



Fresh Coast Planning

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MEMORANDUM

To: Laketown Township Planning Commission
From: Gregory L. Ransford, MPA
Date: April 3, 2018
Re: Organizational Meeting – Laketown Township Master Plan

As you know, we are scheduled to meet on April 12th to begin the process of updating the Laketown Township Master Plan. In that regard, this memorandum, as well as the attached Master Plan Framework, are provided for organizational purposes before formally beginning the update. The purpose of this meeting is to receive direction from the Planning Commission regarding the content of the Master Plan Framework and understand areas of interest from the Planning Commission, as well as identify several responsibilities. In addition, we welcome any expectations you have at this meeting.

Based on our Scope of Project provided in response to the Master Plan Request for Proposals, below and within the attached we provide a summary of our approach and the minimum recommendations to update the master plan. As aforementioned, it is intended that the Master Plan Framework may be expanded based on your direction.

Framework

As you will note in the draft Master Plan Framework, the first two (2) Tasks include responsibilities of the Planning Commission and Fresh Coast Planning. Depending on the outcome of the Organizational Meeting, several Tasks within the Framework should be finalized or removed. Specifically, the following items need discussion:

1. Notice of Intent to Plan – Prior to preparing the master plan, the township is required to send a notice to adjacent municipalities and other applicable organizations explaining its intent to prepare a master plan and to welcome comment throughout the process. This notice should be sent prior to Meeting #2, as identified in the Master Plan Framework.
2. Charrettes – As a result of our Scope of Project, we identified at least three (3) areas of interest that would benefit from a greater public participation process than typical Planning Commission meetings. We are seeking your confirmation of these areas as well as whether more areas of interest exist and should be added to the Master Plan Framework.
3. Hamlets – Townships tend to contain old settlements as a result of rail, waterway, or other previous means of travel or industry. While these areas have typically changed from their original purpose, many townships desire to protect and maintain their historic physical character and small-town feel. Given this, the Master Plan Framework allows for the accommodation of a hamlet(s), if identified by the Planning Commission.
4. Public/Semi-Public – As you will note within the Review & Create Master Plan Map Task, we recommend removal of the Public/Semi-Public Classification. While we believe it is important to address public/semi-public uses in the master plan, especially recreational opportunities, the reason for our proposed removal is because if a public park or other public/semi-public use is ever abandoned, it would render the property dormant since the classification does not support any other type of land use. Given that your zoning ordinance allows for public uses in various zoning districts, this removal does not cause any conflicts between the master plan and the zoning ordinance.

5. Eldean Property – As a result of recent correspondence from Wade Eldean, and assuming his notation regarding your rezoning decision was accurate, we identified his property for discussion during the Commercial Chapter Task and the Review & Create Master Plan Map Task. In the instance you disagree, we can modify accordingly.

As aforementioned and noted in the second Task, following the Organizational Meeting we will provide a comprehensive review of the current master plan documents and present a summary with recommendations to begin the preparation of the master plan. At the same time, we will update the Master Plan Framework to contain our recommended revisions and reorganization of provisions from the documents to form each Chapter and achieve one (1) streamlined master plan.

Lastly, in an effort to accomplish adoption of the master plan within approximately twelve (12) months, the proposed schedule within the Master Plan Framework may be aggressive, as we intend to review three (3) chapters during each meeting. Its timeline is certainly flexible and can be modified at your direction.

General Organizational Items

1. As you likely know, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended, provides approval authority to the Planning Commission unless otherwise relieved of and retained by the Board of Trustees. In the instance the Board of Trustees relieved the Planning Commission of this authority, an additional meeting will be necessary at the end of the Master Plan Framework.
2. Charrettes – In preparation for Meeting #2, we seek your identification of important issues for each Charrette, similar to what we discussed during our interview with you, to allow us to best prepare appropriate materials for the future Charrette meetings (i.e. will visual preference surveys have value for each Charrette, mapping exercises, issue ranking, etcetera).
3. Utilities – We note that the 2008 Blue Star Highway plan indicates that public utilities are lacking for this corridor. Whether they now exist and or if limitations exist to establish and expand the utilities is important for discussion.

Meeting Outcomes

Based on the content of our memorandum above, the following require finalization for the next meeting. Further, we identify additional noteworthy items for our discussion. They are listed in no particular order.

- Notice of Intent to Plan – This needs to be completed, if not already, prior to Meeting #2
- Charrettes
 - Finalize the appropriate areas for increased public participation
 - Gather important issues for each area to prepare charrette materials
 - Potential locations to conduct the charrettes to increase convenience of attendance
 - Wi-Fi and cellular capabilities
- Hamlets – Identify any areas of special interest that require their own classification chapter (and on the master plan map) separate from the general chapter
- Public/Semi-Public – Consider removing this classification text (and from the master plan map)
- Approving authority – Finalize whether the Planning Commission or Board of Trustees adopts the Plan
- Public utilities – discuss public utility infrastructure and any limitations, particularly in the Blue Star Highway corridor

We will be prepared to discuss these items further at your April 12, 2018 meeting. If you have any questions, please let us know.

GLR
Principal Planner

Attachment