

**PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF JUNE 27, 2011 SPECIAL MEETING**

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**Members Present:** Howard Balzer, Christopher Finn, Glen Hymer, Hulda Moffitt, Bruce Whyte

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Connie Swisher, zoning inspector

**Call to Order:** Mr. Balzer called the special meeting of the Prairie Township Zoning Commission to order at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 27, 2011, at the Township Hall.

**Meeting Minutes:**

Mr. Balzer asked for a motion to approve or correct the May 17, 2011, Prairie Township Zoning Commission Special Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Finn stated that on page 3 in the fourth paragraph under "OEPA Water Quality Standards," the acronym "OPEA" should be corrected to read "OEPA."

Mr. Finn made a motion to approve the May 17, 2011, Prairie Township Zoning Commission Special Meeting Minutes with the correction as made.

Mr. Hymer seconded the motion.

Roll call as follows:

1. Glen Hymer      Aye
2. Hulda Moffitt      Aye
3. Bruce Whyte      Aye
4. Christopher Finn      Aye
5. Howard Balzer      Aye

The motion was approved unanimously.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:**

List of Frequently Used Acronyms

Ms. Swisher distributed a list of alphabetized acronyms with their meanings. The acronyms are those frequently encountered in the Big Darby Accord, the Big Darby Town Center Master Plan, and other literature about ecology and the environment. Mr. Whyte had suggested that such a list be created as a quick reference guide to increase the understanding of readers who are not familiar with the meanings of the much used and numerous groups of letters.

Ms. Swisher said that the list had been prepared by some of the youth in the commendable eight-week summer program that employs Township residents from the ages of 14 to 18 years old. Several youth work each scheduled day for four hours and are paid minimum wage.

David McAninch, Township road superintendent, supervises the summer youth program. Over the years the participants have painted fire hydrants and house numbers and picked up trash along the Township roads, parks, and cemeteries. They have also assisted the administration department and the zoning department—performing tasks such as preparing the acronym list.

Adoption Process for Big Darby Town Center Master Plan

Ms. Swisher said that she was going to continue her review of the Big Darby Town Center Master Plan from the May meeting. It is important for the Township Zoning Commission to have a thorough understanding of the Plan's contents so that the board will be prepared to undertake its function in the adoption process.

PRESENTATION 3 HIGHLIGHTS

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**ECOLOGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

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Protection of Tiers 1, 2, and 3

The Big Darby Accord Watershed Master Plan<sup>1</sup> prioritized protection of environmentally sensitive lands by designating three tiers of sensitivity. All tiered lands are to be prioritized for protection through land acquisition and other programs.

The message underlying all of the Accord design principles is that the ecosystem services of the Big Darby Creek Watershed must be protected and restored. The planning principles highlight the importance of preserving ecological systems and using them as the basic underpinning for all development strategies.

The Town Center Master Plan is designed to meet the land use recommendations and water quality goals of the Accord.

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<sup>1</sup> *Big Darby Accord Watershed Master Plan*, 3.0 Land Use Plan, pages 3-6 and 3-7, 2006.

### Tier 1

Tier 1 lands are the primary priority for protection through land acquisition and other programs. Resources within Tier 1 are significant in maintaining the overall health of the Big Darby Watershed. No development is recommended in Tier 1. Resources include:

- 100-Year floodplain
- Wetlands
- Critical groundwater recharge & pollution potential zones

### Tier 2

Tier 2 lands are the secondary priority for protection through land acquisition and other programs. Resources within Tier 2 include.

- Highly erodible soils
- Contiguous wooded areas greater than 3 acres in size

### Tier 3

Tier 3 lands are the third priority. Tier 3 lands should be protected from development to the extent possible to provide connectivity as well as passive recreation opportunities. Stormwater treatment features, such as large bioswales and constructed wetlands, will serve as amenities to the community as they will attract wildlife and provide green corridors for walking and bicycle paths,

### Water Quality & Stream Restoration

The Darby Accord emphasizes the need for water quality protection and effective control of stormwater runoff.

Environmentally sensitive stormwater management can enhance habitat by reducing the volume and flow rate of stormwater runoff with naturalized detention and infiltration elements upstream of receiving water bodies. The use of native plants in alternative stormwater management systems will increase local wildlife diversity and provide aesthetic benefits to people in the surrounding developments.

Stream restoration is another critical component of the Accord. The restoration of the impaired Hellbranch Run subwatershed, including Hamilton and Clover Groff Runs, is a priority.

### OEPA Water Quality Standards

The Darby Accord general stormwater permit enforces Franklin County's riparian setback regulations and also requires that stormwater management practices meet water quality volume to comply with OEPA<sup>2</sup> water quality standards. The general stormwater permit also specifies infiltration requirements for the Big Darby Watershed.

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<sup>2</sup> OEPA – Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

Water quality management requirements for the Town Center will be set by Franklin County.

The stormwater strategy proposed in the Town Center Master Plan exceeds the minimum requirements of current regulations.

There is some concern among stakeholders that current stormwater requirements (drafted in 2007) are not stringent enough to protect high-quality aquatic ecosystems and the rare species they support. However, the OEPA is updating its stormwater permit for the Big Darby Watershed. The permit is to be determined in November 2011. The OEPA has reviewed the recommendations in the Town Center Plan, and the organization agrees with the proposed performance criteria.

### Recommended Development Goals

Based on the ecological analysis of the Town Center site, specific development goals and guidelines have been formulated:

- Aid Metro Parks and other organizations in the acquisition of their tier lands in and around the Town Center.
- Replace conventional stormwater management methods with naturalized stormwater treatment train (STT).
- Restore degraded waterways to natural meandering streams and protect high-quality reaches of the Big Darby main stem.
- Protect existing wetlands near development with buffers.
- Consider natural resources as amenities to development.
- Ensure park aesthetics along all roads leading to Metro Parks land.
- Retain agricultural land to grow local food.
- Use native species for all restored landscapes and stormwater management elements, and replace cultivated species with natives wherever possible in formal landscape features. (See “Stormwater Treatment Train” below.)
- Ensure the long-term protection and maintenance of open space in rural residential areas through conservation easements and deed-restricted open space (DROS). (See “Deed Restricted Open Space” below.)

### Stormwater Treatment Train

The Stormwater Treatment Train (STT) represents an ecological approach to stormwater management. The STT is designed with sequential components that contribute to the treatment of stormwater before it leaves the site.<sup>3</sup>

Based on hydrologic modeling and published information on BMP<sup>4</sup> effectiveness, the components of the STT system are designed to treat stormwater runoff for water quality benefits and to reduce stormwater runoff peaks and volumes.

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<sup>3</sup> See page 44 of Town Center Master Plan for examples of plant species appropriate for various components of the STT.

<sup>4</sup> BMP - Best Management Practice

The STT incorporates a number of BMPs with varying effectiveness for removing particulates and pollutants while also reducing runoff volume.

### Deed Restricted Open Space

Deed-Restricted Open Space (DROS) allows individual homeowners to own relatively large lots but protects and maintains open space across the majority of each lot. That is, most of the lot would be deed-restricted to prohibit development activities allowing for ongoing open space monitoring and maintenance.

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## **TOWN CENTER SITE**

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### Big Darby Accord Site

Originally envisioned to be located between West Broad Street and Interstate 70, the site for the Town Center has been moved south—with the majority of its 2,500 acres being located south of I-70 and extending beyond West Broad Street. The southern portion of the Town Center falls primarily in Prairie Township.

The site is bisected by a combination of the railroad right-of-way and a substantial drainage corridor, the McCoy Ditch. There are a number of wetlands and woodlands of ecological significance presently on the site.

### Northern Portion of Site

The northern portion of the Town Center falls primarily in Brown Township. Because of significant environmental constraints, the northern portion of the site is not well-suited for centralized urban development.

This northern portion is subdivided by a break between the Hellbranch Run and Middle Big Darby Creek subwatersheds. Agricultural drain tile lines running north to south into McCoy Ditch follow hydric soil linkages and indicate historical drainage patterns that may be restored for naturalized stormwater management.

The Brown Township portion of the original Town Center site also contains a number of isolated, forested wetlands.

### Southern Portion of Site

The southern portion of the Town Center site falls primarily in Prairie Township. While some environmental constraints exist in this area, there are larger tracts of land along West Broad Street that are suitable for urban development.

There are fewer ecological restrictions in this section than there are north of the railroad right-of-way.

Further south, portions of the Darby Dan airport property and adjacent parcels are also suitable for development from an ecological perspective.

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## **MARKET STUDY**

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### Evaluation of Current Market Conditions

The real estate development market has adjusted considerably since the adoption of the Darby Accord. The Town Center Plan incorporates a re-evaluation of the current and forecasted market conditions to update revenue expectations.

The principles of the Accord are still relevant; however, the estimated revenues are lower given the state of the economy. The Columbus MSA<sup>5</sup> has lost over 20,000 jobs in the last year.

The original qualities to a successful Town Center Plan are the same: regionally-responsive character in a vibrant collection of neighborhoods. However, because of current market realities, the Town Center Master Plan recommends fewer residential units and less commercial space over a longer time frame than what was envisioned in the Darby Accord.

The market analysis yielded a recommended program totaling 3,780 residential units; 300,000 square feet of retail; 310,000 square feet of office; and a 100-room hotel.

#### **Office**

The metro office market is over-supplied. The nearest office submarket of Dublin/Hilliard is currently experiencing a vacancy rate of about 16%. Based on the market analysis, it will take at least 12 years for this market to return to a healthy state. Only then will it become reasonable to attempt new office construction in the Town Center site.

#### **Hospitality**

The Darby House creates a near-term opportunity to build a 100-room hotel in the Big Darby Town Center site. Although it holds over 60 weddings each year and numerous corporate events, the nearest hotels are five miles away. Thus, a hotel in the Town Center would have a source of built-in demand.

#### **Residential**

New residential units represent the strongest opportunity on the site. There is a demand for single-family homes in the area of the Town Center. There will be a need to balance the size and price of homes with the market over a 20-year span as the Town Center is built out.

#### **Retail**

The retail market analysis suggests there is an opportunity for phased development of local-serving retail. The current retail offerings are not satisfying local demand largely because

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<sup>5</sup> MSA – Metropolitan Statistical Area

nearby and aging retail on West Broad Street suffers from high vacancy or, if occupied, low-quality enterprises.

There should be a limitation on the amount of retail that should be planned, and a large, regional shopping center is undesirable and unlikely to work.

### Recommended Development Program

The Town Center Master Plan recommends a phased approach to construction with a total of 3,500 residential units and 700,000 square feet of commercial space, and an anticipated build-out of about 30 years.

The development plan represents a phased approach as follows:

- Phase I      2015 - 2019
- Phase II     2020 - 2024
- Phase III    2025 - 2034
- Phase IV    2035 - 2044

The phased approach model not only limits substantial infrastructure investment such as highway interchanges and costly railroad bridges but also differentiates the plan from conventional suburban patterns of cul-de-sacs and failing strip commercial uses.

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## **FRAMEWORK OF DEVELOPMENT**

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### Town Center Boundaries & Developable Land

What constitutes developable land in the Town Center stems from the ecological analysis begun in the Darby Accord. The Town Center Plan extends the boundary to Kuhlwein Road to capitalize on a connection to Battelle Darby Park, optimize the access to West Broad Street from both sides, and bring the development closer to the trunk sewer connection.

Certain lands within the Town Center boundaries were eliminated from developable area:

- All lands identified and prioritized for conservation in the Darby Accord.<sup>6</sup>
- Lands already occupied with existing houses and other low-density structures.
- Areas that show evidence of hydric soils where water is most likely to drain during storms.

All other remaining lands within the boundaries are considered to be developable.

### Patterns of Development

The Town Center will include two patterns of development:

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<sup>6</sup> These include woodlands, wetlands, streams and stream setbacks, terrestrial habitat corridors, and linkages.

- **CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT** in areas where development needs to be more ecologically sensitive and areas which have limited access to road infrastructure and public utilities.
- **VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT** modeled on traditional Ohio town patterns. Lands which are flattest, least encumbered by ecologically sensitive areas, larger parcels with fewer property owners, and lands accessible by existing or extended infrastructure are most appropriate for this use.

### Conservation Development

Key characteristics of conservation development are:

- Three to five acre lots
- Land clearing regulations
- Minimum 50% dedicated open space
- On-site stormwater management
- Low-impact development standards with minimum site disturbance created by roads and infrastructure

Conservation development will have three forms:

- **WOODLAND PRESERVE LOTS:** development on forested lands with minimal clearing and houses tucked into the woods to reduce visual impact.
- **PRAIRIE PRESERVE LOTS:** houses are located at the edges of lots, often along tree lines, connected by rural lanes.
- **CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT:** Houses are located in small clusters around shared courts and greens.

**FARMSTEAD CENTERS:** Within conservation development, a need will exist for community-serving amenities, resources, and retail. These small commercial and institutional uses should fit into a built form which respects, reflects, and enhances the rural character of the area. Local centers can reside in farmstead buildings grouped around courts.

### Village Development

Village-type development centers around West Broad Street. It follows basic principles derived from traditional villages including houses and buildings that front onto streets, small neighborhood parks, and a variety of parking strategies. The open space and streets form the public realm and connect all parts of the Town Center with trails and sidewalks.

The village-type development within the Town Center accommodates a variety of building types:

- Single-family home
- Duplex
- Townhouse

- Mansion-style flat
- Small multi-family building
- Mixed-use building

Village development includes village residential and parkside residential.

**VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL:** Key characteristics of residential neighborhoods in village development are:

- Variety of housing types developed around key addresses
- Front- and rear loaded parking strategies
- A network of pedestrian-friendly streets with sidewalks, bike paths, and trails
- Interconnected network of community spaces and small parks for gathering and recreational uses

**PARKSIDE RESIDENTIAL:** Key characteristics of parkside residential neighborhoods in village development area:

- Variety of housing types developed around key addresses
- Front- and rear-loaded parking strategies
- Network of community spaces and small parks that provide pedestrian-friendly connections
- A streetscape that is more naturalized to complement the adjacent parks

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#### **OPEN SPACE FRAMEWORK**

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The open space within the Town Center can be categorized as four types:

- **NATURAL RESOURCE AREA & PRESERVE:** steep slopes, floodplain, naturally-occurring wetlands or critical habitat.
- **PARKS AND RECREATIONS:** areas programmed for active and passive recreation (6 to 10 acres for every 1,000 residents).
- **VISUAL RESOURCES & CULTURAL LANDSCAPES:** landscapes that have particular community importance and meaning or are valued for the view they provide.
- **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT LANDS:** land that are set aside for stormwater infiltration elements such as rain gardens, bioswales or wetlands.

**LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES:** Five landscape types are defined for the Big Darby Town Center within a transect that ranges from natural areas to urban center:

- **NATURAL ZONE (T1):** preserved or restored natural areas that allow for walking path construction.
- **RURAL ZONE (T2):** passive recreation that includes picnic structure, multi-use paths, water recreation access, and wildlife observation. This zone includes conservation lots.

- **SUB-URBAN ZONE (T3):** includes single-family homes at five dwelling units per acre. Pocket parks and neighborhood parks are part of this zone.
- **GENERAL URBAN ZONE (T4):** includes higher-density single-family and multifamily lots. Neighborhood parks, pocket parks, schools, and community parks and facilities are located in this zone.
- **URBAN CENTRAL ZONE (T5):** includes the highest density single-family and multifamily lots. It includes urban style parks.

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## TRANSPORTATION & STREETS

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The Town Center Master Plan identifies some basic strategies for how to handle the expanding population over the next 20 to 30 years.

These strategies include three scales of intervention: (1) highways, (2) surface connections, and (3) access management within the Town Center framework.

### New Interchange at I-70

Based on Urban Design Associates' conclusions, a new interchange at I-70 is neither justified nor needed to support the Town Center as conceived. ODOT<sup>7</sup> is not currently evaluating this alternative, and no design investigation has begun.

### Proposed Street Network

In the absence of an interchange at I-70, the consultants evaluated other arterial and potential connections for linking the Town Center with other parts of the city.

Four extensions or relocations of existing roads are envisioned as part of the Town Center Plan:

- The currently planned relocation of Hilliard Rome Road between West Broad Street and Feder Road.
- A short crossover at West Broad Street between Alton Road and Cole Road, eliminating the "dog leg" movement on West Broad Street now required for north-south travel along the combination of these two roads.
- Two east-west extensions of Hall Road into the Town Center site.

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## UTILITIES

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### Accord Agreement with Columbus

In the Big Darby Accord, the city of Columbus agreed to provide 5,000 residential equivalent units of sewer and water capacity to the Town Center without annexation. While this

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<sup>7</sup> ODOT – Ohio Department of Transportation

unprecedented policy change makes denser development possible in the Town Center, it raises questions as to how these utilities are to be installed, managed, and maintained.

The plan for the Big Darby Town Center is only possible through the extension of sewer and water service from the city of Columbus. Without these services, there has been an effective development moratorium in this area for nearly 13 years, as the OEPA will not approve any new septic or package treatment plants within the Darby watershed.

### Sewer Capacity & Service

During the initial Darby Accord effort, the city of Columbus prepared a study to establish sewer capacities. It was determined that the existing Big Run sewer has capacity for 5,000 residential equivalent units (REUs).

Currently another sewer study is being done by Columbus in response to the EPA consent decree, requiring further evaluation of the infiltration/inflow and overflow situations throughout the entire city sewer system. This study is not yet complete, but it will need to be referenced when detail design of the proposed Big Darby Town Center system is commenced.

The proposed Town Center development is capped at a maximum of 5,000 REUs based on infrastructure capacity. Therefore, the system extension is sized to accommodate this full capacity.

The Town Center will be developed with a full mix of uses that include residences, offices, shops, schools, and public facilities. The non-residential uses each have a square-footage that equates to 1 REU.

### Water Service

It is anticipated that water service will be extended from Hilliard Rome Road south of I-70 near two existing water storage tanks. With the southern shift of the Town Center now contemplated, a new waterline is proposed, extending from the existing 16-inch water main along Route 40 to the site.

A second waterline was analyzed, extending from the tanks at Hilliard Rome Road, across Feder Road, and then south along Amity Road to the project site, in order to build a redundant system. This added significant initial cost to the system extension and is seen as a phasable option as development warrants.

### Funding the Infrastructure Extension

It is highly likely that the biggest cost related to creation of the Town Center will be extending sewer and water infrastructure to the site. The total cost to construct these services is estimated at \$13.7 million. How to fund the construction of sanitary sewer and water extensions and water storage facilities to the Big Darby Town Center is a critical issue. A

successful funding plan will include cost sharing by the city of Columbus, Franklin County, and developers.

- **PER UNIT CHARGE:** A \$2,000/unit charge will be added to repay a portion of the infrastructure extension; revenue generated \$2.7 million.
- **DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS:** 75% of total revenue generated from \$2,500/equivalent unit charge; revenue generated \$3.2 million.
- **OTHER:** The remaining funding required, \$7.8 million, would need to be paid for through grants and contributions from Columbus and Franklin County or other sources. These other revenue mechanisms could include TIF or NCA<sup>8</sup> fees.

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) should be negotiated among the various jurisdictions to confirm the funding mechanisms. This MOU should also address the cost of long-term maintenance of the sewer and water system services. Ideally, the managing entity (probably Franklin County) would secure a steady revenue stream for this purpose.

Columbus and Franklin County will both review plans for system extension. Inspection during construction will be handled by Franklin County, as well as ultimate maintenance of the system. The system will connect to the City's; however, at the point of connection the County will own it.

#### Electric, Gas, and Telecommunications

The project site is within the service area of American Electric Power (AEP), Columbia Gas of Ohio, and AT&T. Inquiries were made with these utilities with regard to capacity to provide services to a project with approximately 5,000 residential units and 300,000 square feet of commercial space.

- **AEP** has a three-phase service line along Amity Road and Feder Road, and it has a planned substation to be built near the Columbus South Ohio Railroad and Cole Road, near the project site. AEP confirmed capacity to service this project.
- **COLUMBIA GAS OF OHIO** will provide service to the site. Currently the nearest gas lines are located in Feder Road and in Dellinger Road west of Amity Road. A larger 16-inch high pressure line is in Hilliard Rome Road.
- **AT&T OHIO** will provide telecommunications service to this site. Existing facilities, costs, and capacity to serve will be evaluated by AT&T at the time of final development planning.

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#### **IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW**

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To implement the Town Center Master Plan recommends the following:

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<sup>8</sup> TIF - Tax Increment Financing; NCA - New Community Authority

- Prairie Township rezones the Town Center area in accordance with the Master Plan and allows development as the market determines.
- Acquire the land; obtain zoning and permits to enable the land for development; then sell the project to a master developer to execute the Master Plan.
- Establish a Public/Private Partnership (PPP) to acquire the land.

#### Public/Private Partnership

Because of the current economic climate that gives limited access to up-front financing and funding sources for development, the recommended implementation approach is through the establishment of a Public/Private Partnership to realize the Town Center vision.

The PPP does not require the acquisition of land through transactions. Instead, it engages individual landowners in a constructive negotiation whereby they commit their land into the Town Center development as an *equity contribution*. Individual contracts would structure compensation for land contribution. Compensation would likely be tied to the proceeds from the sale of the project to a master developer.

The benefit of this model is that the Town Center development can move forward without the need to raise capital for land acquisition. However, it does require the establishment of a *Development Authority* to oversee the negotiations with landowners and to be responsible for the execution of the Town Center Master Plan.

This approach will also require a complicated legal process for determining the terms of participation and structuring the mechanisms for equity return to the landowners.

#### Development Authority

In order to facilitate the development, public infrastructure construction, and land preservation for the Town Center project on unincorporated land owned by multiple property owners, an entity must be identified that has the legal authority to perform the following functions:

- Contract with individuals and governmental entities;
- Acquire, hold, manage, and convey interests in real property; and
- Issue debt for development, public infrastructure construction, and land preservation purposes.

The two entities that have these powers in the state of Ohio are a Community Improvement Corporation and a New Community Authority. The PPP model for implementation of the Town Center will use a combination of the two.

**Other New Business:**

Next Steps in Approval Process

Ms. Swisher said that the next step for the Zoning Commission was to make and vote upon a motion to initiate for consideration the adoption of the Big Darby Town Center Master Plan and to direct that the Master Plan be forwarded to the Franklin County Planning Commission for its recommendation.

Following action by the Franklin County Planning Commission, the Zoning Commission will hold a public *meeting* regarding the adoption of the Big Darby Town Center. Ms. Swisher emphasized that this will be a *meeting* rather than a public *hearing* because the Town Center Master Plan does not constitute legislative action, that is, it contains nothing that will become law.

**Next Meeting:**

Mr. Balzer announced that the next meeting of the Prairie Township Zoning Commission will be Tuesday, June 28, 2011, at 3:00 p.m. at the Township Hall, 23 Maple Drive.

There being no further business before the Prairie Township Zoning Commission, Mr. Balzer adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Hulda Moffitt, Secretary



**PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF JUNE 28, 2011 MEETING**

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**Members Present:** Howard Balzer, Christopher Finn, Glen Hymer, Hulda Moffitt, Bruce Whyte

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Connie Swisher, zoning inspector; Dana Scott, zoning clerk; Chris Rymer, alternate

**Call to Order:** Mr. Balzer called the special meeting of the Prairie Township Zoning Commission to order at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 17, 2011, at the Township Hall.

**Meeting Minutes:**

Ms. Moffitt said that she had not completed the minutes for yesterday's meeting. Thus, Mr. Balzer said that the reading of the June 27, 2011, Prairie Township Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes will be deferred until the July meeting.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:**

Questions about Darby Town Center Master Plan

Mr. Balzer asked if any of the Commission members had questions or comments about the Big Darby Town Center Master Plan, which we had reviewed at the previous three meetings.

Mr. Whyte said that he had two questions:

1. Would the Zoning Commission have to change zoning for existing properties on West Broad Street so that it meets the criteria stated in the Master Plan?
2. Would the Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) have the legal power to exercise eminent domain to take real property within the Town Center area?

*Existing Zoning on Broad Street:*

Ms. Swisher replied that existing commercial property on West Broad Street is not included in the Master Plan and, therefore, would not have to conform to the criteria in the Master Plan.

As for new commercial development in the Town Center area, it will not be located right on West Broad Street. Rather, it will be situated within the Town Center.

It is likely that aggressive developers will attempt to build non-compliant structures within the Town Center; however, when tested, the Zoning Commission should stick to the Master Plan.

*CIC & Eminent Domain:*

Ms. Swisher said that she did not know the answer to the question about eminent domain.

Mr. Rymer commented that he thought the CIC might have the power of eminent domain. He recalled that it did in Gahanna.

Ms. Swisher asked Mr. Rymer if it was the CIC or the city of Gahanna that exercised the power of eminent domain. She questioned whether persons who were appointed rather than elected would have the legal authority to do so. Also, it seems that the question of what entity, if any, has the power of eminent domain in the Darby Town Center would be further complicated because there are four participating jurisdictions: Franklin County, Columbus, Brown Township, and Prairie Township.

*New I-70 Interchange:*

Mr. Hymer commented that he thought the new interchange on I-70 to be located in the Town Center area, which was included in the Darby Accord, should also be included in the Big Darby Town Center Master Plan. He thought that going forward the new interchange will be needed to handle the significant increase in traffic volume caused by development in the Town Center. The more far-sighted, cost-effective approach would be to build it up front.

Ms. Swisher pointed out that although the transportation analysis had concluded that a new interchange on I-70 was not needed, the Town Center Master Plan did identify other strategies for how to handle the expanding traffic volume over the next 20 to 30 years. These strategies include highways, surface connections, and access management within the Town Center.

Motion

Mr. Balzer made a motion to initiate for consideration the adoption of the text titled "The Big Darby Town Center Master Plan" and would if adopted constitute the standalone master plan for the development for the Town Center area of the Big Darby Accord, and also direct that this plan be forwarded to the Franklin County Planning Commission for its recommendation.

Ms. Moffitt seconded the motion.

Roll call as follows:

1. Glen Hymer       Aye
2. Hulda Moffitt    Aye
3. Bruce Whyte     Aye
4. Christopher Finn Aye
5. Howard Balzer    Aye

The motion was approved unanimously.

**Next Meeting:**

Mr. Balzer announced that the next meeting of the Prairie Township Zoning Commission will be Tuesday, July 26, 2011, at 3:00 p.m. at the Township Hall, 23 Maple Drive.

There being no further business before the Prairie Township Zoning Commission, Mr. Balzer adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Hulda Moffitt, Secretary

