

**Elk Rapids Township Planning Commission Meeting
Meeting Minutes – March 21, 2023**

The meeting of the Elk Rapids Township Planning Commission was called to order by Chairperson Shen Smith at 1:28 PM at the Government Center, 315 Bridge Street, Elk Rapids, MI 49629.

Present: Shen Smith, Emile Sabty, Jim Lundy, Zach Amos, and Tom Crandall.

(Quorum Established)

Absent: Matt Soper and Gary Pepler.

Also Present: Larry Nix, Zoning Administrator and William Derman, Township Attorney.

Audience: Mary Marzolo and Julie Yanch – Cherry Suite Assisted Living.

Approval of Agenda: The March 21, 2023 Agenda was unanimously approved.

Public Comments: Mary Marzolo, owner of Cherry Suite Assisted Living located at 10774 US-31 S in Elk Rapids Township presented a proposal to the Planning Commission to change her current assisted living facility into three rental units. After much discussion, the Planning Commission suggested that Zoning Administrator Larry Nix review and evaluate this proposal and report back to the Commission at the next Planning Commission Meeting scheduled for April 18 – 1:30 PM with a list of pros and cons surrounding this request.

Approval of Minutes: **Motion to approve the November 14, 2022 meeting minutes.**
MOTION/S: Amos/Lundy **Motion Carried.**

Master Plan Process – The primary purpose of this Quarterly Meeting is for the Elk Rapids Township Planning Commission to commence the updating process for the Elk Rapids Township Master Plan. Emile Sabty has been coordinating with Larry Nix to notify the surrounding entities of the Township intent to update their Master Plan.

A summary of this discussion follows:

- Chairperson Smith thanked Emile Sabty and Karen Briggs for the work they did sending out the Master Plan update notification letters to all the surrounding entities.
- Chairperson Smith suggested to the Commission that all references to Monroe Road and the neighboring area – Chapter 4 - Page 23 be removed from the Draft Master Plan. Shen stated the timing on this was not right. The Board agreed that all references to Monroe Road and the building of new roads be removed from the Master Plan.
- Jim Lundy questioned the Census chart on Page 17 of the Master Plan which shows Elk Rapids Township Median Household Income at \$75,000. The increase between 2010-2020 is significant. Emile Sabty reported that these numbers were obtained from the 2020 Census.
- The Board confirmed they had reviewed the proposed revisions noted in yellow and red print that Emile Sabty had drafted and provided. The Board had no concerns or questions regarding the content.
- Administrator Nix referenced his memorandum dated March 17, 2023 which outlines his *Master Plan Amendment Process and Meeting Schedule*.

Conclusion: The Board asked Zoning Administrator Larry Nix to review the proposed Master Plan draft provided by Emile Sabty to ensure everything is correctly structured. Mr. Nix will prepare a report listing what changes he believes need to be made and present his findings to the Planning Commission on Tuesday, April 18, 2023 at 1:30 PM.

Township Zoning Administrator Report (Larry Nix):

- Mr. Nix stated he wanted to be careful not to rezone property too quickly. Protecting the future land use in the Township is very important and rezoning is not the only option or solution.
- He would also like to investigate a special exception land use option for R1 and R2 districts for consideration of limited scale multifamily housing.
- Chairperson Smith reminded the Board that the R3 district also needs to be addressed and included in the amended Master Plan.

Conclusion: Administrator Nix reported he will review all the zoning options available to the Township and will report back to the Planning Commission at the April Meeting.

Township Legal Staff Report (Bill Derman) – Mr. Derman gave a verbal informative report to the Planning Commission on these Elk Rapids Township subjects: Library, Short Term Rentals, Sewer SAD, Tax Tribunal, Tart Trail, HERTHA, Farmland Preservation, Cherries R Us, Sheriff Report, Orchard View, ZBA, MI Marihuana and Assessments.

Upcoming Township Special Meeting – The Horse Show People have been invited to give a presentation to the Township and Village as well as Milton and Whitewater Township. The meeting is scheduled for mid-late April, 2023. The Planning Commission will be notified when the date for this meeting is set.

Unfinished Business – None.

New Business –

- Chairperson Smith suggested Section 7.06 addressing the Group Retreat Center in the Zoning Ordinance be completely removed next time the Zoning Ordinance is reviewed and amended.

Public Comments – None.

Member Comments – None.

MOTION/S: Amos/Lundy

**Motion to Adjourn.
Motion Carried.**

Adjournment:

3:10 PM

(An audio tape of this Planning Commission Meeting is available at the Township Office)