

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF BEDFORD**  
**115 S. ULDRIKS DRIVE**  
**BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**  
**February 28, 2023**

**Call to Order:** 6:30 pm by Chairman, Mike Staib

- **Pledge of Allegiance administered by attending body.**

Approval of a temporary secretary, Barbara Jones, for the February 28<sup>th</sup> 2023 meeting: Moved by Trustee Beamish, second by Commissioner Villadsen, voice vote all in favor; motion approved.

**Roll Call:** Barry Beamish, Board Trustee; Commissioners: Barbara Jones, Claudia Brown, Kevin Villadsen, Tawney Wolters, Mike Staib. Quorum was present.

Excused absence: Shirley Tuggle

**Approval of February 28, 2023 Agenda:** Moved by Trustee Beamish, second by Commissioner Brown; motion approved.

**Approval of January 24, 2023 Minutes:** Moved by Commissioner Villadsen, second by Commissioner Wolters; motion approved.

**Liaison Report:** Trustee Beamish stated that the Board was waiting on the updated Solar Ordinance, but did not express any urgency. A potential timeline for sending the Solar Ordinance to the board was discussed, but nothing was set in place.

**Public Comment Time on Agenda Items:** Open and closed at 6:36 pm, no comments.

**New Business:**

Review and adoption of Rules of Decorum: Moved by Trustee Beamish, second by Commissioner Jones, 6 yes; motion approved.

Review and adoption of 2022 Annual Report: Moved by Commissioner Wolters, second by Jones, 6 yes; motion approved.

**Discussion of Old Business:**

Chairman Staib: Presentation of Master Plan Draft-2/22/23 Update

- Raphael Kasen, Project Manager from McKenna, presented the updated and revised Master Plan for the township.

- Commissioner Jones requested a break down by ethnicity in the demographic profile.
- Commissioner Wolters requested a change to the language on page 4 of Master Plan-Draft 2/22/23 regarding the support and influences related to future growth to be more focused on Bedford rather than surrounding areas.
- Commissioner Wolters asked for clarification of future Land Use Map and potential conflicts and/or problems, specifically in regards to the extension of the Neighborhood Residential on Kirby Road. Mr. Kasen clarified the process of adoption of the Master Plan and future Land Use Map, as well as the review of the zoning ordinances and new districts. The Master Plan and future Land Use Map will be posted for public review, a public hearing for comment will be held, after it is adopted the Planning Commission will begin to review changes to districts. He also provided an explanation with examples of Legal Non-Conforming Use in relation to residents' rights under the current zoning ordinance in regards to any district changes. Trustee Beamish reminded the commission that their job is to look at the long-term goals and objectives and stated that a review in 3 to 5 years can happen, specifically for growth boundaries if robust growth is occurring.
- Commissioner Villadsen asked about clarification on page 13 of Master Plan-Draft 2/22/23 regarding functional classifications of roads. Mr. Kasen responded that the language is that of the federal classification system that the roads fall under and is correct.
- Chairman Staib cited minor changes to Master Plan Draft 2/22/23: Page 3 Battle Creek Township change to City of Battle Creek; Page 15 and 40 Calhoun County Road Commission to be changed to Calhoun County Road Department; Page 21 Gull Lake Schools to be changed to Gull Lake Community Schools. Trustee Beamish pointed out misspelling of Battle Creek Public Schools.
- Correction to future Land Use Map regarding the expansion of the Mixed Use in the village along M-37 highway; expansion is to be from Meacham Road to Banfield Road.
- The extension of Mixed Use from Morgan Road to the north side of Hubbard Road includes the parcels in their entirety.
- Commissioner Jones asked for clarification of the Enterprise Zone; it is a combination of commercial and industrial for a flexible variety of business uses.

### **Solar Ordinance Review and Discussion:**

Solar Ordinance Review: Mr. Kasen's presentation included specifics regarding setbacks for participating and non-participating parcels. The commission requested that setbacks be changed to: Road Right of Way 300-foot setback; Participating Parcel: 50-foot setback from lot line; Non-Participating Parcel 300-foot setback from lot line; Wetland: 200-foot setback. In regards to landscape buffering, specifically evergreen plantings, Mr. Kasen, and Seth Koches

agreed that it is within the Planning Commission's right to review and attach conditions as warranted for any applications that may be submitted. Mr. Koches reviewed the ordinance and stated overall it seemed solid and non-exclusionary. He recommended the strengthening of language regarding the actual cost of decommissioning. Commissioner Villadsen requested that the language regarding the 2-foot perimeter around the structure of small-scale roof mounted solar systems state that the perimeter must extend around the entire structure.

**Open Public Comment Time: 8:08 pm**

John Cash: stated that Pennfield Township's ordinance on public discharge of a firearm is only permissible on agricultural land, and pointed out the importance of considering such changes when reviewing zoning and future Land Use Map changes.

Adam Heikkila: stated that the hiring of a professional planner needed to be done, and encouraged everyone to read the charter act. He also stated that it would be beneficial to have draft documents posted online.

Melissa McKay: stated concerns regarding a wind ordinance and at what point the Planning Commission was in reviewing said ordinance. She also expressed concerns regarding the enforcement of the landscape buffer requirements for commercial solar. She reiterated concern regarding use of firearms related to future Land Use changes.

**Close Public Comment Time: 8:15 pm**

**Planning Commission Member Time:**

Trustee Beamish stated he would not be in support of limiting firearm usage and recommended including agricultural to the name on the rural residential open space district.

Commissioner Wolters stated her concern regarding compliance on an annual basis for the commercial solar landscape plan.

Chairman Staib stated that he agreed with the importance of the video recording of the meetings and that he would make better effort to get documents online.

Chairman Staib adjourned Meeting at 8:22 pm

**Next meeting March 28, 2023 at 6:30pm**