The Charter Township of Orion Planning Commission held a regular meeting on Wednesday, May 5, 2021, at 7:00pm at the Orion Township Community Center, 1335 Joslyn Rd., Lake Orion, Michigan 48360

*Please note this meeting was also available virtually via a “GoToMeeting” #599-669-285*

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT (Commissioner location):**
Scott Reynolds, Chairman
Don Gross, Vice-Chairman
Joe St. Henry, Secretary
Jessica Gingell, Commissioner

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:**
None.

1. **OPEN MEETING**
Chairman Reynolds opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

2. **ROLL CALL**
As noted

**CONSULTANTS PRESENT:**
Rodney Arroyo, (Township Planner) of Giffels Webster
Eric Fazzini, (Township Planner) of Giffels Webster
Eric Pietsch, (Township Planner) of Giffels Webster (Via GoToMeeting)
Mark Landis (Township Engineer) of Orchard, Hiltz, and McCliment, Inc.
Tammy Girling, Township Planning & Zoning Director

**OTHERS PRESENT:**
Matthew Stypula

3. **MINUTES**
A. 04-07-21, Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes
Moved by Vice-Chairman Gross, seconded by Commissioner Walker to approve the minutes, as originally submitted. **Motion carried**

B. 04-21-21, Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

C. 04-21-21, Planning Commission Workshop Meeting Minutes

D. 04-21-21, Planning Commission Public Hearing Minutes for PC-2021-37, Meijer SLU

E. 04-21-21, Planning Commission Public Hearing Minutes for PC-2021-39, Lake Orion Schools Rezone

Moved by Trustee Urbanowski, seconded by Vice-Chairman Gross to approve all four sets of minutes, as submitted. **Motion carried** (3B. – 3E)

4. **AGENDA REVIEW AND APPROVAL**
Moved by Vice-Chairman Gross, seconded by Trustee Urbanowski, to **approve** the agenda as presented. **Motion carried**

5. **BRIEF PUBLIC COMMENT – NON-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY**
None

6. CONSENT AGENDA
None

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. PC-2021-43, Orion Manufactured Home Community, Site Plan Amendment to add a community center, located at 47 Bluebird Hill Dr. (Sidwell #09-35-300-001).

Mr. Matt Stypula 5500 New Albany Rd., Columbus, OH, presented.

Mr. Stypula stated that he was there on behalf of the owner of Haven Park Communities who owns the mobile home facility and is looking to put in a community center. He added that with their submission there were a few comments from the Planning Commission and so he put together a brief PowerPoint presentation to go over how they will be addressing these comments in hope of getting conditional approval.

Mr. Stypula went through his PowerPoint presentation.

Mr. Stypula stated during his presentation regarding the tree permit for over 4” in size. They are trying to keep as many trees as they can, but there will be some trees that will be required to be removed that are over 4” in diameter and with those they would need obtain a separate tree permit for those items. He noted that none of those were landmark trees but they would be protected trees because they are over 4” in diameter.

Mr. Stypula said that one of the issues that were brought up was open space. They have gone through and analyzed the open space and the requirement is for 5,500-sq. ft. per lot. Based upon the site area they are about 62.5-acres, the site is around 75-acres, there are about 13-acres of easement and right-of-way for the roadways. They are at 62.5-acres, and 420 lots, so they are just under 6,500-sq. ft. per lot. They would meet that requirement and would not be impacting the open space with this development.

Mr. Stypula stated that the other item that was noted was 200-ft. to the furthest parking space, it is 153-ft. to the face of that space, 170-ft. to the back of the space, so they would meet that requirement as well.

Mr. Stypula said that there was a request for the pavement to be 4-inches of asphalt, they have no objections to that, the client is ok with that and they will install that for the parking lot.

Mr. Stypula said each of the individual lots has its own trash dumpster container that gets picked up. There is also bulk refuse just down Meadow Lark Lane from where this building is proposed. They would primarily use the bulk dumpsters, they are used by the maintenance area, if the need arose for smaller pick-ups, they would have the opportunity to use just a small residential side trash can for standard pick-up.

Mr. Stypula said that a couple of grading items were brought up, so they have made a couple of tweaks to the parking grading. Where they have an existing well, they were just over 4% they reduced that down to below 4%, so all grades will be between 1-4% in the parking and 1-6% in the drives. It was noted that 1-4 was the preferred slope for the general area. They generally have 1-4 there are a couple of spaces one along the rear of the building where they have that existing gazebo or overhead structure that they are maintaining where they are 3-1. This is privately owned and maintained, 3-1 is mobile with even a riding lawnmower, they can mow on
that. There is also where they have the walk that winds through the trees, they do have one spot that is 3-1 and that is there simply to try to save as many trees as they can, if they go 4-1, they get into the tree and more into the root zone, that was the justification behind that.

Mr. Stypula said regarding the landscaping, there were a couple of questions that came up regarding screening. They have added screening basically around the entire lot, they originally did not have screening along Blue Bird Hill Drive, the drive that fronts the community center, they will install screening there. They have also added an additional tree, there is 130-ft. of frontage along that parking lot which will require five trees. There are five existing, they are removing one for the entrance drive but will add one back in to meet that requirement.

Mr. Stypula noted that one of the other items was the disturbed area, anything that is disturbed will either receive grass or three inches of mulch as noted in the comments for the planted areas they will be three inches minimum mulch, everywhere else will be stabilized with grass.

Mr. Stypula said that they have one interior island and it was noted that for every 200-ft. they would need a tree. They have not planted one there, there are two existing wells on that island that feed a private water system that serves the site, so they are not planting a tree on that island. They are asked that they are not permitted to not have a tree there. They do have three existing trees that border the east side of that parking lot that they are going to be maintaining. They also have just over 12,000-sq. ft. of open space, they will be planting five trees, they are required to have five as a part of one for every 3,000-sq. ft. or part thereof. There is also one existing tree within that disturbed area so they would have an access tree in the open space requirement to make up for that interior lot.

Mr. Stypula said that is how they are planning on addressing the comments that they received from the Planning Commission. None of those is a significant impact on the scope of the project from the owner’s eyes so they are willing to comply with all of those comments. They are asking for conditional approval.

Planner Fazzini read through his review date stamped April 12, 2021.

Engineer Landis read through his review date stamped April 7, 2021.

Chairman Reynolds noted that they did have a review from the Fire Marshal and had no additional comments and recommended approval.

Chairman Reynolds said that Public Services had no comments and recommended approval.

Chairman Reynolds stated that there was a site walk done by the Site Walk Committee.

Vice-Chairman Gross said that the Site Walk Committee did do a site walk on the project a couple of weeks ago. They found that the development was very well maintained, in fact, it looked like it was undergoing some major improvements. It appeared that the roads had been recently resurfaced. There has been a number of mobile homes that have been removed, and there are vacant lots and appeared that there were new mobile homes being brought in which is improving the overall character of the community. He added that it was an older well established mobile home park. Mr. Stypula said that it has been there for quite a few years. Vice-Chairman Gross said that it has been going through some major renovations and improvements he thought to the benefit of the community.

Chairman Reynolds thought the applicant did a nice job introducing the project.
Chairman Reynolds said that the applicant did touch base on the dumpster. He asked if refuse picked up from individual units by staff and brought to those dumpster locations? Does everyone have dumpster bins? Mr. Stypula said that everyone has an individual residential size dumpster bin for pick-up. Chairman Reynolds asked if that was picked up by the Township trash provider or was it strictly on-site? Mr. Stypula said he would have to confirm that if it was the Township trash or if it is a private company. Chairman Reynolds said he didn’t have an issue with the dumpster being located down the street. He said he knew that a lot of communities like this have on site staff maintenance members that would take the trash down the street.

Chairman Reynolds said he knew that they had a standard for open space and didn’t see a major issue with the existing property and meeting it. He thought that the building was well fitting and thanked the applicant for clarifying the distance to parking and things, but it seemed like a good location for the building and well-fitting, and in his eyes have done a nice job trying to fit things without destroying the nice mature trees that were there too. He didn’t have a major issue with allowing an acceptable deviation from our max grading and things if it means they are preserving some mature trees there.

Trustee Urbanowski said that was the one thing that she was going to agree with him on when they were talking about the 1-4 grading and then he said in that one little section that they will put it to 1-3 to save that tree, she thought that was fantastic. Mr. Stypula said that there were some nice trees out there and obviously they don’t want to go through and clear-cut those down, and thought it was a very nice area back there with the basketball court and they have a volleyball court, and some picnic space, and thought this would enhance the experience back there and be nice access to the community.

Trustee Urbanowski asked Planner Fazzini if he could go over again the overall open space calculation? She asked if it was too far off, is it not taking too much away from the overall open space? She said it is a community center. Planner Fazzini said that typically open space means yard it doesn’t say you can’t have a community center building/structure in an open space area. He said it was more of an existing condition comment if the current site meets open space or not then they could go from there to see what the reduction would be for the building, it is likely minor, building and parking lot would be the area coming out. The requirement is 500-sq. ft. per unit or 25,000-sq. ft. for the whole development whichever is greater. Mr. Stypula said that it was 420-sq. ft. and that it would be the 25,000-sq. ft.

Trustee Urbanowski questioned that the other question that was said something about planting trees over in the open space over a well, or something? She wondered if they needed some kind of waiver for them, are they required to put something there and they need to waive it, or is it not an issue? Chairman Reynolds thought that she was referring to the parking landscape requirements, that interfere with the well location? Mr. Stypula replied yes. Chairman Reynolds said technically speaking he thought that the ordinance speaks to that 200-ft. He thought that if there needs to be something there and they are ok with that one instance, and that is the one instance that prompts it, yes, he would say let’s have a waiver just to have it on record. To him, some of the things that are fitting and some of the creations of the distances are because they are fitting within existing trees in his opinion. Mr. Stypula said that in the comments because they are only a single isle it does note that the Commission can waive that requirement for the interior, and they would ask that that is waived.

Trustee Urbanowski asked if the four units were being put together? Mr. Stypula replied yes. He added that the roof structure is going to be constructed on-site but there will be basically four modular units that are brought in and put together and then the roof structure will be put on. Mr. Stypula thought that it had some nice architectural features, in it, not just a plain box.
Commissioner Walker asked how many trees they would be cutting down? Mr. Stypula replied that there will be eight trees. Chairman Walker questioned what the plans were for replacing them? Mr. Stypula replied that there will be several trees that they will be planting along the perimeter of the parking lot. He said that they have two additional trees that will be planted along the drive and then two planted on the northern part of the parking lot. He said that they have six additional trees planted evenly spaced throughout the open space. Commissioner Walker assumed that these trees will not be the same size trees that they will be cutting down. Mr. Stypula replied no. He said that they will be a two-inch caliper tree. Commissioner Walker asked if he knew the species of tree? Mr. Stypula replied that they have a split between a maple tree and a serviceberry tree. He said that the owner wouldn’t object if there was a preference as far as a tree species, they would be open to that as well.

Secretary St. Henry said that he was part of the site walk team, and it is a very heavily wooded lot. They were wondering how it would all fit in there. Based on the site plan and the discussion today, he was very comfortable that the applicant has put together a design that will preserve as many trees as possible, which is great because there is a lot of mature trees there that add to the ambiance of the community center right on the lake. He thought it was good to see that they are only taking out eight trees because there are quite a few trees there.

Chairman Reynolds said that they have had some discussions on their Tree Ordinance, some of these trees are technically allowable to be removed because they are in the building footprint, in the building area. He added that only those that are technically protected or legacy trees are those that need to be replaced, and thought that they did a very nice job. A lot of people would come in and clear-cut this and then build the center and then come back and plant significantly less mature trees and were happy to see what they were doing there.

Chairman Reynolds said that they have spoken regarding the dumpster, he thought it would be good to have a waiver on that. Landscape interior requirements just because they have the opportunity to waive it and he thought that was one item that potentially got brought up in the Planners review. He asked what concerns for the open space or providing a waiver for that increase in open space? He thought if they were in support of it, they should just have those three waivers be made. He felt that it addresses all the open planning comments. He thought that the only item that he would like to add in the motion is that he didn’t have any issue with that they have agreed to meet all OHM requirements but wanted to add that if limiting their grading from 1-3 preserves existing trees he would be fine with that because item #4 speaks to recommending 1-4. Engineer Landis said he was fine with that, 1-4 is the recommended maximum but they do allow 1-3. Chairman Reynolds said that if they say meet OHM comments numbers 1-5 that would address that they don’t need anything additionally.

Moved by Trustee Urbanowski, seconded by Commissioner Walker, that the Planning Commission waive the dumpster requirement as they have a dumpster further away that can be used, and it was also stated that, if necessary, they can use a residential bin in front of the community center.

Roll call vote was as follows: Urbanowski, yes; Hoffman, yes; St. Henry, yes; Gingell, yes; Walker, yes; Gross, yes; Reynolds, yes. Motion carried 7-0

Moved by Vice-Chairman Gross, seconded by Commissioner Hoffman, that the Planning Commission waive the additional or the current open space criteria due to the fact that this an existing development of over 62-acres that is undergoing some major improvements and that the overall landscaping for the complex is being satisfied with the existing open space, the pond in the development satisfies the landscaping requirement.
Roll call vote was as follows: Gross, yes; Urbanowski, yes; Hoffman, yes; Gingell, yes; St. Henry, yes; Walker, yes; Reynolds, yes. Motion carried 7-0

Moved by Trustee Urbanowski, seconded by Commissioner Hoffman, that the Planning Commission waive the landscape requirements for the interior parking of this site.

Discussion on the motion:

Chairman Reynolds asked if there were any findings of fact? Trustee Urbanowski replied yes.

Trustee Urbanowski amended the motion, Commissioner Hoffman re-supported to include that due to the fact that there is a well underneath that open space in the parking area.

Roll call vote was as follows: Walker, yes; Gross, yes; Urbanowski, yes; Hoffman, yes; St. Henry, yes; Gingell, yes; Reynolds, yes. Motion carried 7-0

Moved by Vice-Chairman Gross, seconded by Commissioner Walker, that the Planning Commission grant site plan approval for PC-2021-43, Orion Manufactured Home Community, Site Plan Amendment to add a community center, located at 47 Bluebird Hill Dr. (Sidwell #09-356-300-001) for plans date stamped received March 24, 2021 based on the following findings of fact: that this is an existing project which appears to be undergoing major improvements, it would be difficult and impractical to try to impose and determine all the area and bulk requirements, and the landscaping provisions of the zoning ordinance for the entire 62-acres; this proposal does represent a major improvement to the character and amenities to this community; this approval is based on the following finding conditions: that they have taken into account the planners conditions relative to the dumpster, and landscaping requirements, and that it is in compliance with the items 1-5 of the OHM report of April 7, 2021, and a final review of the landscape by the planners.

Roll call vote was as follows: St. Henry, yes; Walker, yes; Urbanowski, yes; Hoffman, yes; Gross, yes; Gingell, yes; Reynolds, yes. Motion carried 7-0

B. PC-2021-07, Master Plan Update Discussion

Planner Arroyo said he wanted to give them an update on what they showed them last time during the study session. He knew that they had made some comments and they have tried to reflect those. As they know they are preparing for the public Open House, so they thought that they would go through this one more time, and have a final discussion before they actually start to finalize the boards and get ready for the Open House which is coming in June.

Planner Arroyo said that they will be doing two Open Houses as part of this Master Plan. This one is the pre-planning one. Essentially the idea with this one is to get public input before they start to create any idea and planning policies. This is their chance to get some information that they think might be helpful to them as they go into the planning component. He said once they work with them to prepare a draft, they plan on having a second Open House so that they can share the ideas that they have developed and get public input as well on that. He wanted to make sure that they are clear that this is basically a two-part project, for this Open House. One is the pre-planning and the other will be once there is a draft in a position where they feel that they are ready to share that. He thought it was helpful in terms of understanding where they are going with the discussion. He wanted to go through and highlight what some of the changes were.
Planner Arroyo said that he has already talked about the community engagement that is already occurring. They already talked about the stations. One of their boards will be demographics and economics and that is more of an informational board although they are going to ask what type of employment centers and industries should the Township pursue and encourage, and what other comments would they like to offer related to these topics.

Planner Arroyo stated that the next one would be the market assessment survey. This is something that is actively being prepared. The Chesapeake Group who is working with them on this particular element is currently analyzing the information, as they know, there was that survey that went out, and then the data that has been collected, so they are going to have a really good snapshot of what the market can support in terms of looking at commercial, industrial, and housing/office uses. That is information that they will share as soon as they have it but they expect to have a board that will be available so they can share that with the public as well prior to the Open House.

Planner Arroyo said that the next board is housing, they talked about this first one as being more for the rural areas of the Township and talking about rural corridors and how development looks from the roadway. They are going to ask what the preferred road character is in these rural areas, is it maintaining the status quo, which is lots located adjacent to a thoroughfare or providing incentives for a setback so they can potentially preserve so that the development occurs farther from the road right-of-way, where the development isn’t right up to the roadway. Where they might not have natural vegetation but they may have some natural amenity that they might want to provide and then the lots would be behind this, so in exchange for providing that open space there might be a corresponding lot reduction in the lots themselves that is equal to the amount of open space that is being provided, so they are not penalizing. They might even incentivize it by providing a little bit more density to some developer that chooses to provide this type of amenity. That is a detail that comes through with implementation but the concept here is they are trying to get the public’s input on whether they think that this is something that makes some sense in the community.

Planner Arroyo said they will be doing a comparison of what the existing future plan classifications are with what the zoning ordinance calls for. The single-family low rural residential is the one unit for every 2.5-acres which is the equivalent of the Suburban Farms (SF) zoning district. This is more of an informational item because a lot of times at an open house there is sometimes confusion about what is the difference between the Master Plan and the zoning ordinance and these categories, they start bringing up category names that don’t necessarily match. So, it is more of a helpful reference but they want to identify in particular is the 2.5-acre minimum lot size requirement for rural residential still practical and they want to get some input on that because there is some concern about the viability of, they don’t really see proposals coming in for 2.5-acre subdivisions any more. They do want to get some input and they want to have some discussion about that to see if, in fact, it is really something that the public feels strongly about and also ultimately how the Planning Commission feels about it, so this is an introduction to that process.

Planner Arroyo said also a check and balance on what is going on with certain types of developments with Planned Unit Developments (PUD) and Consent Judgements. These are instances where either someone has gone through the (PUD) process or the Township has settled a lawsuit related to housing, and they want to indicate what projects have been approved and what the density is, and how that actually related to what the future land use called for. He thought it was good information to share in case some questions come up about projects that are active in the community.
Planner Arroyo showed the Planning Commission the Future Land Use Map that they currently have adopted, they would have a current board with that on there indicating that part of this process the Planning Commission will be making updates to that and certainly if people have specific suggestions and they want to write them down they will have different forms people can fill out and they will also have an online opportunity where people can do that too. All the questions that are being asked in person at the Open House people will also be able to do that online. Even if they come to the Open House and they don't want to touch the paper and the pens they could fill it out online while they are at the Open House, or they can go online through the website and do this without coming here at all. They want to make sure that it is available to everybody regardless if they come here or they attend online.

Planner Arroyo said the next one is getting input on different types of missing middle housing. This is an idea where they can show the public different types of essentially more house scale attached units and ask a few questions. Are these missing middle housing types appropriate in more densely populated areas of the Township? What are the preferred housing types for areas planned for denser development? Would their opinion about multiple family development be more favorable if that development had more open space? They are going to ask that question, that was an add on that was suggested, and he thought that was a good one.

Planner Arroyo said that they are going to talk about the single-family units and whether or not the garages are street facing, side facing, or recessed from the front of the living area. They are going to ask in terms of questions should the Township pursue and encourage different types of housing forms other than traditional single-family housing. Would their opinion change regarding new single-family residential development if smaller lots were built, but there was a corresponding increase in open space. That is another question about that tradeoff would they be willing to accept slightly smaller lots if these new single-family subdivisions had more open space. They would get the same number of units it is just the development scheme that they are looking at might look different and they might have the opportunity to showcase some open space areas.

Planner Arroyo said that they are going to get into their 15-minute neighborhood conversation. They are going to have an introduction as to what that really is and they are showing the hypothetical radii here depending on the type of transportation they are using. They are going to ask people if they support overall the concept of the 15-minute neighborhood. They are going to ask them if they use an electric vehicle whether it is a car, motorcycle, or truck. Then they are going to ask them if they use an electric bike. He thought it would be interesting to get a feel for those that attend if there is a use of those types of vehicles and thought it was an interesting question to ask. They have the 15-minute neighborhoods that they have identified the four different locations and they are showing the existing radii is what it really looks like if they use the current transportation system and try to bike or walk along these quarter-mile 5-minute walk, three quarter mile 15-minute, and then they show the 2-mile 10-minute bike ride, and the 3-mile, 15-minute bike ride. They are going to ask what uses would they like to see at the center of each of these 15-minute neighborhoods. What physical improvements would they like to see in terms of, safety paths, streetlights, bike lanes, and the like to make it easier to get to these. Then any other comments that they want to share about the 15-minute neighborhoods.

Planner Arroyo said that they are going to talk about the Village concept how they have two of these which is really more of the Village concept, feeding off the Village of Lake Orion and taking the area that goes into the Township and funneled it into the Village that becomes one center. And then the Gingellville area which is at Maybee and Baldwin, and that whole Baldwin corridor area that the Township has made a priority in terms of development and becoming more walkable. Also, with new transportation improvements with the boulevard and the
landscaping and a lot of what happened there really supports walkability. They are going to ask them if they support the concept of the 15-minute neighborhoods in these two locations which are village-based.

Planner Arroyo said that they are going to talk about the hamlets. They have two 15-minute neighborhoods the Decker and the Friendship Woods area. They are going to show some images and they are going to ask them if they would support the hamlet concept with the different setbacks, really looking at having more of a front yard, not the zero setbacks or the reduced setback that they might find in a village setting. They are going to ask them if they think these locations are appropriate for it being the center of 15-minute neighborhoods.

Planner Arroyo stated that the natural features and sustainability, they are going to ask people how important sustainable development principles are. They are going to talk to them about what that means. They are going to ask them if the Township should require a developer to preserve large existing trees or require developers to pay into a tree fund, to install trees. They want to see what kind of support there is for some of what they are doing now and if there is continued support to strengthen that and get some information on how people feel about preserving that natural resource.

Planner Arroyo said there was a suggestion to talk about the fact that the Township doesn't really have much control over the roadways within the Township. So, they will have a board that says the Townships in Michigan have a general lack of authority to build and improve roads, city and villages have that authority. At the Township level, Michigan law has transferred the responsibility primarily to County Road Commissions. There is the ability for the County Board of Commissioners to take that into control if they want, that has happened in Wayne & Macomb County’s but in Oakland County, it is the Road Commission for Oakland County that controls the Township roadways. They indicate that the Road Commissions can't levy taxes, which some people say why doesn't the Road Commission levy a tax? They are getting their funding from the gas tax and vehicle registration fees and then Federal and State funds are also there and there are matches that go along with that. That is the educational piece which is part of what they are doing, then they were going to ask them to describe the condition of roads in the Township, and what their overall impression, and which roads should be widened to increase capacity, to get public input on that and see where some of those priorities are.

Planner Arroyos said complete streets – they are talking about nonmotorized transportation so they are showing proposed pathways, existing pathways, and community facilities that are located and then they have added parks as well. The other element that they were going to add on it was schools, and they are currently working on having that on there as well. So, what enhancements would they make to improve mobility, walkability, and cycling in the Township? Then circle the area on a separate sheet where they think there should be future pedestrian and bike path and bike lane connections. That way people can actually circle roadway segments that they believe is a priority. Another thing they are going to ask is how important is school location to their decision regarding their desired location for their home. Did they make their decision and would they make a decision if they were moving based upon school location? They are also going to ask, how important is close proximity to parks and trails in terms of their choice of home location. Is that something that is driving home location and would it if they were looking to move would they want to move closer to a trail or some type of park facility within the community, is that important to them?

Planner Arroyo said regarding land use, they are going to suggest that folks mark areas of the Township that have a potential for redevelopment. Is there an area that maybe has developed that they see as a resident or a business person where maybe there could be some redevelopment occurring to take a different approach to how something has already occurred?
Are there any missing land uses that should be in the Township, is there something here that is really missing? Someone may answer a certain store, or a certain type of industry, or a housing type. They don’t really know but it is kind of an open-ended question. Are there any land uses that the Township should discourage? Do they believe that they have enough of a certain type of land use, or they don’t want to see any more of a certain type of land use? He thought that he would get some good feedback on that.

Planner Arroyo showed the Planning Commissioners the developments that have occurred from 2019 through current. It was a development map that was helpful to show where development is happening and what type of development it is and what the requests are. He thought that would be helpful to people and then they can ask them their opinion of the recent developments in the Township. Do they see them as being positive, neutral, negative, and why? People can respond to them, they are reviewing site plans, they are applying the ordinance standards, he wants to hear what the public says about the quality of new development that is occurring within the Township.

Planner Arroyo said they have their spending priorities where people will have the opportunity to pretend, they have six million dollars in their hand and they can set priorities on how they would like to spend it. This is more of a capital improvements recommendation that deals with how the Township would spend money if they could spend money to improve certain public facilities, so this will, he thought, give them interesting insight on spending priorities.

Planner Arroyo stated that the next steps are finalizing these boards, they will have the QR codes to help with online participation. They have the date set for the Open House on June 16, 2021.

Chairman Reynolds said he wrote down when they were talking about population and just general demographics the question mark of trends, which he thought that he had addressed in some of the developments, he thought that was an interesting piece of info that maybe they have in the back of their minds. When people speak to something and then actually live it sometimes are two different things especially when it comes to development. He encouraged the use of some different kinds of language tools whether that be a postcard, infographics, or just visuals that speak to some of these ideas of like hamlets. He knew a lot of people have difficulty understanding the term but when they see a picture they would say “I like this”. He thought that was sometimes a good comment piece especially even for them as Planner Commission members, if it is not the Master Plan but if it is ordinance updates and the future to talk about bonus criteria and when they were talking briefly about density. What are those features that people really value and therefore what other criteria are they willing to compromise whether that be density, garages, or architectural significance if the landscaping and open space become more of a prevalent topic? He was looking forward to the Open House. He asked if the Open House was all in person? Planner Arroyo said that it will be in person but there will be an online option, so, they don’t have to come.

Trustee Urbanowski said that she agreed with finding out what the trends are what people would prioritize so that they know. If they are presenting one thing and it is an amazing thing but they are stuck on something else that they know where that creativity could come in, in terms of, incentivizing. She liked the Land Use map because sometimes people do get a little wrapped around the axel thinking that there is so much happening, it is nice to see what is happening and where it is and putting it into a visual. She was surprised that it was not fuller.

Secretary St. Henry said that it is only since 2019, and 2020 was kind of a wash. He asked if it was possible to have a map like this from the last time, they did the Master Plan until now? Like the last five years of development? Planner Arroyo replied that they don’t have it available. The
data is since they became their Planners, they track this and map it so they can pull it up and map it. Secretary St. Henry asked if the Township had some sort of graph or data? Planning & Zoning Director Girling said that they have the annual report. Chairman Reynolds asked if these were all active projects on the map or any project from 2019 – 2021? Planner Arroyo replied anything that was sent in for their review. Chairman Reynolds asked if this was on the website or they are working to put this on our website? Planner Arroyo said what will happen is that the Open House will be on the website, it will be in the Open House format, prior to June 16, 2021.

Trustee Urbanowski asked since they are doing that live and people can participate online, would it be that it would be open for a time after the Open House, or would this be that this is live now please take the opportunity now or will they have a chance later on? Planner Arroyo said that they would typically suggest that it become live the morning of the Open House because they want to create some excitement for the Open House and for people actually come that can come and are willing to come. They would suggest keeping it open for several days beyond that, but it is not meant to be long-term, it is really a short few day’s iterations where they want people to get on and do it. Probably 5 business days would be the maximum that they would want to have it available. People can come the day of the Open House and then have another four more days to go online if they didn’t get a chance to and then close it out so they can summarize it and start moving on to a plan. Chairman Reynolds said that the goal is to get them to come in person.

Trustee Urbanowski asked if they have done other Open Houses in other communities that were just outstandingly successful and they were like how did all these people get here? Planner Arroyo said that the best way is for them and for the Township Board Members to invite people they know. Just like with the survey, people respond to personal invitations more than they do to seeing something on social media or on a website. If they have five or ten people that they know that they think should participate in something like this and be active and call them, is probably the best thing. He thought that was the most effective thing and thought that is what has worked in a lot of the communities that they have seen a good turnout is personal invitations. They want to hear from them, they are planning the next 20-years of how this community is going to grow do they want to participate in that? Do they want to have input on what the Planning Commission is going to do with the direction of future growth? Most people will probably say yes.

Trustee Urbanowski said she sent an email to the board of her owners Home Owners Association and she put in the email line, something about their yearly dues, and they shared it on the Facebook page. Planner Arroyo said that they almost have to create something mildly controversial to get people’s attention.

Secretary St. Henry asked if he could walk them through briefly if someone was too long into the website for the Open House, what would they experience from home versus coming here? Planner Arroyo said what would happen is they would log on and there would be an introduction, just a page describing what this was all about. It will likely be going to be scrolling, he was going to have to verify, it will probably be a story map scroll is how they typically do it. They would then be able to scroll down and they would come to the very first board, and like the demographic board, they would be able to see that information zoom in on it and read it, and then they would get to the point where the questions are being asked. So, the questions would be there and they would click and they can actually answer those questions by clicking on their response. Then that would register and they would have that recorded once they do that. Then they would scroll to the next board read that board, then the questions would popup. It is kind of like they are scrolling through this information presented topic by topic as if they were walking from station to station. Because the way it is going to be here, they will have a table and it is
going to be the demographic table and it is going to have a couple of posterboards with the information on it and then there is going to be a couple of sheets down here where they can fill out the answer to the questions that are being asked. It is trying to replicate that same process of being at the Open House in person. Secretary St. Henry asked if there was any interactive chat with the Planning Commission members? Planner Arroyo replied no, not like at the Open House, they have to be at the Open House to have the chat component.

Vice-Chairman Gross said he wished they could get some age demographics because they are planning for the future and they don’t know what they are planning for yet. Is it going to be an aging community? Will it maintain itself as a middle-aged community? Unfortunately, they don’t have that information through the census because he thought it would be very helpful in assisting them in terms of giving them a heads up of what they are looking at in the future relative to their population makeup. Planner Arroyo said that they do have some pretty decent forecast from SMC about that that they can use to plan he thought. I will help, but at the same time with the Master Plan, they are also asking the question, do they want to try to attract a certain demographic that maybe is underrepresented or they would like to see more of. They can then decide whether a priority or not. He thought that was something that they are thinking about too as they go through this process and they are listening and they are there at the Open House and listening to what people say is that something that is important, should the Township be trying to attract to more young people, or people that are older, or in the middle, is that important and why is it important. Then they can think about things that they may want to do from a land use plan perspective that might foster that type of thing. Vice-Chairman Gross said it is going to be first home buyers, empty nesters, those types of housing things that he thinks they are going to be faced with in the future.

Secretary St. Henry asked Planning & Zoning Director Girling that years ago somebody presented information along those lines of projections of population ages and so forth to them and it looked out like ten years? Planning & Zoning Director Girling said that the former Planner did make a presentation. Perhaps the census information was available at that time.

Chairman Reynolds said all the more reason to encourage people to come, they don’t have to have qualifications, they don’t have to know even what a Master Plan is. Get them here, they have professionals to help facilitate the conversation. He thought that a lot of people are scared to speak up or get involved and this is exactly what this process is for is to connect resources and receive community input. He thought that was one of the leading ones and this is the time to speak up and they want to hear from them. Planner Arroyo said this is the perfect opportunity because they are not coming to a Planning Commission meeting and standing in front of a bunch of people and having to give a presentation where they might be intimidated. This is a place where they can come in and talk one on one with someone at a table. That is probably the most comfortable opportunity other than being online for trying to share their opinion. This is not something that they are going to be standing up in front of a bunch of people giving their opinion they are going to be able to walk around from table to table and talk to Planning Commissioners one on one and it is very welcoming environment.

Planning & Zoning Director Girling said if they wanted to add a picture on their webpage where they are announcing the date. She asked if they had a picture that shows the tables too so they can see what it looks like. So, they can then see this is representative of what the format would be and maybe alleviate some of the anxiety on how this is being conducted. Planner Arroyo said that they will get them that.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
None.
9. PUBLIC COMMENTS
None.

10. COMMUNICATIONS
None.

11. PLANNERS REPORTS/EDUCATION
None.

12. COMMITTEE REPORTS
None

13. FUTURE PUBLIC HEARINGS
A. 5-19-21 at 7:05 p.m., PC-2021-45, Mountain Substation, Special Land Use Request for an electric substation located at unaddressed parcel 09-36-300-004 (a parcel north of 4879 Bald Mountain Road).

14. CHAIRMAN’S COMMENTS
None.

15. COMMISSIONERS’ COMMENTS
None.

16. ADJOURNMENT
Moved by Trustee Urbanowski, seconded by Commissioner Hoffman to adjourn the meeting at 8:11 p.m.  
Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Walon
PC/ZBA Recording Secretary
Charter Township of Orion

May 19, 2021
Planning Commission Approve Date