

Village of Bellaire

MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

Dan Bennett, Georgia Jean Burns, Tani Carl, Butch Dewey, William Drollinger, Fred Harris, Brad Kik, Don Seman and Margie-Thomas Boyd

Master Plan Committee Meeting Minutes

May 9, 2018

5:00 p.m.

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m.
2. **Roll Call Attendance:** Committee members introduced themselves.
 - Present:** Dan Bennett, Georgia Jean Burns, Tani Carl, Butch Dewey, Bill Drollinger, Brad Kik and Margie Thomas-Boyd
 - Absent:** Fred Harris and Don Seman
 - Staff Present:** Lori Lockett, Zoning Administrator
 - Also Present:** John Sych, Networks Northwest
3. **Approval of Minutes:** None presented. This organizational meeting was the first committee meeting.
4. **Unfinished Business:** None presented.
5. **New Business:** Master Plan Update: John Sych introduced himself to members of the committee explaining that he is a community planner with Networks Northwest, a regional agency covering ten counties from Emmet County to Missaukee County. There are three areas of providing services, workforce development, small business development, and community development. He explained that he is one of six planners providing planning services to communities within the service region. He identified the planning and zoning services provided, explaining that they are a public agency receiving funds from various sources, including fee for services. Sych explained that he is here to provide guidance to the committee. This process is a community effort. The committee was created, building on the planning commission. Sych next reviewed the package of information provided for orientation. The objectives for the meeting were to review pertinent sections of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, 2008 PA 33, for authority to develop a plan; to establish a time line for the development of a master plan; to review a conceptual outline for the plan; and to set the meeting schedule. Sych explained the general purpose and functions of a master plan providing a brief history of why certain items, such as “light and air” are specifically referenced in the statute. According to Sych, the master plan is a policy document that provides guidance to the community, the planning commission, and the village council. The master plan provides support for the zoning ordinance. Land use and infrastructure is also to be addressed in the master plan. The overall character of the community is also addressed. Sych explained the “zoning plan” component of the master plan and the connection between the planning and zoning documents. He explained the difference between goals and objectives, providing examples; a goal may be to increase the variety of housing choices within the community, the objective to support would be to revise the zoning ordinance to allow for different housing options and density in various districts. According to Sych, the goals and objectives are the heart of the master plan. A master plan is required for zoned communities. Zoning is covered under separate statute. Sych asked if the committee had questions. Brad Kik asked about the age of the current master plan. Butch Dewey stressed the importance of the master plan in seeking grant funding. Brad Kik asked about the Redevelopment Ready Community practices. Sych explained the program the six best practices areas making up the designation. Primary among the best practices is the master plan. Georgia Burns asked about other communities

that have gone through this process recently as she would like to review other communities' master plans. She wondered if the community would look different when finished. Sych explained that the community would not look different but would have a clear direction. Bill Drollinger said the goals and objectives have changed over the years. Sych said part of the process is protecting what the community has. Burns said that the downtown has changed because there are fewer places to shop. She sees the community as drowning, while others see it as floating. Sych said that the perspective was important. Understanding where the community has been, some change may not be for the better. The goal is to determine what is best for the community. There was recollection of the efforts to remove the historic courthouse. Dan Bennett commented on the condition of the county building. He agreed that there are items that need to be protected. Bellaire is a small, safe town and a great place to raise kids. There needs to be jobs. Sych said this is the opportunity to address the strengths and challenges. Development reflects on the character of Bellaire. Buildings have a lasting imprint on the village. Margie Thomas-Boyd asked whether the committee needed to worry about compatibility with the Antrim County Master Plan. Sych indicated that he had read the county plan. He thought that it gave the village more flexibility as it recognizes the developed areas. Committee members may be able to attend the county facilities meetings. Sych said that public buildings are civic assets. There used to be more pride in civic structures. Now it is more about the bottom line. Brad Kik asked about researching questions about housing availability and type within the village. Sych said that the initial assessment would include information about housing, income and populations trends. Luckett explained the efforts by the planning commission to address housing in the current zoning ordinance. Sych said the planning process might make recommendations. Discussion moved to the timeline. Monthly meetings are proposed. The committee is charged with engaging members in the community. Residents, property owners, visitors and business owners should have input. Engagement through public workshops and focus groups for economic development may be pursued. Sych has learned that it is important to listen to opposing viewpoints through this process. Summer is a busy time but it is also time for public engagement and gathering information. Gathering information leads to the development of goals and objectives. Sych explained the public hearing process after committee completes the draft plan. Burns asked about the process for the future development of parcels. Sych explained the process and emphasized the impact of the master plan. Drollinger asked about the community surveys. Sych explained that an on-line survey, using Survey Monkey would be developed. He cautioned that this would not be a scientific survey. There was discussion about setting the regular meeting time. Taking into consideration the various work schedules and other meetings in the village offices, the members agreed to meet the second Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. Sych emphasized that the meetings are intended to be working/discussion sessions.

6. Correspondence/Reports: Luckett thanked committee members for participating and volunteering.

7. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 6:09 p.m.

Minutes compiled by:
Lori Luckett, Zoning Administrator & Recording Secretary

Approved: _____

Date: _____