

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS
Minutes October 22, 2019**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, October 22, 2019.

Present were Chair Wayne Harrall, Vice Chair Scott Conners, Secretary Dave Van Dyke; Commissioners Doug Kochneff, Bill Culhane, and Dan Ophoff. Also present was Township Attorney Jim Brown and Planning Assistant Lindsey Thiel. Commissioner Mark Prein was absent.

1. **Approve minutes of June 25, 2019 regular meeting.**

Bill Culhane, seconded by **Dan Ophoff**, moved to approve the minutes of the June 25 meeting with the following changes:

- p. 1, sixth line, remove “what”.
- p. 1, last paragraph, add “he is” to the last line.
- p. 2, seventh paragraph, change “a drone survey” to “drone surveys”.
- p. 3, first paragraph, change “with” to “if” in the second sentence.
- p. 3, first paragraph, add “not” in the last sentence.
- p. 3, second paragraph, change “enforce” to “force” and “parking” to “to park” in the first sentence.
- p. 5, ninth paragraph, change “think” to “agrees”.
- p. 5, eleventh paragraph, remove “an” before “appropriate” in the last sentence.

Motion approved, 6-0.

2. **Initial Review – Forest Hills Preserve - Rezoning request, R-PUD, for a 31.11 acre parcel located at 2409 Knapp St NE.**

Rick Pulaski from Nederveld presented a PowerPoint overview comparing the approved plans from 2016 to their current proposal. He touched on how they have added 24 unit buildings, which allow for more open space. The open space will increase from 54% previously to 57.4% in the current proposal. He also said a pond was removed from the previous plans and many of the retaining walls were removed.

Bill Culhane inquired about the retaining walls and if the parking lot would be below the retaining wall. Rick Pulaski responded it would.

Wayne Harrall asked if the footprints of buildings are the same as the previous plans. Rick Pulaski responded they are the same size, but they are adding another level.

Bill Culhane noted that the pond was eliminated and asked if it was for stormwater management or just an amenity. Rick Pulaski said it was simply an amenity. Wayne Harrall asked if the wetland on the property will be used for stormwater management in the current

plan. Rick Pulaski said the wetland will not be used for stormwater management at this point in the plans.

Rick Pulaski continued his presentation noting that they are applying for this to be apartment rental units currently, but they may consider turning the units into condos in the future. He said he is aware they need to work with the Kent County Road Commission and the Township Engineer on Knapp Street improvements.

Dan Ophoff noted that there are 19 parking spaces in front of the clubhouse on the current plans. He said there were 30 spaces on the previous plans and asked if that is sufficient for clubhouse parking. Rick Pulaski responded that they believe 19 will be suitable and lowering the number of spots allowed them to move the maintenance shed.

Scott Connors asked if there are issues from the previous plans that have not been addressed and asked that they go over the conditions set on the previous approval.

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal review.

Wayne Harrall touched on the location of Building #7 on the plans and its proximity to a house north of the property line. He asked if they could look at shifting the parking for Building #7 south and east. He mentioned the current tree canopy by St. John's Home and asked for it to be added to the plans. He also mentioned planned improvements to Knapp and suggested the applicant could partner with the Kent County Road Commission for infrastructure requirements.

Jim Brown mentioned the Township Engineer's memo and touched on several items from the memo.

Scott Connors suggested that the applicant should bring a cross section design of the retaining walls to the Public Hearing to show the neighbors.

Dave Van Dyke questioned the sewer location and where it needs to be placed. Rick Pulaski said he will verify location with the Township Engineer.

Wayne Harrall noted that the drive to the east would need sidewalk added. Rick Pulaski said that plans to be a secondary drive and they wanted to emphasize that drive less. Scott Connors responded that he would like to see the sidewalk added to the East driveway. Jim Brown noted that several sidewalk issues are included in his legal memo.

Wayne Harrall asked if the other Commissioners agreed with this thought on Building #7. Dave Van Dyke responded that he remembers moving that building on the previous approval. Bill Culhane asked if they considered switching Building #7 to the location of Building #5 to help with the parking issues. Rick Pulaski said he would take a look and see what they could do.

Dan Ophoff, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to set a public hearing for November 26, 2019.

Motion approved, 6-0.

3. **Discussion – Potential amendments for Additional Permitted Uses for the “C” General Commercial District.**

Attorney Jim Brown gave a brief overview of his legal memo. He said he has had a discussion with the property owners requesting these changes and they are having difficulties finding tenants, so they would like the ordinance amended for additional uses. The additional uses could only be done in existing buildings.

Bill Culhane asked if the property owner would fix the buildings for additional uses. Jim Brown responded that issue wasn't addressed.

Scott Connors commented that careful planning is needed when allowing these additional uses.

Dave Van Dyke asked how much of the property owner's building are vacant. Jim Brown responded the front has tenants, but the back is empty.

Scott Connors mentioned that Amazon is in Walker populating existing buildings without any improvements required and an impact that wasn't planned on. He said he thinks a traffic study would be necessary and noted concerns with traffic patterns and circulation. Dave Van Dyke agreed with Scott and commented they should look closely at adding distribution center as a permitted use. Jim Brown responded that the Site Plan Review Committee's approval would be required, so they could make requirements on traffic circulation. He also mentioned that the additional uses are only for existing buildings and referred to the proposed language.

Wayne Harrall commented he thought a circulation plan within the development would help, and it would give the ability to direct where the traffic enters and exits. Scott Connors agreed and said depending on the circulation the traffic signals might also need to be adjusted.

Bill Culhane said he is less concerned with the building and more with the site. He would like to ideally see grass and trees added and make a nice walkable area in front of the building. Scott Connors agreed and commented he would like to see life brought back to the site.

Wayne Harrall asked if Attorney Jim Brown could look at some revisions to the amendments. He said he would like to require some types of improvements within the Site Plan Review Committee process and the ability for them to determine certain conditions.

Dave Van Dyke commented that it might make more sense to allow the distribution centers as a Special Land Use instead of a permitted use. Dan Ophoff and Wayne Harrall both commented they liked that idea.

Wayne Harrall tasked Attorney Jim Brown to work on changes and they will be reviewed for additional discussion at the November 26, 2019 meeting.

4. **General Public Comment.**

No residents spoke during the public comment.

5. **Adjourn**

It was moved by **Bill Culhane**, seconded by **Dan Ophoff**, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion approved, 6-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 pm



David A. Van Dyke, Secretary