

Casco Township Planning Commission

Regular Meeting

May 21, 2025

6:00 PM

Casco Township Hall

Members Present: Andy **Litts**, Dan **Fleming**, Greg **Knisley**, Ryan **Brush**, Paul **Macyauski**

Members Absent: Dian **Liepe**, Kelly **Hecker**

Audience: Julie **Cowie**, Dave & Mary **Campbell**, Allan **Overhiser**, James **McManus** AICP

1. Call to order: Meeting was called to order by Chairman **Litts** 6:06PM

2. Review and approve agenda:

A motion was made by **Fleming** to approve the agenda, supported by **Knisley**. All in favor.
Motion carried.

3. Public comment:

Mary **Campbell** - 7174 Ferndell Ave thanked the PC members that attended the Allegan County Housing Summit. She also commented that the organizer of the event, Chris Klienjans, had attended the most recent board meeting and would be happy to give a presentation at a PC meeting to discuss the work force and senior housing shortage in the area.

Julie **Cowie** – 7376 101st Ave. also thanked the PC members who took time to attended the Housing Summit.

4. Correspondence –

Litts stated that he had received an email regarding the City of South Haven's Distribution of Proposed Master Plan for Review; which he forwarded to the other PC members.

Cowie had sent an email RE: Housing examples and slides from the housing summit.

Fleming had sent an email Re: Financial assistance from the Federal Government to help preserve AG and support small farms.

5. Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by **Fleming** to approve the April 16, 2025 Regular Meeting minutes. Supported by **Litts**. **Macyauski** abstained. All in favor. Motion carried.

6. Public Hearing – None

7. New Business – None

8. Old Business:

a. Continue update of Master Plan (MP)

McManus reported that he had completed the updated drafts for Chapters 2 & 3. **McManus** also informed the PC that Chapter 1 had been re-written and was available for review and that the Goals & Objectives portion of Chapter 5 was also ready for review. **McManus** then proceeded to go line by line through Chapter 5 of the MP Draft.

5.1 Public engagement survey: It was noted that closing date of the Community Survey and the amount of responses was in correct and needed to be updated.

5.2 Future Land Use (FLU): **McManus** recommended removing Manufactured Housing Community and Industrial from the Zoning District list; Industrial could be a Special Land Use (SLU). **McManus** also suggested that a portion of land between 66th and 68th, and 103rd and 104th be rezoned from Agricultural (AG) to Rural Residential (RR); which would better fit what the area is being used as. Also, two Private Recreation/Open Space designations should be rezoned to AG, as they will no longer being used for that purpose. Some photos also need to be replaced.

5.4 Goals & Objectives: some minor tweaks and typos were addressed.

Goal #1:

Objective 1a: replace sliding scale land divisions with Planned Unit Development (PUD)

Objective 1d: remove “such as the area west of...”

Objective 1e: remove “such as overlay Zoning”

Objective 1g: Specify what types of AG related ancillary uses that would be allowed?

Objective 1h: Provide examples of important products? i.e. Fruit vs. Hay

Goal #2:

Objective 2a: add PUD & RR

Objective 2h: replace I-96 with I-196 (and anywhere else this error may have occurred). Also, clarify if mixed-use or small-scale commercial would apply.

Goal #3:

Objective 3a: Replace “Support & Limit” with the word Encourage.

McManus also discussed updating the Water/Sanitary Sewer service area map, reviewing and condensing the Vision Statement, and updating the Acknowledgements. Updating the Flood Plain information was also discussed. It was determined that **Hecker** would be asked to review Chapter 1 before the next meeting to confirm that Introduction had been re-drafted to the PC’s liking.

The next steps are drafting an action plan for the July meeting and preparing the Maps for review.

9. Administrative reports:

Zoning Administrator – **Smalley** presented her April report. **Litts** questioned the numbers on the latest sand mine report stating that it was inaccurate and needs to be revised. The number of trucks vs the cubic yards of sand remove just doesn’t add up.

Township Board Representative – **Fleming** reported that the Board had received an incomplete application from the Domes for a noise variance request. There was opposition to this request with audience members complaining about the noise and, especially, the bass. The decision was postponed and there was discussion about updating the noise ordinance because decibel level does not factor in bass.

ZBA Representative – **Liepe** was absent but **Smalley** reported that the front yard setback variance request scheduled for their May 8 2025 meeting was approved.

10. Public comment:

Dave **Campbell** requested that the PC keep an open mind about FLU at the I-196 interchanges.

Allan **Overhiser** commented that the MP should acknowledge the Township’s strategic alliance with South Haven Area Emergency Services (SHAES), South Haven Area Water Sewer Authority (SHAWSA), and the Township Senior Services.

Julie **Cowie** suggested that the Vision Statement be revised to state “Casco Township seeks to preserve its rural character” removing “Agricultural and Vacation community”. Cowie also stated that she was impressed with **McManus’** work and hoped that the PC would consider using the Northshore/I-196 interchange area to develop affordable apartment housing for teachers.

11. Adjourn 8:35 pm

Attachments: available upon request

Minutes prepared by:

Jennifer Goodrich, Recording Secretary