moxley shared what they intend to be a final draft of the preliminary recommendations stemming from the investigation of the Roundhill project.

Member Moxley read recommendation number four and explained that Manager Swayze had requested they include the text from the PUD Ordinance in the recommendations at this point as the PUD Ordinance is law, which the Planning Commission can work to amend, but the problem that needs to be addressed here is unauthorized changes to the approved site plan by staff. Planning Commission members had a lengthy discussion about what should be considered minor changes but it was determined that this was not a discussion on making a recommendation to change the PUD Ordinance, and was summarized to adding, “A review of the zoning ordinance definition of ‘minor’ is needed.”

Member Meurlin recommended changing the word ‘recorded’ to ‘documented and retained’ as ‘recorded’ has a legal definition. Member Rapin noticed that section four also limits the change in size to “5000 sq ft or 5%”, adding “whichever is smaller” after it, as this is what it says in the zoning ordinance.

Manager Swayze requested the addition of a recommendation number nine, in the meeting with Member Moxley and Chair Rissi, that discussed implementation of the recommendations. Member Moxley asked Manager Swayze what he wanted for this section and he responded as follows: “Implementation Plan: Selected members of the planning commission and township staff (including the Manager, Planning Director, and other staff members as needed) should work cooperatively to establish an implementation plan for the recommendations and provide the plan to the Township Board, on or before June 30th, 2022 for their consideration.”

Member Meurlin pointed out that ‘PUD Ordinances and Master Deeds’ (plural) must be recorded, as should Stormwater Maintenance Agreements. Member Rapin shared concern with listing all documents they believe should be recorded as that would

appear to be an exhaustive list. Chair Rissi stated that he believes this is where the committee working on the implementation plan comes in as they will be able to focus on these types of changes and what type of documents need to be included. Member Korstange liked the idea of leaving it broad so that any required documents would be encompassed. The suggestion the commission came to was the potential addition of wording saying, “All of the required documents, such as PUD ordinances, master deeds, and stormwater maintenance plans”. Member Meurlin wanted to add clearcutting of trees on property as an activity needing approval and Chair Rissi recommended leaving detailed changes to the focus committee. Chair Rissi said that he and Member Moxley would present this to the board and Trustee Noordhoek would be there as a member of the Township Board but would also be able to answer questions.

**PUD Maps:** Member Moxley brought in the PUD map that former Community Development Director Peterson had given him when he joined the Planning Commission. Many members have been interested in having a copy of this map and Member Moxley asked Manager Swayze if this would be something the township would be willing to purchase for all of the Planning Commission members and he said that it would. The commission decided they wanted nine, laminated, 30x42 in copies that can be rolled up for storage. Interim Planning Director Hilbrands said that he would get the most updated version of the plan from Fishbeck to make the copies from.

**2022 Meeting Topics:** Member Noordyke requested that if members have anything they’d like added to the agendas, outside of the typical cases, send him a message and he will get it added as he wants all Planning Commission members to feel like their voice is being heard.

Member Korstange also suggested, prior to the meeting, emailing staff any questions they have that they know they will want answered during the meeting so that staff have time to look up information or get an answer to the question. Those questions will need to be asked only of Interim Planning Director Hilbrands and not have any other Planning Commission members copied on them to avoid ex parte communication.

**Planning Commission Member Email Addresses:** Member Deering asked if there was an update on Planning Commission members getting township email addresses. Interim Planning Director Hilbrands said that he had not heard anything from Manager Swayze since Member Noordyke emailed him last. Member Noordyke stated that he had many emails with Manager Swayze about this and the township is moving to the cloud, which is a more complicated process. He said it is a function of the quantity of Office 365 licenses the township has and they are working towards getting Planning Commission members email addresses once the new system is in place.

**Thank You:** Member Meurlin expressed his thanks to Chair Rissi for his service as Chair over the last year.

## **ARTICLE 15. Adjournment**

**Motion was made by Chair Rissi to adjourn. Supported by Members Deering. Motion carried 8 to 0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Diedre Deering, Secretary