

**PRELIMINARY \* AGENDA**  
**GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**MEETING**

**September 24, 2018**

5PM – Gaines Board

7PM – Gaines & Byron Boards

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**A COPY OF THE TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING RULES OF ENGAGEMENT CAN BE FOUND ON THE COUNTER AT THE BACK OF THE ROOM**

Meeting called by Supervisor Rob DeWard

Attendees: Supervisor Rob DeWard, Clerk Angela Burnside, Treasurer Laurie Lemke, Trustees Crystal Osterink, Dan Fryling, Tim Haagsma, Kathy VanderStel

**CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE AT 5:00 PM**

**Declaration of any Conflict of Interest**

**Approval of Agenda**

**5:00PM**

**I. Topic(s) for Discussion**

- Mark Sisson, Township Planner – presentation regarding updating of Master Plan
- Board Reserves the Right to meet in closed session in regard to confidential attorney-client privilege legal advice presented in a written legal opinion.
- Open discussion regarding implementing a Public Safety Assessment

**7:00PM**

**II. Byron Board will join meeting**  
**(Byron Board will officially call their meeting to order)**

**Action Item**

**Cutlerville Fire Department 2019 Budget**

*Any interested persons are invited to attend and participate. Persons with disabilities needing any special accommodations should contact the Township offices one week prior to the meeting to request mobility, visual or any other assistance.*

# Memo

**To:** Gaines Charter Township Board of Trustees  
**From:** Mark A. Sisson, AICP-Township Planner  
**Date:** September 20, 2018  
**Re:** September 24, 2018 Township Board meeting: Master Plan Process – Issue identification and Board direction

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The attached is a brief overview of some of the major long range policy documents that the Township is or should be relying on for guidance when deciding its future actions. Included are; the Master Plan, the Parks and Recreation Plan, the Non-Motorized Trail Plan (trails and sidewalks), a Capital Improvements Plan, a Fire Service Plan and a Strategic Plan. There are also others such as utility plans, storm water management plans, DDA plans, Economic Development Plan, a food systems plans etc., each with their own focus. Some communities actually bundle many of these plans and include them as individual elements within a so called “comprehensive plan”.

It is my intent to briefly go over each of the documents that Gaines Township currently has in place, to explain the usefulness, significance or need for each type of plan and to discuss where the Township currently is with respect to needed updates.

On a broad scale, this overview should prompt additional discussion and help to develop a consensus of support for a systematic and reinvigorated planning process as a general approach to addressing the many interrelated service, infrastructure and funding related issues facing the township.

Ultimately, a clear and well thought work program and timeline for completion of updates to these policy documents is needed. For that reason I believe that the next step after our discussion on Monday will be to create “a plan for planning” whereby the goals, scope, remaining steps and time frame needed to complete the updates to the Master Plan and Parks and Recreation plan and other needed policy initiatives can be more clearly articulated.

I is my feeling that a joint strategy session with the Planning Commission and Parks Committee can be useful in doing this. At that meeting the Township Board and the other two other committees can express their ideas and priorities and it is hoped that a preferred direction on some of the more important policy issues can be arrived at. In addition, the roles, and responsibilities of each of the three bodies should be discussed as well the professional and staff resources needed to assist completing the tasks.

See you at the meeting.

## 2002 MASTER PLAN

The current Master Plan was adopted in 2002. Its implementation has solidified the current development pattern and it is still considered useful and pertinent in large part.

- Relatively minor changes may be needed, or more clarity provided
- Issues/areas of concern have been addressed through sub-area plans, in a somewhat fragmented form and now need to be brought together.

A. **The 2008** update to the plan incorporated two sub-area plans; the Dutton sub-area and the 100<sup>th</sup> Street sub-area. The update also provided a basic demographic update.

The update was driven by a perceived need to attract new economic development and employment opportunities, and where in the Township that should occur. This was a recognition of the new economy and knowledge-based work force.

1. Identified “new” forms of development as the desired or preferred approaches to development.
2. Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)
3. Utilize the small lot, street grid, alley and sidewalks
4. Strictly separated from commercial and industrial areas
5. Open Space (Cluster) Development: Requires the set aside of green space/open space in exchange for high net density – Important for natural systems and “rural/semi-rural” community design.
6. Classic Suburban Patterns (with a twist): Attempts to create a high quality design by connecting them together, and to employment and shopping with sidewalks and trails, and by providing more neighborhood amenities such as parks, playgrounds.
7. Recognized the Dutton Area as the area most likely to attract “knowledge based” businesses and workers, where the new economy will be created.
8. 100<sup>th</sup> St. Corridor area is more isolated, more likely to support “old economy” forms of economic development. Residents attracted to this area and other rural portions of the township are less likely to be desirous of alternative (TND traditional neighborhood development) and mixed use forms of development.

### **B. 2013 Master Plan Update:**

The purpose of the 2013 update, or addendum, was to fulfill the requirement for the five-year review. The Board and Planning Commission agreed that the current Master Plan was still valid (including the 2008 sub-area plans) and would continue to be used to guide future development of the Township. In the end, no changes were made but a new set of updated demographics was prepared and a set of topics were listed for use in evaluating evaluate the need for future amendments to the Master plan on a semi-annual basis by Township Staff.

It was agreed that should the need arise, the next review of the Master Plan could occur before the end the required five-year planning period (2018).

**Topics for future consideration in a future update to the Master Plan included:**

*If you get a chance please note how strongly you either agree or disagree with addressing these ideas or issues moving forward:*

1. **Establishing a** greater identity for Gaines Township and working to promote the Dutton and Cutlerville areas to developers, entrepreneur, small businesses, and the general public.
2. **Reviewing the** need for new planning techniques to implement at strategic locations in the township, in an effort to protect property values for lands adjacent to new development and promote community character and cohesion.
3. **Identifying needs** for increased senior care options, housing opportunities, and determining a need for a central activity and community center in the township.
4. **Attracting new** Higher Education Facilities to the Township
5. **Implementing land** use strategies to attract New Economy workers to the Township.
6. **Increasing winter** and summer recreation opportunities and facilities
7. **The Division** Avenue Corridor and the impact of The Rapid's Bus Rapid Transit line will have on future developmental opportunities within the area.
8. **Identifying future** options for the lands surrounding the Kalamazoo Avenue and 84<sup>th</sup> Street Intersection.

**C. 2016 – 84<sup>th</sup> Street and Kalamazoo Avenue Sub-area Plan**

This sub-area plan was commenced in 2014 and adopted in 2016.

1. **It technically** has the effect of extending the next master revision deadline out until 2021.
2. **Its primary** purpose was to establish a “future land use and community character for the 84<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor, East of Kalamazoo, along with the 84<sup>th</sup> Street intersection proper.
  1. To promote economic development
  2. To facilitate a blend of uses and mixed uses
  3. To facilitate a mixture of architecture
  4. To promote non-motorized trail extension
  5. To create gathering places
3. **The plan** created a framework for zoning in this area and identified zoning ordinance changes that need to occur to make the plan work.
4. **The plan** did not appropriately address utility implications.
5. **The plan** should be revalidated.

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## PARKS & RECREATION PLAN

The last update was adopted in 2009.

In order for the Plan to have standing with the DEQ and make the Township eligible for state grants, the plan **must**:

- A. **Be current** (i.e. adopted within the preceding five (5) years).
- B. **Since 2008**, the recreation plan **must** be part of the Master Plan. It is possible for it to be completed by a Parks Committee or Commission, but ultimately it must be made part of the Master Plan that is approved by the Planning Commission and the Township Board (either by direct inclusion, appendix or addendum).
- C. **An update** to the Parks and Recreation Plan has been “underway” Since 2014.
- D. **The Plan must** include each of the following:
  1. A community description
  2. A description of how Parks & Recreation are administered in this Township.
  3. An inventory of facilities. *A natural resource inventory is optional.*
  4. A description of the planning process, including a **mandatory** “Public Input Process”.
  5. Goals and objectives
  6. An Action program (e.g. Priorities, what is to be done, when, by whom and how will it be funded). A best guess at a timeline.  
This will not preclude proposals that are not identified in the plan, but which come forward afterwards. If they accomplish a goal that has been identified, they can still be funded (i.e. private land could come available that better addresses a need than another previously identified acquisition).

A number of citizen surveys have been conducted over the years that tries to gauge public support of various types of facilities

## Non-Motorized Trail Plan (& Sidewalk Plan)

- A. The Non-Motorized Trail Plan** was completed and adopted in 2010
1. The initial NMTP was a project of the Township's Park and Recreation Committee, which appointed a 3-person subcommittee to work with Township staff. The Planning Commission also provided oversight on the project to ensure that it met the intent of the Township's Master Plan.
  2. Two public open houses, were held, flyers were distributed soliciting public comments
  3. And individual interviews and meetings with key stakeholders were held.
  4. The NMTP was identified as a tool to inform every one of the Townships strategic planning efforts regarding trail and as a source of potential projects related to Capital Improvement Planning.
  5. The Township Board adopted the NMTP and it was to be used as a guide when determining the appropriate expenditure of funds with respect to trail and sidewalk development and maintenance.
  6. The development of the NMTP was considered a crucial first step, but now needs to be revalidated and updated.
- B. The NMTP** should be considered an element of the transportation plan section that is required to be included in the Master Plan. Similar to the Parks and recreation plan it can be done concurrently with the Master Plan or adopted separately as an addendum or appendix, either within the Parks and Rec. Plan or as a separate element on its own. In any case, coordination is required.
1. There is a question as to which body should lead this planning process. Because of its broader focus, it my opinion that the Planning Commission is best suited to lead .
  2. The currently underway Four Corners Transportation Plan update will in part deal with elements of the Townships Non-motorized Trail Plan and sidewalks particularly as relates to intersection design, facility extensions and gaps.
  3. The current thinking of staff is that the NMT Map needs to be updated and the township policies as to where trails versus sidewalks should be more clearly defined. Trails should become a recognized aspect of the Township's sidewalk ordinance. Other policy changes regarding funding options and the criteria that can be used to either defer trail development or utilize payment in lieu development incorporated.

## Capital Improvements (CIP)

**A. Capital Improvements Plan.** A Six-year Capital Improvement Plan (“CIP”) is intended to be a “living document” that is reviewed, updated and reissued annually. The CIP is used to provide an overall framework for the Township’s capital project planning, with projects being prioritized based on need and projected funding availability.

1. High priority projects are projects that are to be fully-funded based on current and projected annual expenses and revenues.
2. Medium priority projects are projects that need to be done within the next five-to-ten years, but funding sources or the ability to fund has not yet been identified. The timing of completion of these projects will be adjusted according to the availability of revenue.
3. Low priority projects are projects that should be done within the next ten years, but for which funding sources have not yet been identified. The timing of completion of these projects will be “opportunity-based” according to available revenues, including sources such as federal or state grants.
4. A typical process involves each department generating a list of projects and its own recommended priorities.

**B. Under Michigan Planning Statute, all Township’s that have a sanitary sewer system are required to have a capital improvements plan.**

**C. Under the statute,** unless another body or official (such as the Township Board or Township Supervisor) is specifically authorized/identified by charter or the Board as being responsible for the CIP, the responsible body is by default the Township Planning Commission.

**D. All projects** identified in the CIP are ultimately subject to approval by the Gaines Charter Township Board of Trustees. But, in order that infrastructure projects are coordinated with the Master Plan, all new public infrastructure that occurs in the township must first be reviewed by the Planning Commission. The Township Board may override but not ignore their role.

**E. The preparation** of a CIP provides the following benefits to the community:

The process of preparing a CIP helps decision-makers relate capital spending to achievement of adopted community goals

1. Preparing a CIP forces a process in which capital projects of different types are evaluated and prioritized; helps ensure that financial resources are devoted to most important needs first
2. Preparing a CIP helps ensure that funds are set aside for eventual replacement or major rehabilitation of facilities with a limited useful lifespan.

## Other Plans

### **A. Fire Service Plan; or Fire Facilities Plan:**

1. Identification of locations for new facilities, timing and scale.
2. Identification of facility, expansion needs
3. Identification of a five (5) year capital needs plan (items over \$10,000)

### **B. Strategic Plan**

Used by the organization as a way to identify goals and objectives of the organization, and to implement measures designed to facilitate the delivery of existing services and programs, and to implement new services.

1. Attempted by Township Board and Department Heads in 2010. Did not take to completion.