

SOLON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Tuesday, April 4, 2023
Solon Township Hall
9191 South Kasson Street, Cedar, MI 49621

I. Call Meeting to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Morgan called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Roll Call / Guest Sign-in

Present: Steve Morgan, Chair; Meg Paxton, Member; Samantha Vandervlucht, Member; Todd Yeomans, Vice Chair/ZBA Rep and Steve Yoder, Township Board Rep

Staff Present: Tim Cypher, Zoning Administrator; Allison Hubley-Patterson, Recording Secretary

Members of the public: In total, there were six (6) members of the public present at various times throughout the meeting.

III. Motion to Approve Minutes – March 7, 2023

Chairman Morgan asked for a motion to approve the March 7, 2023 minutes as presented. **YODER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MARCH 7, 2023 MINUTES AS PRESENTED; PAXTON SECONDED. ALL PRESENT IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

IV. Agenda (additions/subtractions by PC)

Chairman Morgan asked for a motion to approve the April agenda. **YEOMANS MOVED TO APPROVE THE APRIL AGENDA AS PRESENTED; PAXTON SECONDED. ALL PRESENT IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**

V. Correspondence

Cypher stated that he previously forwarded an email message to the PC members from Patricia Soutas-Little who is the Chairperson of the Leelanau Internet Futures Team (LIFT) regarding a progress report on the Broadband project. There was some question as to whether the link in the email message to the Broadband Project Coverage Map is working but it appears to be. If one is still having difficulty, please try the link again:

<https://leelanau.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/basic/index.html?appid=2135e72e11b942d5bcf000a2c2957013>

- VI. Conflicts of Interest - none
- VII. Public Comment (three minutes per person unless extended by Chair) - None
- VIII. Reports

Township Board Rep:

Yoder reported that the Parks and Recreation Department recently held a movie night and it was very successful. The Township is considering moving the fence that was located at the former recycling site to Solon Township Beach Park due to the fact that someone appears to be driving an all-terrain vehicle over the area and the fence would help deter this activity. The Fire Department is looking to purchase an ambulance; the cost of a new ambulance is approximately \$400,000. The Township Board approved for Fleis and VandenBrink to help with the Spark Grant for the Parks and Recreation Department. The Cedar Chamber will be holding an Easter egg hunt. Yoder also explained that the Township is considering using the remaining ARPA funds to repair doors and windows at the Township Hall and put in offices towards the back of the hall. Office space is needed at the hall now that there are several days of early voting prior to an election and the clerk must be present. The Township will not be pursuing the boat wash station at the present time. For the 2023-2024 fiscal year, members of the Planning Commission will receive a pay raise for their attendance at meetings, including the Chairman. The Township currently does their banking with Huntington Bank; however, they are looking to change banks because Huntington Bank imposes a fee if the account balance is below \$10,000. They are looking at 4Front Credit Union and Yoder noted that they currently offer a good rate on their Certificates of Deposit (CDs). Yoder distributed the Annual Report from the Fire Department which is a very nice overall summary for 2022.

ZBA Rep: Yeomans had nothing to report.

ZA: Cypher reported that there were no land use permits issued in March. He is currently working on two separate projects. The first project involves working with the Leelanau Conservancy on a driveway and access off of Lakeshore Drive to service the Cedar Preserve area. The Leelanau County Road Commission (LCRC) is concerned about ingress and egress and the line of sight in this area. Cypher stated that he spoke to legal counsel about this project and was advised to not simply issue a permit as the Township would then be locked into what the LCRC wants to do. Yeomans inquired about an easement. Cypher will send out information to all PC members in case they receive any telephone calls or questions about this project.

The second project involves Light of Day Organics. They were closed for a while due to Covid but the owner, Angela Macke, is now interested in pursuing having weddings at the tea farm. In 2010, she obtained a special land use permit for her location to the west of South Cedar Road on the south side. Ag tourism is an option in the area so Cypher indicated that Ms. Macke would let us know what

she is planning to do. He added that Ag tourism is intended to support farmers, not to create a business venue in a particular area. In the past, the learning events that were held at the tea farm were appropriate but there was no previous discussion of weddings.

IX. Public Hearing – None

X. New Business

A. Review of LCPCD Staff Report 04-2023-10, Solon Township Future Land Use Maps

Chairman Morgan explained that after reading the Staff Report that was sent to Solon Township from Leelanau County Planning and Community Development (LCPCD) and Cypher's response to the Staff Report, he asked that this item be placed on the agenda as he had some concerns.

Chairman Morgan stated that it would be a good idea to clean up some of the labels on the Future Land Use Maps to help clarify the maps. He also addressed the fact that the Citizen Survey results from the 2022 survey are not up on the Solon Township website; people would like to see the results of this survey. Cypher stated that he has previously requested that Hubley-Patterson be granted access in order to post Planning Commission materials to the website but this request has been repeatedly denied. He has also asked for assistance from the County in the past to get items posted but has been told to "stand down".

Chairman Morgan inquired about staff drafting a letter to the Township Supervisor in order for the staff to have access to post materials to the website restricted to the Planning Commission section only. Cypher stated that the PC could make a motion in this regard.

Chairman Morgan inquired if the PC is putting the cart before the horse by working on the maps before the text of the Master Plan.

Paxton concurred with the comments that were made regarding the website; she stated that posting to the website is a very simple and quick process. Yoder agreed with the idea of drafting a letter to the Township Supervisor. He added that he has received complaints from citizens regarding PC meeting agendas, PC minutes and the County regarding the Citizen Survey results not being up on the website meeting the state statutory requirements.

CHAIRMAN MORGAN MOVED TO APPROVE HAVING STAFF DRAFT A LETTER TO THE TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR WHICH WOULD REQUEST THAT SYAFF HAVE ACCESS TO THE SOLON TOWNSHIP WEBSITE FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSTING PLANNING COMMISSION MATERIALS; YEOMANS SECONDED. ALL PRESENT IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.

With regard to the discussion of the Staff Report prepared by the LCPCD and the response from Cypher, Yoder stated that he recused himself as he serves as the Chair of the Leelanau County Planning Commission (LCPC). He stated that he understands the intention of the Solon Township PC as he was present for these meetings; however, he can also see how some LCPC members were confused by the titles on the maps. He added that certain individuals were perplexed that they received the Future Land Use Maps first but have not received the text of the Master Plan. Yoder added that it is important that the text of the Master Plan be completed and noted that the PC must be sure that the maps accurately reflect the text.

Yoder stated that the LCPC discussed that the 2022 Citizen Survey results were not up on the website; this was concerning to some members. He concluded that, in his opinion, the text of Cypher's memo went a little too far in calling out LCPC staff.

Cypher stated that he respectfully disagrees with Yoder. Cypher is perplexed as to why the County is still confused when they were asked to, and did complete, and Informal Review for Solon Township in October of 2022. Cypher explained that the County has every right to comment under state law requirements. He explained that we do technically have the cart before the horse but this is due to the fact that the Solon Township PC has five rezoning requests that are in abeyance; this served as the guiding force for the PC to first turn their attention to the Future Land Use Maps. Cypher does not understand the need to clarify the titles on the maps but added that he does not want to hold up the rezoning applications.

Cypher likened the Staff Report to the pushback that the PC received on the Landscape Ordinance. He concluded by stating that he did not receive any telephone calls seeking clarification and was surprised to see that staff was confused by our request.

Yeomans asked Yoder if the LCPC is fine with the maps but confirmed that the titles are the problem. Yoder stated that this is correct; they are confused by what is being changed on the map. Chairman Morgan suggested using different titles so that the zoning maps align with the future land use vision for the Township. Cypher stated that this can be done. All agreed that indicating "This is new" on the maps will help clarify. Using both dark and light colors along with an overlay was also suggested. Yoder stated that this is a big change for the LCPC but added that the overlay will help this be less confusing for both the LCPC and the public.

Chairman Morgan summarized by stating that the Future Land Use Map should not include the term "zoning" at all. Cypher indicated that this can be done. Cypher will change the legend on each map to show the hatched areas, both new and proposed. He will have the County GIS Department make the changes to the maps. There will be an item on the agenda for the May 2, 2023 meeting for

the PC to vote to approve the changes to the maps and forward them to the Township Board for their consideration. Yoder reiterated that the PC must ensure that the text of the Master Plan does not violate the maps.

Chairman Morgan asked Cypher to stay away from using certain language in his memoranda. Cypher agreed and stated that he would send an apology to Ms. Galla and Ms. Myer.

XI. Unfinished Business

A. Planning Commission Bylaws – discussion and motion to allow Cypher and Hubley-Patterson to prepare updated version of Solon Township Planning Commission Bylaws

Discussion ensued regarding the sample Bylaws from the Michigan Township Association (MTA) that were distributed to all PC members.

Regarding Section 2 (Meetings), item B (Special Meetings): A special meeting may be called by the chairperson.

Section 3 (Duties of the Planning Commission), item H: Cypher stated that we do not currently do this because the Township Board holds the purse strings regarding appropriating funds for training, conferences and/or meetings. Cypher added that the PC could get a resolution on this and ask that they be able to attend these educational sessions.

Section 6 (Conflict of Interest): Cypher asked Yoder if he could inquire at the next Township Board Meeting whether a Conflict of Interest policy exists. It was stated that there is a policy and Cypher noted that some Townships have “Conflict of Interest” specifically spelled out in a separate document.

Paxton asked about several very large passages and headings for other sections that appear in the current Solon Township Bylaws. Cypher explained that much of the text that is in the current Bylaws is outdated and unnecessary. The sample that the PC members reviewed at tonight’s meeting from the MTA is an excellent example of how Bylaws should look today.

Yoder inquired about Section 3 (Duties of the Planning Commission), item D: (Prepare an annual written report to the township board of the planning commission’s operations and the status of planning activities, ...). It was noted that the 2022 PC Chair Annual Report that Chairman Morgan distributed to all PC members and Township Board members had been done in the past but it is more formal this year. A more detailed report such as the one that was prepared for 2022 will be prepared each year going forward.

B. Master Plan Rewrite – continue discussion / review completed work

Cypher and Hubley-Patterson led the PC through the work that has been completed thus far on the Master Plan. In total, two chapters have been written using the Centerville Township Master Plan as a template. Tables have been inserted into Chapter 2 which is a very data-intensive chapter; however, the tables need to be filled in with updated data. Additional chapters will be distributed to the PC at the May meeting. The PC agreed that they are pleased with the format that is being used and indicated that it is easy to read.

C. Review of MSU Extension Checklist: “For Adoption of an Amendment to a Plan”- distribution of additional materials for Master Plan binder.

Hubley-Patterson distributed tabs for the binders as well as an additional checklist. One checklist should be used for the Master Plan and one should be used for the amendment (Future Land Use Maps).

XII. Other Items – None

XIII. ZA / Planning Commission Comment

Cypher thanked all PC members for their input at tonight’s meeting and reiterated that he would be sending an apology to Ms. Galla and Ms. Myer.

XIV. Public Comment

Ms. Judy Janosik stated that she has submitted complaints about the Solon Township website for approximately 15 years. She applauds the efforts of the PC to try to obtain approval for the Recording Secretary to post Planning Commission materials to the website.

XV. Adjournment

There being no objection, Chairman Morgan adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 2, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the Solon Township Hall. Based on the motion that was passed at the April 2022 meeting, future regular meetings will begin at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison Hubley-Patterson, Recording Secretary

**APPENDIX A: SOLON TOWNSHIP ZA'S MONTHLY PERMIT SUMMARY
(MARCH)**

SOLON TOWNSHIP ZA'S MONTHLY PERMIT SUMMARY

PERIOD: MARCH 2023

DATE	PERMIT #	NAME	USE	RECEIPT CK.#	AMOUNT
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NO LAND USE PERMITS WERE ISSUED IN MARCH 2023

TOTAL \$ -

SIGNED:

Timothy A. Cypher

DATE: 4/9/2023

TIMOTHY A. CYPHER
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