

**SPECIAL JOINT MEETING
GRAND HAVEN CHARTER TOWNSHIP BOARD & PLANNING COMMISSION
THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 2017**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Supervisor Reenders called the special joint meeting of the Grand Haven Charter Township Board and Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Board members present: Reenders, Larsen, Kieft and Gignac

Board members absent: Behm, Redick and Meeusen

Commissioners present: Cousins, LaMourie, Robertson, Taylor, Chalifoux, Wilson & Reenders

Commissioners absent: Wagenmaker

Also present were Manager Cargo and Community Development Director Fedewa along with Dr. Richard K. Norton and Zachary Rable from the University of Michigan.

III. INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT – “BUILDING COASTAL RESILIENCY” FINAL REPORT

Dr. Norton provided an overview of the Integrated Assessment project and the four topics that were studied, and acknowledged that each topic identified multiple solutions the Township can consider. It is noted that these topics of concern were identified during the Master Plan update project, and a second grant was received for the University of Michigan to research each topic and provide a range of policy options. The Township is not obligated to consider, adopt, or implement any of the policy options presented in the final report.

1. Stormwater Management

Current Stormwater Ordinance is sufficient, but will need to be updated when Ottawa County adopts a new set of standards commonly referred to as MS4. Recommends incorporating Low Impact Development (LID) within the updated ordinance. Policy options include:

- a. Update Stormwater Ordinance to comply with the impending MS4 program.
- b. Offer development incentives for best management practices.
- c. Coordinate efforts between the Planning Commission and Public Services Department to advocate and enable LID.

2. High-Risk Flood Areas

Depending on the severity of the storm, there are between 40 – 90 structures at risk within flood zones established by the project team. Furthermore, there are between 65 – 90 undeveloped parcels within these zones, that if developed in the future, could also be subject to a flood. Policy options include:

- a. Keep current standards, which are required to participate in FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
- b. Incorporate the current NFIP requirements into a comprehensive floodplain ordinance, and continue taking steps necessary to join FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS) program.
- c. Expand flood areas to include base flood fringe and 0.2% flood areas to increase protection.

3. High-Risk Erosion & Near Shore Coastal Development

The entire Lake Michigan coastline within the Township is subject to the DEQ's High Risk Erosion Area (HREA) regulations, which generally identify a 60-year erosion setback line. The DEQ calculates the bluff erosion rates to establish the setback line. On average the bluffs erode 1+ foot per year, which is why a 60-year setback line is utilized. Policy options include:

- a. Continue to allow the DEQ to manage the HREA program by establishing setback lines and issuing permits.
- b. Develop, and adopt, a mechanism to establish a setback from the shoreline by creating a freestanding zoning district or an overlay district; or modify the existing zoning districts and establish a shoreline setback.
- c. Create a Shoreland Development ordinance, which would prohibit new structures lakeward of the setback line; only allow readily moveable structures lakeward of the setback line; establish that existing structures lakeward of the setback line are nonconforming; and require owners of structures currently lakeward of the setback line to post a surety bond or obtain homeowners' insurance sufficient to cover the costs of cleaning up and restoring the shoreline should the structure need to be removed following erosion or a coastal storm event.

4. Fire Risk in Critical Dune Areas

Many of the existing developments within the Critical Dune Areas (CDAs) are situated on narrow, steep, and winding roadways. This creates a difficult situation for the Fire/Rescue Department because most do not have public water available, so the fire trucks must be setup in stations to transfer water via hoses for long distances. In other words, fighting fires is difficult and dangerous within the CDAs. This is further complicated because the DEQ will not allow the roads to be widened because it would disturb the vegetation that stabilize the dunes, and most property owners do not want a wider road. Policy options include:

- a. Continue operating in the same fashion, and continue acquiring specialized equipment, and practicing for emergency responses as best as possible given the infrastructure limitations.

- b. Seek to widen selected access roads and remove vegetation in the highest-risk coastal dune areas.
- c. Adopt a fire hazard overlay district for remote, poorly accessed, and high fire-risk dune areas.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

V. ADJOURNMENT

Without objection the special joint meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laurie Larsen
Grand Haven Charter Township Clerk

Mark Reenders
Grand Haven Charter Township Supervisor