



EAGLE TOWNSHIP

Eagle Township Planning Commission

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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Table of Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Membership
- 3.0 Meetings
- 4.0 Planning Commission Responsibilities
- 5.0 Planning Commission Activity 2023
 - 5.1 Master Plan Update
 - 5.2 Site Plan Reviews
 - 5.3 Variances
 - 5.4 Special Use Permits
 - 5.5 Zoning Requests
 - 5.6 Master Plan Reviews
 - 5.7 Zoning and Zoning Administration
 - 5.8 Public Engagement
- 6.0 Zoning Permit and Violation Activity
- 7.0 Zoning Amendments
- 8.0 Training
- 9.0 Planning Commission Goals 2024
- 10.0 Recommendations

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Eagle Township Planning Commission functions under, and has their powers and duties set forth by, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008) and the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (PA 110 of 2006) as amended by the Eagle Township Board. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) provides for the creation, organization, powers, and duties of Planning Commissions. Section 19 requires the Eagle Township Planning Commission to make an annual written report to the Township Board of Commissioners. This report is to provide the Board with a summary and status of planning activities since formation of the Eagle Planning Commission per the Eagle Township Planning Ordinance 01-2023 dated as effective on June 30, 2023.

2.0 MEMBERSHIP

The MPEA states that the membership of the Planning Commission shall be representative of important segments of the community, such as the economic, governmental, educational, and social development of the local unit of government, in accordance with the major interests as they exist in the local unit of government, such as agriculture, natural resources, recreation, education, public health, government, transportation, industry, and commerce. In 2023, the Planning Commission's membership was as follows:

- Robin Currie, Chairperson (2-year term)
- Michelle Hoppes, Vice Chairperson (2-year term)
- Eric Sutherland, Secretary (1 year term)
- John Iszler (1 year term)
- Dick Jones, Board Member Representative *Resignation in November, 2023

3.0 MEETINGS

The first meeting of this Planning Commission took place on August 29, 2023, where election of officers was completed, and bylaws reviewed and subsequently adopted. The Planning Commission set their meetings for the first Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Eagle Township Hall. The Commission met every month from August through December with one special meeting and two joint meetings with the Board. In 2024, the Commission will meet the last Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. All meetings are held in compliance with the Open Meetings Act (PA 267 of 1976).

- The Planning Commission held five (5) regular meetings in 2023, one (1) special meeting and two (2) joint meetings with the Board.

4.0 PLANNING COMMISSION RESPONSIBILITIES

The Planning Commissions basic duties and responsibilities include the following:

- Prepare, review, and update a master plan as a guide for development within the Township's planning jurisdiction.
- Generate comprehensive surveys and studies of present conditions and future growth of the Township regarding its relation to neighboring territory.
- Prepare coordinated and comprehensive programs of public structures and improvements.
- Promote public interest in, and understanding of, the master plan.
- Review and take such action on petitions, staff proposals, and Township Board requests for amendments of the master plan if required.
- Prepare an annual written report to the Township Board of the Planning Commission's operations and the status of planning activities, including recommendations regarding actions by the Township Board related to planning and development including, if applicable, any budget recommendations for the Planning Commission.
- Take such action as authorized, or required, by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act and/or Clinton County Zoning Ordinance or an Eagle Township Zoning Ordinance, if established by the Planning Commission and Township Board.
- Take such actions, as authorized or, required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.
- Perform other lawful duties, and responsibilities, as directed by the Township Board or Planning Commission.
- Implement the Township Board additional direction to create a plan for the creation, sustainability, and perpetuity for bringing zoning and ordinances to the local township level and help establish guidelines for all land use districts.
- Implement the Township Board additional direction for zoning at the local Township. Effective December 4, 2023, through Resolution the Township Board empowered the Planning Commission with all powers, duties, and responsibilities provided for zoning commissions by the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, (PA 110 of 2006, MCL 125.3101 et seq.;;) or other applicable zoning statutes instructs the Planning Commission to develop, adopt, and enforce a Zoning Ordinance for Eagle Township. *

*Section 11 of the Eagle Township Ordinance 01-2023 was repealed on December 4, 2023, and declared to be of no effect, and that any other Eagle Township Ordinance restricting or prohibiting the Planning Commission from exercising all powers, duties, and responsibilities provided for zoning commissions by the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act or other applicable zoning statutes; are also repealed and declared to be of no effect.

5.0 PLANNING COMMISSION ACTIVITY 2023

The Planning Commission was active in 2023 as they strived to meet their goals for the year. Accomplishments included the following:

5.1 MASTER LAND USE PLAN REVIEW

- 5.1.1 The Planning Commission reviewed the Clinton County Master Plan which includes Eagle Township as well as the 2002 Eagle Township Master Plan. This review will aid the Planning Commission in the creation of an updated master plan specific for Eagle Township.
- 5.1.2 Master Plans from other Counties and Townships have been reviewed for comparison purposes.
- 5.1.3 The Planning Commission developed and approved a request for proposal (RFP) for a company to support the development of the master plan as well as bringing zoning into the township including zoning administration. Four companies were chosen to send the RFP and one responded with a full proposal. After review of the McKenna proposal a motion was made to the Eagle Township Board to engage and contract with McKenna for assistance with creation and updating the Eagle Township Master Plan. The Board approved using McKenna at a joint meeting of the Board and Planning Commission on December 4, 2023. The Master Plan update will include the Existing Conditions sections of the 2002 Master Plan, Existing Land Use, Circulation, Natural Resources, and Community Facilities to bring the Master Plan up to date with 2023 conditions and Future Land Use and Future Transportation sections to be consistent with current priorities and goals. Guidelines for land use districts will be included. Existing Land Use, Wetlands, Flood Plain, Prime Farmland, and Circulation Network Maps will also be included. This update will include updating the demographic and economic data, and a public engagement survey and open house will be conducted as part of the process.
- 5.1.4 The Planning Commission reviewed the Giffels-Webster report and recommended that the Eagle Township Board pass on to the Clinton County Planning Commission to take no action to change any part of the Clinton County Comprehensive Plan or Zoning that effects Eagle Township.

5.2 SITE PLAN REVIEWS

- 5.2.1 The Planning Commission received PC-44-23 SP Application for a Commercial Site Plan but did not review as the Eagle Township Board already recommended to Clinton County approval.

5.3 VARIANCES

- 5.3.1 The Planning Commission reviewed one variance request ZC-06-23 in October 2023. A request for comment was received by the Clinton County Zoning Board of Appeals and the Eagle Township Board responded.

5.4 SPECIAL USE PERMITS - None

5.5 ZONING REQUESTS

- 5.5.1 The Planning Commission reviewed PC-33-23 SP in August of 2023 related to Ground Solar Panel Array and Site Plan before Clinton County. Deferred review to Clinton County Planning Commission who has authority for zoning at this time as the Eagle Township Planning Commission was advisory.

5.6 MASTER PLAN REVIEWS

- 5.6.1 The Planning Commission has received the draft updated Master Plan for Watertown Township and received letter of intent from Danby Township to update Master Plan.

5.7 ZONING & ZONING ADMINISTRATION

- 5.7.1 The Planning Commission was directed by the Township Board to plan for the creation, sustainability, and perpetuity for bringing zoning and ordinances to the local township level. As such, the Planning Commission included zoning and zoning administration in the RFP as indicated above for updating the Master Plan. The Eagle Township Board approved as recommended by the Planning Commission the selection of McKenna for development of the Township Zoning Ordinance and interim Zoning Ordinance, zoning administration, planning, code enforcement/zoning inspector at a joint meeting on December 4, 2023, with the Planning Commission. At this joint meeting the Board also empowered the Planning Commission by Resolution as stated above with zoning commission powers. The Planning Commission plan included cost and fees for McKenna services and the contract is in perpetuity with a long-term sustainable approach at the local level. It is noted that costs and fees are well below the budgeted amount.
- 5.7.2 The Planning Commission in coordination with McKenna has established a timeline for completion of the interim zoning ordinance, final zoning ordinance and zoning administration duties.

5.8 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- 5.8.1 The Planning Commission established open meetings whereby public comment is encouraged at the beginning of meetings and after each agenda item before decision making by the Commissioners. This encouragement of public comment has aided in decision making and has received positive public feedback.

6.0 ZONING PERMIT AND VIOLATION ACTIVITY - Performed by Clinton County

7.0 ZONING AMENDMENTS - None

8.0 TRAINING

- 8.1 The Planning Commissioners are all completing the MSU extension certificate for Master Citizen Planner.
- 8.2 The Commissioners reviewed MI related planning and zoning enabling public acts, checklists, and articles from the MSU extension course, webinars, and online education from the Michigan Township Association.
- 8.3 The Commissioners will complete a training session with McKenna in 2023.

9.0 PLANNING COMMISSION GOALS FOR 2024

9.1 The Master Plan

- 9.1.1 The Planning Commission has created a timeline in coordination with McKenna for updating and creating the Master Plan for Eagle Township and will lead on implementation from now through the anticipated completion date of August 2024. This will include public engagement survey and open house to ensure community involvement.
- 9.1.2 The Planning Commission has outlined all public notice requirements, public hearings, distribution, and communication with various adjacent municipalities as well as other required stakeholders in accordance with the MI public acts and has established a goal to ensure timeliness and accuracy.
- 9.1.3 The Planning Commission will review continue to review other Master Plans for comparison purposes.
- 9.1.4 The Planning Commission will conduct a workshop for the Future Land Use Map with McKenna.
- 9.1.5 The Planning Commission will coordinate with the Board a joint meeting to present and review the plan when in final draft and answer questions.
- 9.1.6 The Planning Commission will strive to have all aspects completed for the adoption of a final Master Plan for Eagle Township by end of August 2024.

9.2 Interim Zoning and Final Zoning Ordinance

- 9.2.1 The Planning Commission has created a timeline in coordination with McKenna for all aspects of the interim zoning ordinance and final version. The timelines established include completion of the interim zoning ordinance with Board input and approval for effectiveness by January 2, 2024.
- 9.2.2 The Planning Commission will review the Model Zoning Ordinance as recommended by McKenna for adoption as the interim zoning ordinance for Eagle Township.
- 9.2.3 The Planning Commission will continue to work closely with McKenna on the zoning fee schedule for implementation by the end of February.
- 9.2.4 The Planning Commission will complete amendments to the interim Zoning Ordinance as may be applicable by end of February 2024 and ongoing as may be applicable.
- 9.2.5 The Planning Commission in coordination with McKenna will review any material changes to zoning from the current Clinton County Zoning Ordinance to the final Zoning Ordinance for Eagle Township.

9.3 Zoning Administration

- 9.3.1 The Planning Commission will work with McKenna and lead the implementation of the zoning administration process for Eagle Township to include, but not limited to the tracking process (BS@A or Google), fee schedule and escrow accounts, set up for forms and intake process, algorithm for process steps, deadlines and procedures, specific roles, insurance needs, website update and/or hosting arrangement, relationship with assessor, engineering support as needed, enforcement and inspections and escalation for appeals. Recommendations will be communicated with the Board for review, input, and approval. The timeline is by end of February.
- 9.3.2 The Planning Commission in coordination with McKenna will recommend for review, input, and approval of a two-month moratorium on zoning permits until March 1, 2024, to aid in setting up the local process. This will be escalated for Board review, input, and approval.
- 9.3.3 The Planning Commission will work with McKenna and Eagle staff to ensure readiness by March 1, 2024, to accept zoning applications and all related processes as will be outlined in an internal work plan.

9.4 Zoning Appeals Board

- 9.4.1 The Planning Commission will review and recommend to the Board for review, input and approval of the Zoning Board of Appeals bylaws and membership by the end of January.

9.5 Budget

- 9.5.1 The Planning Commission will establish a budget for the Township Board to review, provide input and approve for 2024 encompassing the goals outlined in this report.

9.6 Training

- 9.6.1 The Planning Commissioners will complete the Master Citizen Planner certificate from MSU extension.
- 9.6.2 Training will occur formally and informally with McKenna.
- 9.6.3 Planning Commissioners will attend and/or listen to various Michigan Township Association educational offerings.

9.7 Communication and Project/Task Management

- 9.7.1 The Planning Commission will develop project plans to aid the Commission members and Board members in execution of related tasks outlined in the 2024 goals.
- 9.7.2 The Planning Commission will lead in communication in coordination with McKenna and the Board related to all goals listed here with the public and all stakeholders.
- 9.7.3 The Planning Commission will provide a summary of progress on the goals for the Eagle residents for Board review and distribution as may be applicable.
- 9.7.4 An evaluation of the relationship with McKenna and the system for zoning administration will be completed by the end of 2024 using an on-line survey for public engagement.

10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The Planning Commission encourages the Board to continue to support the Planning Commission and to work closely as a team with the Planning Commission on the significant goals and changes for Eagle Township in 2024.