

LIVONIA TOWNSHIP
PUBLIC HEARING
NOVEMBER 22, 2010

Don Sherper, Town Board Chairman, called the public hearing to order at 7:30 p.m. The following Board members were present: Don Sherper, Dave Hewitt, Butch Hass, Gary Doebler, Doug Manthei and Clerk/Treasurer Spencer. Chuck Marohn, President of Community Growth Institute was also present.

The purpose of the public hearing is for the Town Board to receive public input on Livonia Township's Comprehensive Plan. Sherper went over the meeting procedures and announced the hearing was recorded for the official record.

Sherper provided the following background: During November/December 2009 the Comprehensive Plan Goals Survey was drafted by Community Growth Institute and in January of 2010 distributed to Township Residents who had an opportunity to offer input regarding the importance of the goals. Throughout 2010 the Task Force consisting of Town residents met to review, agree or not agree on the community goals as they were prioritized in the survey. The draft Plan was presented to the Task Force for final input. The notice of public hearing was published in the Legal Section of the Elk River Star News on Saturday November 13, 2010. Sherper asked Mr. Marohn if he wanted to add to this. Marohn offered the following: He introduced himself, he is a Planner with Community Growth Institute has been working with the Town Officials and a number of interested residents who have attended the meetings over the past two years to create the document. This was part of a project funded in part by McKnight Foundation. The Plan has been created to give guidance and direction to the Township for future planning. The document provides background information, goals that were established in the working group, sent out and verified by the citizens through the survey. For each goal there is background and supporting information and a list of strategies, things that can be done at the Township level to implement the plan. The last section includes a breakout of specific strategies for this year, next year and four years subsequent to that. The Township has taken on other planning processes, but this Plan is one that can be adopted following feedback, public hearing and whatever other changes that may need to be made.

Sherper declared the public hearing open for comment. Sherper asked if there was anyone present who wished to comment. There were no comments from the public. Sherper declared the public hearing closed.

Sherper called for Board discussion. Sherper said the decision can be tabled to the December 20th meeting; Marohn agreed the Board does not have to make a decision at this meeting. Marohn addressed feedback he received from Sherburne County Zoning and summarized by saying they seem to be concerned that we are unhappy with them. He felt this is important and asked for the Board's permission to respond and reassure them we are not unhappy with them. The fact that we would like more decision making authority on some of the key issues is not a reflection on either the competence of the County staff or with the happiness or unhappiness of the work they have done, but an outcropping of having a deeper understanding of what is going on in the Township. This country is founded on principles of local control; it is very reasonable that we would not want someone else making decisions without shared authority. In his letter he would like to stress we want to work closely with the County.

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Hewitt stated we want to work with the County as well as neighboring entities for planning and decisions made for this Township. Sherper stated this would relate to a memorandum of understanding; Marohn replied in a sense. At the last meeting we talked about how we could implement some of these things. The best case scenario we have a memorandum of understanding that is revised and enhanced based on an enhanced relationship. Marohn recommended we start at a point where we would be working very cooperatively. Their response is a natural reaction; however we want to maintain a good line of communication with them in order to dissolve the feeling of rejection, which is not our intention. We are now entering the next phase and in order to have an enhanced memorandum of understanding, both the Township and the County need to have conversations. In response to Manthei's question about whether or not the County was invited to all the meetings, Mahon said they were. Hewitt added Commissioner Leonard has attended several of the group meetings. Marohn confirmed the County Commissioners also received notices. Prior to sending letter to the County Marohn, Sherper will review; it was consensus of the Board that Marohn should also meet with the County Planner in person.

The next community group meeting will be Monday December 6th at 7 p.m.; Marohn will send out notices.

Hewitt/Doebler unanimous to table decision on the Comprehensive Plan until December 20th during the Regular Board Meeting.

Hewitt/Doebler unanimous to adjourn the public hearing at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by



Lila Spencer, Clerk/Treasurer