



# DEXTER TOWNSHIP

## PLANNING COMMISSION

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**EX-OFFICIO TWP. BRD.**  
CHANDRA HURD  
CHRISTINA MAIER  
ALICIA ABBOTT  
**COMMISSIONERS**  
  
JANIS MILLER  
**RECORDING SECRETARY**

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### REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

#### Wednesday, February 28, 2024

Present: Marty Straub, Chairperson, Tom Lewis, Secretary; Chandra Hurd, Christina Maier, Alicia Abbott, and Gretchen Driskell. Absent: Bob Nester, Vice-Chair (he has submitted a letter of resignation which comes before the Township Board on March 19<sup>th</sup>).

Also present: Megan Masson-Minock, Planning Director, and Samatha Edwards, Administrative Manager

Absent: Janis Miller, Recording Secretary.

1. **Call to Order:** Chairperson Straub called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Recited by all.
3. **Conflict of Interest:**  
Alicia Abbott is remodeling her home and questioned whether she should recuse herself from discussion, or voting, on the amendments to Article 25, Table 25.1 Activities Requiring Zoning Permits. After discussion, consensus of all five Commissioners was that she did not have a conflict of interest. Note: Nester absent and Abbott abstained.
4. **Approval of Agenda:**  
*With no corrections or additions, Chairperson Straub declared the agenda is approved as presented.*
5. **Public Comment:** (non-agenda items) Opened 6:05 PM. No public comments.
6. **Public Hearings**
  - A. Public hearing to amend the title of Article 4 of the Zoning Ordinance from “Table of Regulations” to “Table of Uses”.  
This was an inconsistency that was discovered by staff review. The previous Zoning Ordinance had the uses stated within each zoning district. “Regulations” is associated with dimensional requirements.  
Opened 6:07 PM  
Jeff Lindholm, 5857 Ray Knight Drive  
He was questioning the Table of Uses permits for residential businesses. He also said the documentation of Open-Air Markets wasn’t very clear and he questioned why Open-Air Markets were restricted from May 1<sup>st</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup>. Chairperson Straub said that these comments were not for this public hearing but would be taken into consideration on the following public hearing.  
Closed 6:15 PM

- B. Public Hearing to amend Table 25.1 in Article 25, Section 25.03 of the Zoning Ordinance as to which structures, uses, or activities require zoning permits.

Open 6:15 PM

Discussion: A Commercial use of a building would need a zoning permit to evaluate parking, loading, etc. The Table states “Home Occupation” and Jeff Lindholm’s concern is in the rural area of Dexter Township there are people running businesses out of their homes for years and have not filed for a permit. Home Occupation based businesses should be dealt with separately from Commercial. Anything preexisting is presumed they were permitted at the time or it could be a preexisting non-conforming use. The placement of the comma is the issue and if it was moved it would change other verbiage in the Zoning Ordinance. Agricultural businesses fall under The Right to Farm Act and Dexter Township has no jurisdiction over those businesses.

Closed 6:23 PM

Continued Discussion:

Question, why a permit is needed for demolition or raising a building. Planning Director Masson-Minock stated it is because Chelsea Area Construction Agency does not require [physical] checks, or paperwork, to make sure all the utilities are cut off, so the permit is a safety check from the Township’s point of view.

Question, why the height of a flagpole was removed. Section 16.21 addresses setbacks and maximum heights for flagpoles.

The new items in the table have footnote references (B, C) that should have been included in the board packet [and ordinance?] for clarity.

## 7. Action Items:

The Commissioners decided to take the more difficult one first, hence “B” before “A”.

- B. Recommendation to Township Board on proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment to Table 25.1 in Article 25, Section 25.03 of the Zoning Ordinance as to which structures, uses, or activities require zoning permits.

***Motion by Driskell (as formulated by Planner Masson-Minock):***

***Based on the information provided by staff and during the public hearing held on February 28, 2024, the Planning Commission makes a favorable recommendation of the proposed text amendment for Table 25.1, in Article 25, Section 25.03 of the Zoning Ordinance; specifically text as noted in red in the [PC] board packet, to the Township Board for the following reasons: 1. The zoning text amendment is compatible with the goals and policies of the Master Plan, and 2. The zoning text amendment is consistent with state and federal law.***

***Motion seconded by Abbott.***

***Roll Call Vote: Yeas - Hurd, Driskell, Lewis, Abbott, Maier, and Straub;***

***Nays - None; Absent - Nester. Motion carried 6-0.***

- A. Recommendation to Township Board on proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment to amend the title of Article 4 from “Table of Regulations” to “Table of Uses”.

*Motion by Maier (as formulated by Planner Masson-Minock):  
Based on the information provided by staff and during the public hearing held on February 28, 2024, the Planning Commission makes a favorable recommendation of the proposed text amendment for the title of Article 4 of the Zoning Ordinance, specifically changing the title from “Schedule Table of Regulations” to “Schedule Table of Uses”, to the Township Board for the following reasons: 1. The zoning text amendment is compatible with the goals and policies of the Master Plan, and 2. The zoning text amendment is consistent with state and federal law.*

*Motion seconded by Hurd.*

*Roll Call Vote: Yeas - Hurd, Driskell, Lewis, Abbott, Maier, and Straub;*

*Nays - None; Absent - Nester. Motion carried 6-0.*

## 8. Discussion Items

- A. Zoning amendments regarding open air markets

Planning Director Masson-Minock is looking for some input from the Commissioners. The complexity of this text amendment is due to the fact when you add a use you are adding it into about four or five different sections. There were also some mistakes that were marked in red and strikeouts for deletion. The current Zoning Ordinance does not provide for a farmers’ market where multiple vendors would come to sell. The approach was to look at it as a temporary accessory use, like a parking lot. A road side stand is different in that it is attached to the property which is selling the goods. Discussion of open-air business, which does include flea markets, as there is no definition in the zoning Ordinance for “open air sales” as stated in the table. Discussion of food trucks, which is listed in the table as food carts. Planner Mason-Minock suggests adding food trucks to a temporary event and write a few more regulations in the section Food Carts to put parameters around food trucks. We need to have coordination between open-air sales, open-air business, and open-air markets. Need clarification regarding signs in open-air markets. This Section will be addressed in future Planning Commission meetings.

## 9. Approval of Planning Commission Minutes:

**Discussion: Spelling corrections, add verbiage to 7. B., change date of the meeting on top of first page, change 7C to 7B, change 7D to 7C, and change 7E to 7D.**

*Moved by Maier, seconded by Abbott, to approve the meeting minutes of January 23, 2024 as amended. Motion carried 6 0. (Nester absent)*

## 10. Correspondence

Letter from the City of Dexter and Planning and Zoning report for January.

Abbott questioned the Natures Preserve report that they were approved in 2020 but the applicant has yet to submit construction escrow as well as provide insurance and bonds that are required, or schedule the preconstruction meeting. Planning Director Megan Masson-Minock responded that they may owe us money and she had met with OHM (township engineers) for which she will update the PC in March.

*Documents regarding the agenda items can be obtained at the Township Hall during normal business hours, the Townships website: [www.dextertownship.org](http://www.dextertownship.org) and can be viewed on [ew.livestream.com/dextertownship.org](http://ew.livestream.com/dextertownship.org).*

**11. Township Board of Trustees Update**

Trustee Driskell gave an update of the January 16<sup>th</sup> Board of Trustees meeting. She noted that the [Dexter Township] Public Safety Millage passed

**12. Concerns of Commission Members, Director of Planning and Zoning, Supervisor, and Recording Secretary:**

Maier noted that the website list of links to the Master Plan need to be corrected.

Administrative Manager Sam Edwards said that anyone interested in the empty Planning Commission seat email the Office Manager.

Also note: Meeting on March 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM on single hauler proposal.

Chairperson Straub commented on Bob Nesters history with the Township and suggested a resolution in his honor.

**13. Public Comment:** Opened 7:35 PM. No public present.

**14. Future Agenda Items: March 26, 2024**

A) Issues mentioned tonight.

**15. Adjournment:**

Motion by Maier to adjourn. Motion seconded by Hurd. All ~~eyes~~ **yeses**. Meeting adjourned at 7:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Tom Lewis, Secretary

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Janis Miller, Recording Secretary