

CLINTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

REPORT OF MEETING

AUGUST 11, 2016

PRESENT: Kirkanne Moseley, Chairperson
Ron DiBartolomeo, Vice-Chairperson
Denise C. Trombley, Secretary
George Brumbaugh
Stephen Charron
Fred Gibson (arrived at 6:35 p.m.)
Daniel Spatafora
Joie West

ABSENT: Peter Henderson (Excused)

STAFF: Carlo Santia, Director
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Moseley called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Mr. DiBartolomeo, supported by Mr. Spatafora, to approve the agenda as submitted. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – DiBartolomeo, Spatafora, Brumbaugh, Charron, Moseley, West, Trombley. Nays – None. Absent – Gibson, Henderson. Motion carried.

**PROPOSED NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PLAN IN CONJUNCTION
WITH THE VILLAGE ROAD PUBLIC HOUSING PROPERTY
- PRESENTATION BY MS. EBONI NUGIN, CLINTON TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION (REPRESENTED BY MS. SARAH TRAXLER,
AICP, McKENNA ASSOCIATES)**

Ms. Trombley indicated there was no correspondence to be read into the record.

Ms. Eboni Nugin, Director of the Clinton Township Housing Commission, introduced Ms. Sarah Traxler and Mr. Chris Khoury, of McKenna Associates, who will be making a presentation on a proposed Neighborhood Revitalization Plan.

Ms. Sarah Traxler explained that McKenna is a community planning and design firm and works with dozens of local units of government. They assist in preparing Master Plans for Future Land Use, neighborhood plans, zoning, landscape architecture, ordinances and other services. She explained that they attended the Township Board meeting this past Monday evening and provided them with the same information, and the Board members were eager to see the progress on this plan. She stated that the creation of this plan was triggered by the Clinton Township Housing Authority, who is their client. The Housing Commission is proposing to redevelop the Village Road property, and in doing so, they want to apply for low-income tax credits. Part of that application process involves having a Neighborhood Revitalization Plan in place to gain additional points in the scoring system. She informed that she worked on a similar plan for the Bay City area. She explained one reason the State likes to see a plan in place is that they focus their grant and loan efforts on communities and properties that have a “strong sense of place” and already have private investment going on in the area, and that the community is paying attention to the area around the housing development. She added that in the past, she understood that low-income tax credits were not targeted towards areas and neighborhoods that had a strong coordinated approach to neighborhood development, but they are now geared toward coordinated place making, and look at factors such as “walkability” and not having to use motorized transportation to get to local businesses and services. She clarified this is not a plan to look at parcel-by-parcel, but they will be “painting broad strokes”.

Ms. Traxler reviewed a handout she prepared and reviewed some of the facts about the Neighborhood Revitalization Plan they are preparing:

- Useful for the improvement of the Clinton Village redevelopment
- Helpful to the Township
- A plan that can guide development in a specific area
- A document that will outline existing conditions for the area
- Provide a long-range vision on how the area will develop.

She stated it is not an amendment to the Master Plan, although it could be considered to be incorporated into the Township's Master Plan for Future Land Use at such time as it is updated. She added that this is not to be used in order to be influential over the site plan, and it is not considered a specific site development plan.

Mr. Chris Khoury explained how they determined the study area, starting with Clinton Village and looking at the surrounding neighborhood. The boundary to the east is I-94, where the Township boundary exists. To the west, the neighborhood ends at Gratiot, which is a wide boulevard. He explained they looked at incorporating the industrial area on the north side of 15 Mile Road but opted to stop at 15 Mile Road instead because this is mainly a residential plan. To the south, the old incinerator site was a natural boundary, but there is some housing to the south of that on Quinn Road, so they ended up with a curved boundary for their study area. He indicated they included the incinerator site because it can either be an area for redevelopment, or it may need to be cleaned up, but either way it should be addressed in the plan. He advised there are also some secondary areas outside of the boundaries that need to be considered as having impact on the study area. These areas include commercial developments such as Target and the composting facility. Mr. Khoury explained the feedback they received on July 21st when they met with four focus groups from this area, including Clinton Village residents, the Quinn Road neighborhood organization, neighbors living closer to the 15 Mile/Gratiot area, and business owners and institution stakeholder, including some of the Township Trustees. Some of the input that came out of those focus groups included:

- Feeling that there has been a recent reduction of crime in the 15 Mile/Gratiot area, and they give credit to the Police Department and the Housing Commission, the fact that the movie theater recently changed ownership, as well as the additional lighting along Gratiot Avenue.
- Prince Drewry Park was indicated as an asset but only by those living close to it.
- Improvements in their housing developments.
- Would like to see more infill development on the vacant land, especially more single-family development.
- Concern about the bus stop on 15 Mile being very muddy
- Concern over distances to walk to get to some of the businesses on Gratiot. Car ownership in Clinton Village is not high, so they would like more public transportation.

Mr. Khoury stated they looked at some ideas of what the neighborhood could look like, and gained input from the residents. They also asked the residents to draw on a map the boundaries of their "neighborhood" as they perceive them. He noted that some of them only drew a line around their specific complex or street rather than encompassing a larger area. They talked about what they felt needed to be fixed, what they would like to keep, and what they aspired for their area. He informed that they will be holding an open house on August 24th, 2016 from 6 to 8 p.m. at Parker Elementary School.

Mr. Spatafora inquired as to whether they have taken the proposed Rapid Transit Plan, which is scheduled to be on the ballot this November, into consideration for this plan.

Mr. Khoury replied it is important to the future of this neighborhood, and that plan also upgrades the route along 15 Mile Road, but he stated they will not know the outcome of the ballot issue in time to submit this Neighborhood Revitalization Plan.

Ms. Traxler stated she just kicked off a Master Plan for Future Land Use process in Eastpointe, and the same question arose. They considered using the medium rather than either extreme, so that is the way they handled it.

Mr. Charron inquired as to how the implementation of this plan will be funded.

Ms. Traxler replied that, just like any plan that the Township undertakes, it will be up to the Township to determine as to whether the improvements will be taken out of their capital improvement fund. She added they always include other stakeholders that are important for implementation, and she cited that for the example of the roads, the County's Department of Roads would be involved. They lay out a program for partners in the project and also include whether it is a short-term, medium-term or long-term project.

Mr. Khoury explained that since this is a land use plan, over time it is to give direction to private development.

Mr. DiBartolomeo inquired as to whether there is help with grants in this area.

Ms. Traxler replied the community receives Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding and that could be included to implement a project.

Mr. Santia informed that last year, the Township spent \$200,000 of CDBG funds on sidewalks in the area out of the \$515,000 that was received. He stated the Township does not get as much money as they need, and informed that the Board would have to approve any application of grants for these projects.

Mr. DiBartolomeo inquired as to whether they look at the infrastructure and what needs to be replaced.

Mr. Khoury replied they take into account the infrastructure when they make their land use recommendations. He added it will impact their recommendations but it is not an infrastructure study.

Mr. Spatafora inquired as to whether municipalities have other sources of grants for which they can apply for these purposes.

Mr. Santia replied that occasionally there are grants, but there is nothing available to the Township at this time. They have about \$200,000 in HOME funds through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). He noted that they have a consortium with the County and a few other communities. He explained that any road funding would have to go through the Macomb County Department of Roads, and there are major hurdles to provide infrastructure on the southeast corner of Gratiot. He stated there is a huge drain in that location, and they would have to look at mitigation efforts in the wetlands. He replied to further inquiry that the HOME funds already have uses for them.

Mr. Spatafora inquired as to whether municipalities can pursue grant opportunities from the private sector.

Mr. Santia replied that is a possibility, and the Township has marketing efforts of their own. He cited the example of the extensive marketing they have done on the incinerator property, although there have been some ownership issues with it, because even though it belongs to the Township, the Township does not have full control of it.

Ms. Traxler stated they have found that the State and various foundations have aligned their grant-making efforts to central cities with traditional downtowns as well as cities that are showing extreme distress. She added that is the same case with private foundations. She felt the sad situation is that a lot of their clients do have areas that could benefit from these external foundation sources but they have to continue to try to make their case through these applications, but without success. She hoped that eventually the bad areas will be done and then the field will open up for communities like Clinton Township.

Mr. Spatafora commented it appears when the private sector comes in with site development plans, it will be at that time the Township Board can approve such developments within that geographical revitalization area.

Ms. West stated this has been close to her heart since the beginning, and she has served on the Housing Commission for twelve years. They have had a couple of other proposals in the past where they would tear down and build new. She explained the RAD grant there is the ability to branch out if they want, which is why she would love to have the Planning Commissioners attend the open house, because it may be something they could do in two years or further down the road. She explained the first phase of this plan will be the development of a two-story senior building. It was originally going to be three stories, but due to some of the tax credits, it will be two stories. It will have 36 to 44 units, and they will be moving the people who are in the senior area into that building. All of the others who get a Section 8 will end up moving somewhere else, and she added that she and Ms. Nugin will be working closely together to make sure the families with children are able to stay in the Clintondale School District. She pointed out

that the Clintondale district is suffering, and removing 75 students will not help. Ms. West stated that they recently rezoned the property from RML Multiple-Family Residential (Low-Density) to RMH Multiple-Family Residential (High-Density) in order to be able to construct all of the units on the footprint of Village Road. She stated she would love to see something that would allow them to branch out and building something that can be rental in another area. She has heard other Board members say there are already a lot of rentals in that area, but she felt people need to realize that when renting from the Housing Commission, those renters are under tight scrutiny, having had to complete criminal background checks. They can be kicked out at any time if they get into trouble with the law. She felt when they look at “rental”, they have to get away from that word and look at the scrutiny that would be a positive thing. She reiterated this phase is strictly for the senior housing, and they need this plan approved to get the tax credits to pay for it, and possibly look to expand in the future. She commended Eric Gold and Bob Beale, of RAD, who have been integral in a lot of these redevelopments. She cited the former Herman Gray development, now Herman Gardens in the Joy Road/Southfield area was redeveloped by this group and it is a beautiful development. She also noted that this group refurbished Oxford Square and Cordova Courts in Clinton Township. Ms. West stated she wants to make sure the Quinn Road community is behind this, and there has been some friction and discord, but she emphasized that the goal is to make the entire area far better than it is currently.

Ms. Traxler explained she included a proposed schedule, noting that this is the Planning Commission Introduction. The Community Open House will be held on August 24th, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at Parker Elementary. They will then be coming back to the Planning Commission with a draft plan on September 8th, 2016 and hope the Planning Commission will make recommendation to the Township Board for approval. She urged the Planning Commissioners to research their plan for “Maplewood Apartments” in Bay City if they are interested. Ms. Traxler assured the plans will be turned in to the Planning Department early enough for the Commissioners to have a chance to review them in their agenda packages before the meeting. She stated that they are scheduled to go back to the Township Board on September 19th, 2016 with the Planning Commission’s recommendation.

Motion by Ms. West, supported by Mr. Spatafora, to receive and file the presentation from McKenna Associates, with regard to the proposed Neighborhood Revitalization Plan. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – West, Spatafora, Brumbaugh, Charron, DiBartolomeo, Gibson, Moseley, Trombley. Nays – None. Absent – Henderson. Motion carried.

REPORT OF MEETING

-- APPROVAL OF THE JULY 28TH, 2016 REPORT

Motion by Mr. Spatafora, supported by Ms. West, to approve the report of the July 28th, 2016 Planning Commission Meeting as submitted. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Spatafora, West, Brumbaugh, Charron, DiBartolomeo, Gibson, Moseley, Trombley. Nays – None. Absent – Henderson. Motion carried.

PLANNING COMMISSION SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

-- MEETING SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, AUGUST 25TH, 2016

Mr. Santia confirmed that there will be a meeting on August 25th, 2016, to consider a site development plan for Clinton Village Senior Housing (Phases I and II), and a site development plan with special land use for a company selling new and used tires at a location on Groesbeck, south of Metropolitan Parkway.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Ms. West, supported by Mr. Gibson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise C. Trombley

Denise C. Trombley, Secretary
CLINTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

ces:08/15/16

ces:08/16/16

Approved 08/25/16