

**CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION October 2, 2019**  
**Approved on November 6, 2019**

The Planning Commission regular meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Chairman Doug Dow, with members Andy Brown, Bill Marske, John Chipman, and Jerry Kohn present, also present Chris Khorey of McKenna, Attorney Charles Hilmer, and several members of the community.

Chairman Dow led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by roll call by members present.

John Chipman moved that every member of the public will have three minutes to speak at the public meeting and the public meeting will only last two hours or until everyone has a chance to speak, supported by Jerry Kohn. Motion carried.

The following comments were made by the Chair, Doug Dow, to introduce the Public Meeting on the proposed new Zoning Ordinance for Chikaming Township Planning Commission Meeting on October 2, 2019:

As Chair, I will open this Public Meeting momentarily.

First, there is a sign-in sheet at the back of the room. If you wish to speak, and you have not done so already, please add your name to this sign-in sheet.

While people are signing in, I will provide a few context-setting introductory remarks: What we are trying to do with this proposed new Zoning Ordinance is to preserve the Chikaming Township that we have come to know and love, while also anticipating and adapting to new challenges and opportunities.

This process began in the Fall of 2016 when the Township Board determined that the current Zoning Ordinance needed rewriting. McKenna, a group specializing in local government zoning work, was retained to assist the Township in this effort.

During the Winter and Spring of 2017 the Township held an open house to solicit public input and conducted a technical review of the existing ordinance identifying areas for changes and additions.

In Fall 2017 a draft new Zoning Ordinance was shared with the public. The Township hosted a day of open discussions and then the Planning Commission held a formal public hearing. These events showed there was insufficient consensus on a number of issues, and the draft was referred back to the Steering Committee for additional development.

Through the Winter, Spring and Summer of 2018 the Steering Committee and McKenna held a series of focus groups involving several members of the public and the Planning Commission to review and comment on each section of the new Zoning Ordinance. The subsequent iterative process of reviewing and revising drafts moved toward consensus on the key issues.

The resulting draft Zoning Ordinance was posted by the Steering Committee to the Township's zoning website on Sept. 6, 2018, for public review and comment.

This Planning Commission conducted a formal Public Hearing on the proposed new Zoning Ordinance for Chikaming Township on Oct. 3, 2018. At that time, we received input from a number of individuals and groups. Based on this input, several changes were made to the

proposed ordinance, and, at a subsequent meeting on October 18, 2018, the Planning Commission voted to recommend the amended proposed ordinance to the Township Board for approval.

The proposed ordinance was then submitted for review, as required, to the Berrien County Planning Commission. The Township received a letter on November 15, 2018, in which the Berrien County Planning Commission identified a number of challenges and issues with the proposed Zoning Ordinance.

On December 13, 2018, the Chikaming Township Board posted a revised draft to the website for an additional 30 days of public review.

At their January 10, 2019, meeting the Chikaming Township Board, after obtaining further public input and subsequent deliberation, sent the proposed Zoning Ordinance back to the Planning Commission for further review.

As the Chair of the Planning Commission, I established a Zoning Workgroup, consisting of one Township Trustee, one other member of the Planning Commission, the Township Zoning Administrator and me. The Steering Committee did very good work and established a solid base for the new Zoning Ordinance. The job of the Zoning Workgroup was to smooth out the rough edges, incorporate additional public input, make the document easier to use, and address the new issues that had surfaced, including those raised by Berrien County.

On September 6, 2019, David Bunte, our Township Supervisor, and I sent a letter to the owners of property along Lake Michigan in the Township. This letter explained the rationale for the new lakefront zoning district (R-1-W) and the proposed 150 foot lakefront setback.

On September 21 and September 28, 2019, I hosted an open house for these lakefront property owners at the Township Center to answer their questions and show them where this proposed setback line would run. Twenty six property owners attended these sessions, and all left saying they supported these proposed zoning changes along the Lake Michigan shore.

We are now offering an additional opportunity for public input and comment. Following this public meeting, the Planning Commission will assess the input gathered. The Planning Commission will then decide whether to recommend approval of this proposed ordinance to the Township Board, approval with changes, or to get more public feedback.

We will now open the floor for your comments. As Chair, I will recognize each speaker. When recognized, please:

- Step forward to the podium;
- State your name;
- State where you live;
- Make your remarks. You will have 3 minutes to speak.

I ask that you direct your remarks to the Chair, and further ask you be respectful to this Commission and your fellow citizens with these remarks. We, in turn, will provide you with all due respect. Let us begin.

Fran Wersells of Union Pier thanked the Planning Commission for all their hard work on the proposed zoning ordinance.

The public meeting was closed at 6:35 PM and the members went into the regular meeting.

John Chipman moved to approve the agenda as presented, supported by Andy Brown. Motion carried.

Jerry Kohn moved to approve the minutes of the September 4, 2019 regular meeting with changes proposed by Chairman Dow, supported by Andy Brown. Motion carried.

**Old Business:** After a short discussion Jerry Kohn moved to recommended the Township Board to approve the proposed zoning ordinance, supported by Andy Brown. Motion carried.

Roll Call Vote: John Chipman – Yes  
Doug Dow – Yes  
Jerry Kohn – Yes  
Andy Brown – Yes  
Bill Marske – Yes

**Zoning Administrator Report:** None

**Communication:** None

**New Business:** None

**Public Comments:** Fran Wersells commented about the part time rentals and how it has changed the Union Pier area.

**Adjournment:** With no further business before the Planning Commission, John Chipman moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:56, supported by Andy Brown. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.