

Steering Committee Meeting 1/25/22

Chairwoman Melissa Augustine called the Special Trustee Meeting for the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee to order at 6:31PM on Tuesday, January 25, 2022. In attendance were Trustees Augustine, Ascherl, and Swedyk. Trustee Augustine called the roll of the committee; Paul Easterling, Maria Griffiths, MD, Lou Bentzen, T. David Yatsko, Richard Pearl, Paul O'Neill, Gary Wolny, Brian Cadnum, Jacob Studor, Kara Pay, Kenton Grimes, Zoning Commission Representative: David Manley, and Alternates: Tom Schrader, Cindy Engleman, and Jim Bialosky. Chris Kalina had an excused absence. 9 members of the community in person and 15 joining virtually. Augustine made a motion to begin the meeting. Second by Ascherl. Vote: Aug – Yes, Asc. – Yes, S – yes

Ms. Augustine thanked the committee for their service to Hinckley. She read the definition of a Comprehensive Plan from the 2014 Comprehensive Plan binder: A comprehensive plan is a community's "blueprint" for the future. It is a vision of what a community wants to become, and the steps needed to realize that vision. Specifically, the Plan achieves the following:

- Documents and illustrates what the community looks like today and what direction it wants to go in the future; it includes assessment of existing resources and issues, projection of future conditions and needs, and consideration of collective goals and desires.
- The Comprehensive Plan is a method of translating the community's values into specific actions. It is a policy guide and provides a framework for future land use decision-making and the physical development of the community. It also considers and plans for important social, natural resource and economic values of the community.
- Covers an approximate time frame of 10-20 years; it is assumed that shorter-term reviews will keep it current with the changing needs of the community.
- Is closely integrated with other municipal documents and initiatives.

The Comprehensive Plan is NOT a zoning ordinance, a subdivision regulation, a budget, or a capital improvement program. It is meant to provide the framework for the development of these implementation tools.

Augustine asked that each member of the committee introduce themselves, say how long they have lived in Hinckley and why they wanted to be on the committee.

Paul O'Neill: Lived in Hinckley since 2002 and is the owner of Wayman Farms. He stated he joined because he saw the "Keep it Rural" signs and wanted to represent the agricultural part of the community.

Jim Bialosky (Alternate): Lived in Hinckley for 16 years. He stated he joined because he cares about the community and plans to be here for a long time.

Paul Easterling: Lived in Hinckley for a year and a half. He stated he moved to Hinckley to be close to family and he enjoys the community. He wanted to get involved to help the community

and was concerned that residents in developments are sometimes ostracized and wanted to make sure they had a voice as well.

Jacob Studor: Lived in Hinckley for 18 years. He stated he has worked in various communities and wanted to help the community.

Gary Wolny: Lived in Hinckley for 40 years. He stated that he sees this as an opportunity to give back to the community.

T. David Yatsko: Raised in Hinckley. He stated that it would be a good idea to put his two cents in.

Brian Cadnum: Lived in Hinckley since 1957 and is a full-time farmer. He stated he wanted to join the committee to keep Hinckley a great place to live.

Maria Griffiths, MD: Lived in Hinckley since the 90s. She stated she wants to be a part of directing the change and direction of the community.

Cindy Engleman (alternate): Lived in Hinckley for 10 years. She stated that she wanted to be a part of what is coming down the line. She also said she wants to get other's input on the direction of the Township.

Kara Pay: Graduated from Highland High. She thought it was a good time to give back to the community and find out what everyone's thoughts are moving forward. She stated she sees a lot of polarization and wants to bridge the gap.

Tom Schrader (alternate): He stated that he is interested in helping any way he can and is looking for opportunities for citizenship to come together.

David Manley (Zoning Commission Representative): Lived in Hinckley for 43 years. He stated that he has served on three previous steering committees and is looking forward to serving again.

Richard Pearl: Lived in Hinckley since 1985. He stated he wanted to be on the committee because he's not convinced that the plan is broken but he wanted to talk to others and find out what they would like and audit the plan.

Lou Bentzen: Lived in Hinckley for 50 years. He stated that he joined the committee because he loves the community.

Ken Grimes: Lived in Hinckley since 2002. He stated he always wanted to live in Hinckley since he was a boy and now that he does, he wants to be more productive and help the community in any way he can.

Augustine gave a recap of how the committee was chosen using the ninety eight applications in which the names had been redacted. She reminded members that the committee is here to audit the plan and that any notes are subject to records requests.

The Committee is encouraged to attend the February 12th financial presentation with Fiscal Officer Martha Catherwood, time to be determined.

Augustine stated that the committee is using OHM as an advisor for the committee. The OHM advisor stated that tonight's meeting should be a listening session only for the committee. The committee will not be able to answer questions at this meeting since they don't have all the information yet. This meeting's purpose is to hear from as many residents as possible about their thoughts for the community.

Future meetings will be held (tentatively) at 6:30 pm on February 22, March 29 and April 26 at Town Hall. Ms. Augustine did speak about hosting the meetings at Our Savior Lutheran Church, but there was no way to facilitate the virtual option at the church of which many residents have become accustomed to, so the meeting will be held at townhall.

Augustine then opened the meeting was opened to the public for comments. She stated that everyone would have a chance to speak but will be held to three minutes in order to give everyone time to speak.

Public Comments are as follows:

Terry Walrath: Stated he participated in 2 or 3 Steering Committees and that he is here as an interested observer. He believes Hinckley is a bedroom community, which means that they live in Hinckley but work elsewhere. He further explained that landowners will be able to sell to whoever they would like. Pearl agreed with Terry that Hinckley is a bedroom community with rural characteristics.

Augustine read an email from Scott and Lisa Rushworth. They stated that they want to make sure that there is a high response rate of residents with any surveys sent out. Dave Manley explained how the previous steering committees asked for input: In the 80s, they sent letters to each home. Later committees were in person only.

Augustine then read an email from Patricia Woodall. She stated that she would like to see no collective green space and to maintain the 2- acre minimum.

Heidi Gotein came to the podium to speak. She stated that she has been involved in many meetings in the past. She sees Hinckley is changing and not in a good way. She thinks that bringing water to the Township is the beginning of the end and does not think that we should seek out opinions via mail that if they cared, they would be present. She spoke to being disappointed at the turn out of people that attended the meeting this evening.

A resident asked if there is a time limit for the committee. Augustine said that we have until the end of April per the contract with OHM Planning and reminded the residents that this is just an audit. That the plan, for the most part, is a good plan, but some aspects may need to be changed. The Comprehensive Plan supports the Zoning resolutions. They are working off the 2015 plan that is on the Hinckley Township Website. Hard copies of the plan were given to the committee members.

A resident asked about OHM planning. Augustine explained that the Township has used them in the past and felt comfortable with them as they are highly recommended. She also stated that the 2015 plan took a year to design but it was a brand-new plan.

John Calias came up and spoke at the podium. He echoed Ms. Gotein's sentiment and said that water was a bad idea and would open the floodgates. He thinks that the Township needs to be as independent as possible, and that Hinckley is one of a kind. He believes people will leave if it keeps changing.

Ron Cameron came up to the podium to speak. He explained he previously lived in Avon Lake and the developments started popping up, so he wanted to move to a more Rural area. He came to meet the committee and express that he does not think city water should be brought in.

Bialosky asked Mr. Cameron to define rural. Cameron said that he thinks it means horses, farming, the parks etc. Bialosky then asked that those that come up to speak to please define rural so that the committee ensures that they are defining it how the residents would like it defined.

Marsha Powers Cameron came to the podium and thanked the committee for their time. She asked to look at it from a financial point of view. She said that looking at things from the sources and uses, the residents will have a better understanding of what is going on in the community.

Shawn Pepera came to the podium and asked: What do you want the place to look like in 10 years? She said to look far into the future and don't be afraid of limits. She asked the committee to think of the people, not the developers and close any loopholes that you may see, like a business district.

Easterling said that when they moved to Hinckley, they weren't thinking Rural. He said that they saw it as in between Cleveland and Akron and that it is a small Township and would like to keep it like that.

Cadnum stated that to him, rural means freedom to farm and that putting time limits on a tractor, like other communities hurts the farmers.

Griffiths read a definition of rural, and it was based about space. She stated Hinckley has a lot of characteristics that if they are lost, then the Township will lose its identity.

Bialosky stated that he would like to see Hinckley as Rural but accessible, which means when you go for a walk, you hear crickets, but are still able to go shopping close by. He encouraged input from residents by email and coming to the meetings. They want to hear the Township's voice.

Dean Bernhoffer came up and said that rural means some space between neighbors. He then asked Mr. Manly to give his input on past committees.

Manly explained that he thinks Hinckley has made progress. He stated that he lives on a street with city water, but didn't tie in. He thinks in the future, the EPA will mandate water and sewer whether the township likes it or not.

Pay stated that she has seen a big change since 2015 with traffic and traffic lights, especially on 303.

Cameron again came to the podium. She explained that she believes that Hinckley is rural and still have neighbors that care for one another and are deeply concerned about their history.

Michelle Crew came up and said that she moved into a development and didn't like the HOA. So, she moved to State Road. She wanted to hear from the committee on their thoughts and thinks one of the greatest assets of Hinckley Township is space. She said that the 2 acres may be nothing due to large mansions, so do we increase the frontage or space between homes?

Pearl spoke about conservation developments. He stated that there are only three conservation developments in Hinckley. He then polled the audience if they drove through conservation developments and encouraged residents to drive through conservation developments and to bring back the pros and cons of the developments.

Angela Chesnick spoke on conservation developments and what they were originally sold to Township by former Trustee Catherwood. She said that it is not what has happened. She explained that the homes aren't treed like they were promised and not set back like they were promised. A discussion ensued on what the conservation land looks like for specific developments and how landscaping and setbacks would help with the rural feel with specific developments being discussed.

Augustine stated that the yield plan was adopted in 2018. The plan requires developers who wish to create a conservation development to prepare a concept plan for both a conservation development and a regular development with homes on two-acre (or more) lots. There have been no conservation developments built since that time. Additionally, the 2021 Board of Trustees approved a text amendment change to the zoning resolution that changed the 100-foot setback to 300 feet.

A discussion between the committee started on HOAs and farmers. There are only three or four 100-acre properties left in Hinckley which is the requirement for a conservation development.

Pepera asked if lawsuit rulings were built into the last comprehensive plan. She mentioned that we are reactionary and need to be proactive. Pepera acknowledged the number of 100-acre parcels but reminded the committee that there are several large parcels that adjoin that could be combined in the future to make additional 100 acre parcels.

Jim Lawson stated all comprehensive plans should consider the impact on Zoning and should be broken out. He mentioned that Zoning needs to be understood. Emphasized that the committee needed to consider the consequences of their actions and how their ideas may be used in the future in a different way. He discussed the Redwood development and how the houses are dense because the developer was able to use other land to offset acreage. He stated the conservation districts should be abolished.

Nikki Long approached the podium. She asked if there would be more public meetings. Augustine stated that all the meetings would be public, therefore the public would be invited to interact.

She said that her definition of rural comes down to space. That focus should be on keeping the density at what it is now with the 2-acre minimum for R1 properties. She spoke on the traffic and that more density means more traffic. She also said that Medina County has one of the lower tax rates but that density strains services. She thinks something should be put into the plan to limit or ban apartments in Hinckley. She also is an advocate for not having more water and sewer brought in because she believes it will bring in more conservation developments. She would like to find a way incentivize the developer to build larger lots and find a way to tell developers that they have plant x number of saplings on the new properties. Everything is about balance, find a way to meet in the middle and give everyone a little of what they want. She also asked that the committee keep light pollution in mind and maybe come up with limits. She emphasized that density is very important She stated that she wants Hinckley to stay exactly as it is now.

Manly brought up that about 60% of the properties in Hinckley are under 1 acre secondary to being grandfathered into old zoning codes and that the Ohio Revised Code dictates what the Township can and cannot do. There was a discussion with Ms. Long about what can be asked of developers based on the code. 92% of total acreage is R1.

Walrath came to the podium again and spoke of his role of the conservation developments and stated that he took offense to any implication that the Zoning Commission or the Trustees took bribes from developers. That they wanted to preserve open space. He said that there was no evil or corrupt intent. They thought they were doing a good thing and following the Comprehensive Plan by conserving land.

The committee stated that they needed to have vision and foresight but cautioned that there are some things that they will not be able to control. The needs of the community are universal. They also cautioned that the Township shouldn't be unwelcoming to others.

Nancy Mandilakis came to the podium and asked that they all drive thru Redwood. She wants the committee to look at the density of the development to make sure that it doesn't happen again.

The committee discussed the number of large lots and that they don't believe that thousands of trees would be removed from the Township with developers.

Augustine recapped that the Board of Zoning Appeals is the quasi-judicial board, and they interpret the zoning resolution. The Zoning Commission is legislative body that writes the zoning resolution. Trustees are the executive branch. Trustees do not have any power or say in what businesses or developments come into Hinckley. Trustees can approve or deny map amendment changes to zoning or text amendment changes to the zoning resolution.

Mark Kowalsky came to the podium and asked do we need to allow Conservation Developments? Augustine stated that she believes that due to a previous lawsuit, the Township wrote the conservation development language in the code to avoid judicial process and have a judge determine what comes into Hinckley. Kowalsky stated that he thinks Hinckley is slipping away by over developing.

Pearl mentioned the increased traffic is not all Hinckley. That much of it is from outside suburbs driving through.

O'Neill spoke about his history living next to senior housing. He mentioned how senior housing can bring in more money for the Township. Discussion with Pepera about the senior house and if it was a nursing home, she doesn't think it would be an issue. The issue is the fact that it's apartment complex. She believes that the committee needs to define density because of the strain on safety forces.

Discussion ensued of the senior housing that will be built and if anything could have been done. It was stated that they should look at the zoning areas to familiarize themselves with what can and cannot go in.

Bialosky said that the corner of W 130th Street and 303 was rural so he stressed the burden on support services because of the density going into that are with the proposed projects. Let's look at what is zoned where.

Ms. Cameron came up again. She stated that income should be considered with future developments. She stated that we need to look at the income of the nursing home. The committee stressed that it is not a nursing home. She wants to a clause that anything that goes in must generate income to the community. Manley stated that we must follow the Ohio Revised code, we can't do that. Cameron continued that she had attended a meeting where the was discussion to put up a new police or fire building and she didn't understand why at the same meeting, the trustees had discussion about raises for the fire department that the trustees discussed it at length. Augustine stated that the funds come from completely different lines for department. Discussion ensued on the financial lines and statements. Cameron was encouraged to attend the financial meeting hosted by the fiscal officer on 2/12.

Studor stated that the Trustees and Fiscal officer Catherwood do a great job in informing the community on the budget. Ms Cameron said it only shows money going out, not where it comes in. The committee and Trustee Augustine stated that those records are shared twice a month.

Studor stated that after looking at the 2015 plan, he believes that there aren't major changes needed in the plan. Spoke to social media and lack of citizen participation. He felt there was a huge push to redo the Comprehensive Plan but he believes that the document is good and that the trustees have done a good job.

Bialosky stated that the Binky Commons was a way to improve while keeping the character.

Pepera came to speak again. She believes that a loophole of no residential in a business district should be closed. No apartment complexes. Wolny said that he is one who sold the land to the developer and that he wanted to clarify that what is going in is not apartments. They are rented cluster homes which is the business model used by most of senior housing in northeast Ohio with over ten thousand units. Good transition from the industrial side to the residential side. He believes that it was following the guide of the 2015 comprehensive plan and that it would be a good transition into Hinckley and follows the comprehensive plan. Discussion ensued about the difference between a nursing home and senior housing. Discussion of 55 and older at which 80% must be according to federal guidelines. Berhofer asked if Hinckley residents get to qualify first. Wolny stated that would be discrimination and asked, is that enough senior housing? 2,500 square foot homes are not apartments.

Schraeder asked Pepera why assisted living would be allowed by her but not senior housing. It is the same zoning and the same density. Schrader spoke about the fact that some assisted living centers were like senior housing as residents would be living in a business district. We must follow the law.

Discussion as to who monitors the 20% of non- seniors in senior housing. Manley stated it is monitored by the federal government. Augustine responded that the BZA made it a condition for the facility to report those numbers to Hinckley.

Augustine stated that the senior housing would be in the Brunswick City School district. She explained that municipalities that have assisted living centers saw a significant increase in police and fire calls. She spoke about the Hinckley Police and Fire Chiefs researching the specific company, model and design of the senior housing model in Hinckley and those municipalities only saw an increase of about thirty calls a year which is no different than any other development in Hinckley. She spoke to 55 years old being young.

Cameron asked about tax revenue of this project. Wolny stated that those projections are important as to what can be afforded and be selective. Cameron asked about how much income tax would be coming into Hinckley. Manley explained that there is no income tax in a township. Committee explained that it is property tax. Augustine explained that we will be tracking first responder call and told the developer that if a significant increase occurred, they would be billed for services.

Also discussed Brunswick annexing the land where Drug Mart will go. Township will do what it can to remedy that. Augustine opinion is that it's already business there and if Brunswick wanted to annex it they would have done it already. Bialosky said that is something the township will have to keep an eye on it and do what they can to prevent it.

Susan Larson came to the podium and asked if those in the senior housing will be able to vote, that she doesn't think that they should. Augustine stated that they will be able to vote since they will be residents. Yatsko stated that there are other renters in the Township.

Long asked that future meetings be scheduled as far in advance as possible. Schrader explained and gave the dates for the next three meeting which were determined at the beginning of the meeting. She asked if all the meetings would allow public interaction. Augustine stated that in public meeting, public interaction is encouraged. Schraeder said that was what the committee wanted. We wouldn't always agree but the committee wants to hear from citizens.

Long said they needed to balance business growth and the residents. She doesn't like big government. She would like to see a role within the Township to look for ways to incentivize businesses coming in, especially in the town center. The committee asked what kind of businesses she would like. She said somewhere for people to meet. The committee reminded the residents that many businesses may not want to come to an area without water. The existing businesses have what they need but new restaurants, ect, may need more a different water source. Long would like to develop a role within the township to incentivize businesses to come to Hinckley. Manley mentioned that Hinckley has a Chamber of Commerce to attract businesses. Augustine explained that the county has an economic development department for that. The Chamber was mentioned again, and Manley asked Long to join to which she stated she did not want to join. Pearl said she could still attend and share her thoughts without being a member. Yatsko asked Long if she was for or against water in the center of town. She is against water being anywhere other than it is now. Rural means wells a septic to Long.

Pearl asked who in the audience wants water in the center of town. No one in the audience raised their hands for water.

Discussion started about where the issue with city water began. Manley stated that the water line did not necessarily mean that you needed to tie in. Augustine spoke about a conversation with the county about the history of water in Hinckley which was supposed to come to the town through a phased project. The citizens that said they would tie in didn't, so the county is not looking to install anymore waterlines in Hinckley. Augustine believes there was a misunderstanding about a grant that could be used for water infrastructure last year. The township has received half of the funds and the rest will come in this year. The trustees have not discussed the used of those funds at all. The grant money could be used for a number of different things within the Township.

Easterling asked about where the water ends by his development. It was confirmed it ends at his development and was brought in by the developer.

O'Neill discussed Litchfield and how they handle sewer being brought it. Public health issues and the management if water and sewer. A town he is familiar with have the citizens vote on each instance.

O'Neill discussed the Zoning Board and asked if there was a Planning Board. Augustine mentioned that the Zoning Board acts as a Planning Board. BZA sees projects first to issue a conditional use permit, then it goes to the Zoning Commission to solidify the plan. Wolny stated that we have a Medina County Planning Board.

Karl Kastle with Binky Commons came to the podium and said that if the town center was to be built up more, that parking had to be considered, since there is not enough now. He also said that he doesn't want Hinckley to become like Brunswick and North Royalton. Pearl asked, as a businessman in Hinckley, what would help his business, to which Kastle said parking.

Augustine mentioned that any questions should be emailed to her directly and she will send them to the committee.

Augustine made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:33pm. Ascherl second.
