

Appendix A.

Osceola Township, Osceola County, Michigan Planning Commission Land Use Plan Community Input Meeting

On June 8, 2009, the Osceola Township Planning Commission held a community input meeting to inform township residents of the need for a 5-year land use plan and to seek information about community attitudes and desires relative to land use planning. The meeting was attended by approximately 35 community residents and local officials. During the meeting, small focus groups were asked to discuss and comment on various topics related to land use planning. Following is a summary of the information gathered at that meeting along with the Planning Commission's response to each topic area. The planning commission used this information as a guide during the development of the Township's first 5-year plan.

Community Input Results from June 8, 2009 Community Input Meeting:

Resident overview

1. I live in Osceola township because:

- A. I was born here.
- B. Housing is inexpensive.
- C. It has easy access to hunting areas and other recreations.
- D. I have more space but easy access to the city.
- E. Land is inexpensive and taxes are lower.
- F. I have family here.

2. What do you like about Osceola Township?

- A. It is located close to town (Evert).
- B. The rural character.
- C. Good location within the surrounding area.

***Response to 1 and 2.** The Planning Commission understands that Osceola Township residents like and want to preserve the character of the township.*

3. What improvements does Osceola Township need to implement?

- A. Dedicate land for, and develop a Township Park with play equipment, recreation activity areas, and picnic facilities.

***Response to 3A.** The Planning Commission recommends that the Township Board approach one or more of the township's businesses to see if they would support and provide this facility.*

B. Build, repair, and maintain decent roads.

- i. Failure to sell a beautiful home was cited due to bad road.
- ii. Clear ditches of brush and debris.
- iii. Build up roads that are frequently under water.
- iv. Clean out and/or replace clogged culverts
- v. Find finances for road improvements.
- vi. Encourage a millage for fire protection to free up funds for road improvements.

***Response to 3B.** The Planning Commission will forward this information to the Township Board for further consideration.*

Pure Zoning issues

4. The township should preserve agricultural land and natural resources. Yes – 4
 - A. It is why I moved here.
 - B. More land should be zone agricultural not less.
 - C. Do what is possible to preserve, the aesthetics of the area, the scenic character, natural resources (woods, streams, wildlife, land).
 - i. Preserving agricultural Land - Factors
 - ii. There are fewer farmers than in earlier eras.
 - iii. Much of the agricultural land is being farmed as larger, combined operations.
 - iv. If farm land is not tilled and or harvested, the Autumn Olive (shrub) infestation will likely overrun the acreage.
 - D. Small land divisions (40 acres or less) are not usually practical to farm, or to combine with other units, for efficient production agriculture.
 - i. The Township Land Division Ordinance and the state's Land Division Act were cited as guidelines.
 - ii. The reality that the costs of agricultural ownership and production do not compare favorably with the income availability from the sale of agricultural land no non-agricultural uses was cited. Ice Mountain, land developers and individual real estate purchasers are examples.
5. The township should only rezone property on US-10 for development.
6. The township should keep Industrial and Commercial zoning adjacent to US-10.
7. The township should encourage commercial and industrial development. (3 no. 2 yes)
8. The township should encourage commercial enterprises related to the tourism and recreation opportunities within the area.

***Response to 4,5,6,7 and 8.** The Planning Commission understands that current Osceola township residents desire to maintain the character of the township as is and want commercial and industrial development to be cautiously considered along the US-10 corridor only. The Planning Commission intends to include this community input in the 5 year plan and in future proposed changes to the current zoning ordinance.*

9. The current zoning of all land sales needs to be accurate and provided to buyer.
 - A. Assist prospective and new purchasers of property within the township to:
 - B. Check on permitted uses for the property being considered before purchase.
 - C. Secure information through the Zoning Administrator and/or real estate agents.

***Response to 9.** Currently sellers of land and their Realtor are not required to provide zoning information to prospective buyers. The Planning Commission intends to publish an electronic version of the zoning map on the Internet for easy public access.*
10. Re-evaluate Land Use designations on the Land Use Map.
 - A. Be cautious of "grandfathering".
 - B. Change "Uses by Right" and/or "Uses Requiring Special Use Permits" so that adverse livestock and operations would not be continued in a newly-designated, more restrictive Land Use.
 - C. Change "Uses by Right" and/or "Uses Requiring Special Use Permits" to comprehend the difference between companion animals and agricultural animals

***Response to 10.** The Planning Commission accepts this input and will proceed to consider changes to the Zoning Ordinance along these lines.*

Gun Clubs, Shooting Ranges and Game Preserves.

11. The township should try to minimize the negative effects of gun clubs and gun ranges by:
 - A. Controlling the hours of operation.

- B. Making sure they are a safe distance from neighboring property.
- C. Requiring effective safety berms, embankments and hills.
- 12. The township should carefully balance the rights of property owners adjacent to gun and shooting ranges with the 2nd amendment rights of all residents.
- 13. The township should preserve the 2nd amendment rights of residents.
- 14. The township should not interfere with landowners using firearms on their own property for target practice.
- 15. Game preserves are not currently a firearms concern. The high fence preserves affect the natural flow and migration of wildlife.
- 16. Shooting ranges should be placed away from residential property.

Response to 11,12,13,14,15 and 16. *The Planning Commission recognizes that it has the responsibility to balance landowners 2nd amendment rights with the rights of adjacent property owners. Changes to the Zoning Ordinance in this area are being developed.*

ATV issues

- 17. ATV use in the township is causing damage to local roads.
- 18. Currently ATV use is not an issue (2 responses).
- 19. The township needs to control ATV drivers who trespass especially on agricultural land.
- 20. Review ordinances on ATV use ever 5 years.

Response to 17,18,19 and 20. *The Planning Commission will forward this input to the Township Board who has responsibility in this area.*

Blight and roadside trash

- 21. The township should encourage a “crack down” on trash thrown out of car windows.
 - A. Can local courts allow/assign community service participants to road cleanup?
 - B. The township should install signs to warn litterers of prosecution.
 - C. The Township should partner with the City of Evart and other Townships to share costs for signs.

Response to 21. *The Planning Commission will forward this input to the Township Board who has responsibility in this area.*

- 22. The township should control and reduce blight.
 - A. A definition of blight is needed. A full and complete definition is probably not possible though.
 - B. Old/abandoned/used mobile homes need to be removed.
 - C. Are shipping containers considered blight when used for storage?
 - D. Are old, unused semi-trailers considered blight?
 - E. Can the township sponsor a clean-up day for this?
 - F. The township should look for volunteers to assist property owners who need help.
 - G. The township should publicize ways to dispose of junk materials (Tires, refrigerator, etc.)
 - H. Hire a blight control officer, funded with fines, supplement salary if necessary.
 - I. Identify definitions and infractions to the offender and be tough on non-compliance after a permitted clean up time.

Response to 22. *The Planning Commission accepts that blight control is and should be a zoning issue, specifically items A,B,C and D. The Commission will forward this input to the Township Board who has enforcement responsibility in this area.*

Osceola Township-City of Evart relationship

23. A sewer system for Spring Hill is expensive and unlikely to be funded.
24. The city has very little reserve sewer capacity.
25. The township should work closely with the City of Ewart on growth possibilities.

***Response to 23 24 and 25.** The Planning Commission will forward this input to the Township Board who has responsibility in this area.*

Spring Hill Relationship

26. Do not encourage physical growth of camp because this reduces tax revenue.
27. Limit the amount of the Township land available for Non-profit use by ordinance (Zoning?)
 - A. Require a Special Use Permit to add Non-Profit acreage within the Township.
 - B. Require a Public Hearing.

***Response to 26 and 27.** The Planning Commission will seek input from the Township Board on this issue and will research and address this issue if requested.*