Rock River Township Joint Meeting of CUPPAD with Township & PC Representatives

February 29, 2024, 10 am Township Hall

Present: Dotty Lajoye, Teri Grout, Tammy Shega, Rowan Bunce

Purpose of Meeting: Discuss history and current status of PC activities; strategize and prioritize near-term actions.

1. Master Plan
   1. **Public input efforts and timeline so far.** According to Dotty surveys are not required to get public input for a master plan. She was glad to see we did send a survey but public input from here on can take place at the hearings when the new masterplan draft is presented.
   2. **Status of draft**. When the draft is passed by the planning commission it is presented to the township board for review. A public notice must be sent out 15 days ahead of public hearing on master plan. Master plan must be mailed to all surrounding townships (Limestone, Onota, Skandia, Autrain, Munising etc.) as well as County Board, All utility companies (Uppco, Alger Delta, WE Energies, DTE, others?) MSU and other public organization will also get a copy of master plan. They then have 63 days to respond with questions and changes. Census data is what it is. If Census data does not exist for example, how many Finnish in our community? It does not affect the master plan.
   3. **Clarification of Communication needs**. Planning commission is in charge of master plan. When the PC is finished with master plan it can be sent to CUPPAD for their review, but it is not required for them to respond before continuing the process to adopt the plan.
2. Pending Zoning Ordinance Amendments
   1. **VRBO Status**. CUPPAD is not required to review new ordinances. Sending new ordinances to CUPPAD is a communication courtesy only.
   2. **Other amendments.** The planning commission has full ownership of Zoning Ordinances CUPPAD can offer up to 10 hrs. of free consultation if PC has questions.
3. Updates to DNR Recreation plan
   1. **Status.** Again, the Planning Commission is in charge of recreation plans. Updated rec plan can be sent to CUPPAD as a communication courtesy. We discussed whether we could include the school district into the rec plan for grant purposes. Short answer is no. The school’s parks and playgrounds can be listed in the rec plan as local recreation opportunities.
   2. **Potential Projects & Timelines**. The new Updated Recreation Plan must be done by November/December of this year so we can submit grants for new park and playground equipment.
   3. **Discussion of Strategy.** Consult with Julia Cogger from CUPPAD on park and playground design and planning. She has a ton of experience and advice. Contact Superior Alliance for Independent Living about ADA accessibility of parks. Recreation Plans that include DEI policies are more likely to be awarded grants.
   4. **Other Concerns**. New renewable energy legislation PA 233. Not much township oversight for large renewable energy facilities. Creation of a Compatible Renewable Energy Ordinance (CREO) can help townships ensure large scale projects will follow Michigan Public Service Commission rules.