

Approved April 17th

Casco Township Planning Commission

Workshop Master Plan Update

March 27th 2024

6:00 PM

Casco Township Hall

Members Present: Andy **Litts**, Dian **Liepe**, Dan **Fleming**, Greg **Knisley**, Ryan **Brush**

Members Absent: Kelly **Hecker**, Irene **Wood**

Audience: Allan **Overhiser**, Paul **Macyauski**

1. Call to order: Meeting was called to order by Chairman **Litts** 6:00PM
2. Review and approve agenda: A motion was made by **Liepe** to approve the agenda, supported by **Fleming**. All in favor. Motion carried.
3. Public comment: None
4. Master Plan Update

Kyle **Mucha**, a senior planner from McKenna Associates, presented his *Memo* request for input from the PC members to aid the development process. **Mucha** would like the PC, *per his Memo paraphrased below*, to review the following items prior to this first working session.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS (SWOT)

As the Planning Commission undertakes the process of updating the community's Master Plan, consideration should be given to the community's existing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats "SWOT". This consideration will help establish a baseline for updating the Township's Goals and Objectives, Future Land Use plan and will provide a context for where the community "is" and where it is headed.

This exercise can also incorporate future items that should be reviewed in some capacity at the Township level. Such items could include preliminary comments on seasonal resorts, solar facilities (alternative energy), and provisions for commercial expansion/development. **Mucha** requested that the PC give further consideration to these topics and include any others that may have an impact on the visionary document of the Township. Things like Solar Farms, Wind Farms, Battery Storage facilities, Affordable Housing, Municipal water and sewer connection availability in regards to commercial development, allowing more than one dwelling per parcel, and regulating Short Term Rentals were some of the topics of concern; according to the PC members.

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Fleming commented that the biggest threat to the Township was Zoning. As always, the taking of rights from private property owners is his greatest concern.

Liepe commented that the biggest strengths were the Lakeshore and the Nature preserve. **Liepe** stated that the Township's weakness is the small platted lots along the lakeshore area that are unbuildable and that an opportunity could be to allow tiny homes there. Another weakness that **Liepe** described was the increase in commercial uses that take away from the rural character.

Litts commented that Tourism, especially agri-tourism, are a strength; with Niche farms growing in the area.

Knisley remarked that the farmland use, which has historically been the dynamic that moulded the township, was now being pushed out by the lakeshore community and vacation home owners demanding change.

Brush remarked that commercial businesses are starting to overtake the woods, rivers, and fields of the Township. He dreads farmland being sold for other uses.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

While community input may drive the process of updating the Township's existing Goals & Objectives, further consideration from the Planning Commission on this topic would be beneficial. The Planning Commission should review the existing Goals & Objectives and determine which, if any, can be carried over into the new plan update.

The Goals and Objectives should be designed in a manner that makes them action-oriented and easy to implement. These can be discussed further during a work session.

CURRENT PLAN VERSUS 2024 UPDATE

Mucha requested that the PC consider the elements that are within the existing 2012 Casco Township Master Plan that can be carried over into the 2024/2025 update. Some elements, such as demographics and existing land use analysis will be compared to previous Plans to offer a historic trend analysis.

During this review, some elements of the 2012 Plan may no longer apply to the 2024 Plan; the PC is requested to review items from the 2012 Plan that should be carried over and items that can be disregarded. Additionally, if there are newer items, such as non-motorized transportation components, that are being proposed within the region, planning for such within Casco Township may become prudent.

NEXT STEPS

The McKenna team will work with the Township on producing the required documents for the surrounding municipalities, most notably the "Notice of Intent to Plan" as required by the

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Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Further, the McKenna team will begin conducting existing land use analysis, demographic review and document formatting.

Liepe would like to go through the master plan article by article with planner at the meetings.

Smalley stated that a Zoning Plan also needs to be added. The suggestion was made that the MP Public Survey could be sent out with July tax bills.

10. Public comment: None

11. Adjourn at 7:59 pm

Attachments: available upon request

Minutes prepared by:

Jennifer Goodrich, Recording Secretary