



Manchester Area Joint Master Plan Report

Freedom Township Planning Commission

Plan Implementation, Land Use Sections Review Report

April 22, 2009

1. Purpose:

- 1.01** The purpose of this memo is to outline changes in policies, objectives, or goals suggested in the Draft Manchester Area Joint Master Plan dated 2009. The following sections point out areas for the draft that need further understanding.
- 1.02** The Draft Section reviewed was the Plan Implementation and Land Use Sections.

2. Plan Implementation Section:

2.01 Development Focus

- A. Two other areas have concentrated development, or are potentially influenced by another jurisdiction's presence, but which are not proposed for growth at this time. These areas are the Pleasant Lake area and the area north of the Village of Clinton within Washtenaw County/ Bridgewater Township.**

This paragraph should be added to the following paragraph in order to ensure the right message is being presented. In both areas (Pleasant Lake, and Clinton) a "subarea plan" exists to control the density based on sound planning as described in the paragraph that ends sub-section (b).

2.02 Manchester Village GTA:

- A. Commercial development should occur in planned shopping center configurations in a coordinated manner with controlled access, consolidated parking, extensive landscaping, pedestrian access and alternative transportation accommodations.**

The character of the commercial section was to limit the idea of strip malls or shopping centers on every corner. This statement should be consistent with the intent of the Commercial Section. Please read the Goals of the Commercial Section:

Goal 4: Develop and maintain commercial areas that integrate aesthetically and functionally into the surrounding land use networks.

Objective 1: Prevent strip development by creating planned, compact commercial centers that fit in with the character of existing development

2.03 Comparison of Growth Areas

- A. Objective – Pleasant Lake District – Redevelopment without growth; Lake Preservation**

The statement of "Redevelopment without growth" should be restated as "focused infill development and redevelopment to encourage Lake Preservation".

2.04 Infrastructure

- A. **An ‘adequate facilities plan’ will be prepared for each Growth Transition Area to determine the extent of future development, if any, that can be supported by public services.**

The use of ‘adequate’ needs to be corrected because this is an arbitrary word that can be exploited by a developer or engineer instead of the use of proper planning techniques. Additionally, what is the purpose of “each Growth Transition Area”? Per the plan there is only one GTA and then sub area plans that are Township Centers for the purpose of serving township residents not a region as described for the GTA.

- B. **Extensions of water and sewer lines to new development will be the responsibility of the developer and such facilities will be constructed to the municipality’s standards.**

The importance of this statement is that each community should or would have to develop Land Development Standards. These standards would list the applicable construction methods in which “such facilities” shall be developed. Most communities within the region do not have such standards.

- C. **In the event that no municipality can provide services, the development may be deferred until such time that a financial plan is approved, with the cooperation of the Manchester Community Joint Master Plan members.**

A financial plan is not the only planning tool when considering if a “municipality can provide services”, and additionally it normally is not more important than character or environmental concerns. This sentence should be eliminated because it does not add to the section.

- D. **Package Waste Treatment Systems will not be allowed within the Growth Transitions Areas. Public water services may be extended beyond the GTA to existing development for emergency needs.**

In many rural community master plans a “Package Waste Treatment System” is not allowed because of environmental assessment restrictions. If the intent is to regulate these systems to prevent them to be constructed in areas where public infrastructure exists, then a prohibition should be explored.

2.05 Community Facilities.

- A. **Each municipality will prepare a parks and master plan containing standards for required open space and recreation facilities needed per resident.**

As expressed in correspondence before, this Requirement is difficult to quantify. It is important to understand the recreational activities but difficult to conduct an assessment on a per capita basis. This should be handled by offering stating the wide range of activities that the general populations can take advantage of not by requiring the development of a recreational plan by each municipality, as expressed in the second part of the sentence. This premise should be expanded and eliminate the per capita premise.

2.06 Annexation

- A. **Under certain circumstances the Village,...**

This section should be reviewed by each communities general council for appropriate wording and planning accuracy.

2.07 Work Program

A. The following charts indicate the Goal-Objective listed in each of the Master Plan chapters.

Does this section have to be in the Plan? If this plan is to meet the goal of the State Planning Acts then this section may not be needed because only a few objectives will extend multiple years beyond the local changes needed to meet the MCJPC Master Plan. Furthermore, at the end of each section there are goals and objectives assigned, so this section may be redundant, but it is nice to have in a centralized location. This table might be served by reference in each section and eliminate the goals and objectives section in the body of each section.

3. Future Land Use Plan:

3.01 Future Land Use.

This paragraph should be improved to make it clear that these are the current land use categories that are shared by the MCJPC. These categories may be the basis for a future land use map but constitute community land use patterns throughout the planning region in order to show the regions shared planning practice.

4. Conclusions:

- A.** The Township of Freedom should agree to the requirements or potential obligations that have been prescribed in these sections. This would include the objectives of development documents such as land development standards, parks plan, road plan, and a Capital Improvement Plan to ensure consistency with other authorities.
- B.** An infrastructure plan document based on “adequate”, “viable” or other non-descript words undermine the local planning control. It also creates doubt that could be exploited by developers through court action.
- C.** The use of existing infrastructure is important in the long-term success of sustainable land developments. The objectives should be written to preserve the development of the existing land use zones, districts and locations that have infrastructure capacity, before opening up the annexation process.
- D.** The long-term success of infrastructure development should be based on community needs, character, and sound planning practice and less on financial or annexation processes. Thus it should be researched what mile stones need to be set in order to understand the review procedure of density within or bordering the GTA from year to year. Examples are populations, calculated infrastructure capacity, and land use change versus speed of development. This will give a better measure for proper decisions to change the GTA from year to year.

Thank you for your time,

Donald N. Pennington
William De Groot
Planning Consultants