

Minutes of the meeting of the Chesterland Master Plan Steering Committee

held at Mayfield United Methodist Church
at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, November 19, 2007

Committee Members:

Present: Bill Laditka
Tom Basista
Bruce Becker
Ron Cotman
Geraldine Fisco
Jeff Huntsberger
Tim Todaro

Absent: Jack DeChellis
Joe Mazzurco
Bob Somrak

Proceedings:

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairman, Bill Laditka.

The meeting's agenda was read.

Minutes of the community presentation held on November 11, 2007

Ron Cotman requested that under the ninth agenda item, in number 18 where it reads "The committee has no authority to decide anything and is not saying if Chesterland should adopt one municipality over another", that the word "municipality" be replaced with "form of government."

First agenda item:

The committee reviewed the community presentation event. Overall, the committee thought that the turnout was good, the presentation went well, and there were supportive responses from those present. In addition, it also noted several important issues.

1. In response to some Chesterland residents being concerned that the master plan will increase taxes, the committee may want to publicly emphasize more about its intention of researching and applying for available grants to help pay for any future improvements. The Master Plan Steering Committee has no authority that can impact taxes.
2. The committee may wish to begin actively communicating its planning process to the community.
3. The committee may need to continuously emphasize that its job is to gather and compile information so that it is readily available when needed. The committee does not have the authority to make decisions.

4. The committee may have to reassure the community that its Mission Statement and Cornerstone Principles are simply a guidance tool and are not meant to dictate which direction Chesterland should take.
5. The committee may consider implementing a few small projects (such as Jack DeChellis' landscaping/gateway project) in the near future to show residents some tangible results. However, the committee still believes that it is extremely important to establish the master plan first. This is to make sure that efforts invested into any short-term project would not be wasted if they are later found not to coincide with the master plan.
6. The committee needs to reassure the community that it is not trying to change Chesterland but is just looking to improve its town center, noting the importance of using words such as "improve", "growth", and "visioning" in place of the word "change." The committee hopes to find a public relations officer in the near future to help it communicate with the residents.

Second agenda item:

The committee discussed possible means to communicate with the community. One immediate option is through the township website. The committee intends to post the recent community presentation on the website as soon as possible, working gradually to include other committee information such as planning schedule and meeting minutes. Ron Cotman will contact Mitch Cooper, who is the original creator of the website and a sophomore at Case Western Reserve University and check if he has any time in the near future to help create a space for the Steering Committee on the township website. The committee may eventually create its own website.

The second approach is to draft a letter to the community and post it in the Chesterland News. The letter would include information such as the committee's background, its vision, and explanation of the planning process. Another consideration would be to post the letter and other committee updates on the front windows of the town's businesses, since some residents do not get Chesterland News.

Third agenda item:

Bill Laditka asked committee members to make note of potential speakers who would be able to provide educational information (on any ad hoc related topics such as land use, architecture, and grants) to the committee and other local organizations. Tom Basista mentioned that Anita Stocker, Director of the Geauga County Community and Economic Development, and David Dietrich, Director of the Geauga County Planning Commission have offered to speak to the committee on issues involving their fields as well as their experience with other townships. Tom Basista will invite Anita Stocker and David Dietrich to present to the committee on related topics including the Ohio Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. In addition, Pamela Hanover of Squires, Sanders & Dempsey L.L.P. was also mentioned as a possible speaker on financial/funding.

Fourth agenda item:

The committee decided on the main liaison for each ad hoc committee. Selections are as follows:

1. Transportation:	Jack DeChellis
2. Utilities:	Tom Basista
3. Government Liaison:	Jeff Huntsberger
4. Zoning, Codes, Legal:	Jeff Huntsberger
5. Senior Adult & Youth Liaison:	Geraldine Fisco
6. Architecture, Planning, Landscape:	Bill Laditka
7. Parks and Recreation:	Tim Todaro
8. Civic Facilities, Township Departments Liaison	Ron Cotman
9. Form of Government:	Tim Todaro
10. Sustainability, Environment, Green Building:	Bill Laditka
11. Financial, Funding:	Geraldine Fisco
12. Technology:	Bruce Becker
13. Public Relations & Marketing:	Bill Laditka
14. Social:	Jack DeChellis
15. Past Studies:	Ron Cotman
16. Historical Analysis:	Bill Laditka
17. Natural Resources:	Jeff Huntsberger
18. Economic Development:	Bob Somrak
19. Land Use:	Tom Basista

Bill Laditka will contact volunteers to inquire which of the nineteen ad hoc issues they are interested in and give them the main liaisons' contact information. The main liaisons would need to establish instructions such as schedule and planning process for their sub-committees.

Fifth agenda item:

The committee discussed fundraising possibilities to help pay for future costs such as postage, banners/posters, refreshments, and guest speakers' fees. One option is requesting donations from local businesses, although many costs could be covered by the township, pending approval from the Board of Trustees. First, the committee would have to develop an expense budget so it can identify how much funding it needs. Geraldine Fisco mentioned that it would be a nice gesture to provide tax receipts to businesses that make donations to the committee, as a token of appreciation. Jeff Huntsberger will obtain a copy of the tax receipt that the Rotary uses.

Other matters:

Some topics that were discussed briefly by members and public attendees:

1. A public attendee voiced his opposition to changing the township's form of government and the current commercial zoning regulations. The committee explained that it does not have the authority to decide or change anything. Its job is just to research and gather information.
2. The committee was asked to consider talking to the developer who bought the 11 acres next to the old Chester school to try to find out the developer's plans for the property.
3. Bill Laditka will write thank you emails to everyone who attended the recent public presentation.

4. Geraldine Fisco asked committee members their opinions about asking Joe Mazzurco to resign from the committee. It appears that Joe Mazzurco has not had any time to actively participate in the Steering Committee. His resignation would allow another Lions Club member or a representative from another organization (such as the West Geauga Recreation Council) to join the committee. Bill Laditka will check with Joe Mazzurco regarding his availability.

The meeting officially adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Administrative Assistant, S. Christine Gumal.