

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MADISON  
PLANNING COMMISSION Regular Meeting  
MADISON TOWNSHIP HALL  
3804 S. ADRIAN HIGHWAY  
DECEMBER 21, 2023  
7:00 p.m.

7:00 p.m. Planning Commission meeting called to order by Chairperson Johnson and Pledge of Allegiance said.

**ROLL CALL**

Planning commission members present: Chairperson Michelle Johnson, Vice-Chair Rusty Benschoter, Dale Thielan, Rodney Meeks, Norm Schutte, and Joyce Holtz.

Planning Commission members absent: Secretary Amy Hepker-Wilson.

**Motion** by Shutte seconded by Benschoter to excuse Hepker-Wilson absence **Motion Carried 6-0.**

**Others in Attendance:** David Rincon (Building/Zoning official), Burke Castleberry (township attorney), Janet Moden (Township Clerk) Heather Prewo, Tom Heikkinem , William Gira, Jason Hess, Cathy Thielan, Mario Cabrera, Emma Salazar, Christina Burziaga, Margaret Arute, Mary Bowen, Michael Bowen, John Hickman, and Debra Hickman.

**APPROVAL OF November 16, 2023 Regular meeting minutes:** Moved by Vice-Chair Benschoter, seconded by Schutte to approve. Motion carried 7-0.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – Items on the Agenda: None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Historic District Overlay (HDO)**

David Rincon presented an informative overview of the proposed Historic District Overlay Ordinance. The proposed ordinance would only pertain to certain older subdivisions in the High-Density Residential District (R-2). Currently, the minimum width requirement is 60 feet making many lots non-conforming compared to 50 feet in the select districts when initially platted. Other lot requirements in the proposed overlay is 20' front yard setback; 10' side yard; and 20' rear. This Historic District Overlay would allow current residents to rebuild on their lots if their homes were destroyed by fire, tornado, etc. It does not affect the homeowners' ability to remodel, do needed maintenance, etc. Homeowners are not restricted by "historic rules".

**Public Hearing opened at 7:04pm.**

Residents had concerns about the following:

- The word 'Historic'
- Property values
- Properties that would be covered under proposed ordinance

**CLOSED PUBLIC HEARING at 7:14pm:** Planning Commission Board discussed proposed Historic District Overlay Ordinance to include Geller Drive, Sunnyside, and Drexel Park subdivisions. Chairperson Johnson voiced concern about potential land-splits on Geller Drive, specifically properties that currently comply with existing zoning and not to encourage non-conforming lots. Attorney Castleberry advised land-splits could happen and are very difficult to prevent in any circumstance.

**Motion** Schutte, seconded by **Meeks** to recommend the Historic District Overlay Ordinance as proposed be sent to Township Board for consideration.

**Roll Call vote:** Benschoter-**yes**, Shutte-**yes**, Meeks-**yes**, Thielan-**yes**, Holtz-**yes**, Johnson-**no**. **Motion carried 6-1.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT** items not on the Agenda

Attorney Castleberry addressed concerns of Mr. Fishbaugh who was present but chose not to address the Planning Commission. Castleberry stated he had spoken in length to Fishbaugh prior to the meeting. The topic was Township Ordinance 39 which is not under the Planning Commission's jurisdiction. William Gira addressed his concerns regarding Fishbaugh's "blight" issues, stating it has been an ongoing problem for years. David Rincon discussed how property zoned Agriculture has set rules and a residential building in an agricultural zone does not qualify for the same code allowances as actual agricultural uses.

**REPORTS:**

Chairperson-None

Zoning – None

Township Official – None

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion** by Vice-Chair Benschoter, seconded by Schutte to adjourn. Motion carried 6-0. Meeting was officially adjourned at 7:50pm.

Respectfully submitted

Dale Thielan, Planning Commission Member