

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS
Minutes November 26, 2019**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, November 26, 2019.

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

Vice Chair Scott Connors opened the meeting and announced that the Commission would be changing the presented order of the agenda items and would begin with the additional uses for “C” General Commercial Districts.

1. Approve minutes of October 22, 2019 regular meeting.

Dan Ophoff, seconded by **Dave Van Dyke**, moved to approve the minutes of the October 22 meeting as presented.

Motion approved, 4-0.

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

Chair Wayne Harrall was absent for this agenda item.

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal review.

Steve Pestka, from H & H Management and Development, gave a historical overview of the Northtown Shopping Center and the tenants over the years. He mentioned the difficulties maintaining tenants due to the large size. John Clark, also from H & H Management and Development mentioned that there are other self-storage centers in the area that are using existing buildings. He referenced the old Kmart on Plainfield becoming self-storage and how good it looks now.

Scott Connors asked if only the back half of the building is vacant. John Clark responded there is some front space as well between Big Lots and Polynesian Pools. Scott Connors asked what would be done with the large parking lot in front of the building and what the owners plan on doing to make the property look more appealing. John Clark responded that they are currently working on plans to make some changes that they cannot currently disclose. He said they are looking at some possible out lots in the front.

Jim Brown inquired to some of the specifics of the property including total square footage, if the owners desired both proposed uses, and the minimum size requirement for the uses. The owners said they would look at the proposed ordinance and make sure it applies to their property.

Dave Van Dyke said if additional uses were allowed then he would like to see greenspace or islands in the parking lot to make the property look better. John Clark responded that they would do that with the out lots.

Dave Van Dyke commented that he would prefer to see a distribution center as a special land use. Scott Connors agreed and added that he would like to see both uses as Special Land Uses so that the plans can be thoroughly reviewed.

Mark Prein noted some issues in the draft ordinance not applying to the parcel. Jim Brown responded that the property owners should review the draft ordinance in relation to their property for feedback. Mark Prein also commented on the back businesses and that he would like to be sure traffic patterns would work properly. He said he would like to look at minimum and maximum square footage for the additional uses. Jim Brown responded that the property owner should provide a rough drawing of how they foresee traffic flow, to make sure it would work.

Dan Ophoff said he would be in favor of moving the additional uses forward as Special Land Uses. Mark Prein agreed. Dave Van Dyke agreed and commented he would like to see the area cleaned up.

Jim Brown said the Township will be in touch with the property owners.

3. **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 gave a brief overview of the request, touching on the parcel and its location. He said the PUD would fit well in the community. The Forest Hills Preserve would be 176 units in 9 buildings. There would be some 3 story buildings and he talked about their appearance. He mentioned that they tried to maintain open space and have 57% open space which is more than required.

Chair Wayne Harrall joined the meeting.

Rick Pulaski said the units will be bigger than the Township minimum and the proposal is for 5.7 units per acre in overall density and 7.78 per acre net density. He stated they made the road improvements and sanitary sewer/water main changes asked for at the previous Planning Commission meeting.

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal review.

Mark Prein, seconded by **Dan Ophoff**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 8:14 pm.
Motion approved, 5-0.

Vickie Slot, 2480 & 2484 Knapp NE

Questioned the traffic count; asked about the buffer zone; asked about the “look” of the buildings; asked about the impact on Knapp when installing utilities.

Philip Idema, 1946 Dunlin Court

Knapp Valley Condo Association Board Member; noted that Knapp was widened once; currently difficult to turn left onto Knapp; the Association is concerned about the traffic impact and urge for a traffic study or deny application.

Jim Papparella, St. John’s Home

Concerned with the plans; doesn’t believe the tree lined buffer is enough and would like to request a larger barrier or wall on the property line; concerned with drainage and water hazards.

Ethan Powsner, 1931 Dunlin Court

Concerned about additional cars at rush hour; believes a left turn lane is needed.

Wayne Harrall responded there would be a left turn lane.

June and Doug Schaible, 2266 Dean Lake NE

Land is currently very wet; they live on Shadow Lake and concerned about lake levels; think buildings would be underwater given current conditions; Doug walked property and it is very wet; asked what the DEQ has reported; doesn’t believe it would fit the master plan.

Wayne Harrall responded that the Township has not received a report from EGLE at this point.

Jennifer Winters, 2190 Dean Lake NE

Concerned with water and where it will go; concerned that the three story buildings are very close to her home; inquired about lighting

Julia Wilkins, 2409 Knapp Street NE

Concerned about where the kids will go when this is built; concerned about the wildlife; concerned for property owners in front of property.

Nancy and Steve Paasch, 2501 Knapp Street NE

Doesn’t want cars on their doorstep; asked how much of their front yard will they take; would like to see more information on storm water management.

Linda Sikkema, 1814 Leffingwell NE

Project doesn’t just affect Knapp Street; how much traffic can this area handle; doesn’t believe more apartments are needed in the Township.

Mark Prein, seconded by **Scott Connors**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 8:48 pm.
Motion approved, 5-0.

Wayne Harrall asked if wetland delineation had been done on the site. Rick Pulaski responded that King and MacGregor completed wetland delineation in 2016 and have been back again in 2019, that showed a slight growth. He said the design is around the most recent delineation. He also mentioned that they will be following the new Kent County Drain Commission standards, they will be decentralizing as much as possible, and EGLE will look over their plans.

Wayne Harrall inquired on the applicant's thoughts on the fence request from St. John's Home. Rick Pulaski responded they would consider splitting the cost of the fence on the St. John's Home property line.

Scott Connors commented that the area is growing and traffic concerns are valid. Wayne Harrall responded that the left turn lane will address some of the concerns, but until the bridge is widened it will only help so much. He also commented that what they are proposing is within the Master Plan. Dave Van Dyke mentioned that it is still residential rather than another type of development.

Scott Conner said he sees a lot of loose ends from the applicant from both the Engineer's review and Legal review. Mark Prein agreed and added that the proposed resolution doesn't have correct buffer zones and setbacks. Jim Brown responded that the Planning Commission would have to determine the setbacks, there is not a minimum required for this PUD.

Mark Prein asked what conditions were previously approved. Scott Connors and Wayne Harrall agreed they would like the previous conditions discussed. Rick Pulaski briefly discussed the plans approved in 2016. Scott Connors commented that he would like to see the conditions approved previously shown on the new plan.

Jim Brown noted the Engineer's review and the easements that would be required from other property owners. Dave Van Dyke questioned if the Commission would consider going to 5 ft sidewalks, if the easements were an issue – to help continue the trail.

Dave Van Dyke asked if it would be possible to have Buildings 1 and 2 to a 35 ft setback and if there is room to move Building 9. Scott Connors said he would prefer to move the clubhouse to protect the homes embedded in the development. Wayne Harrall asked if the drives could be moved to protect the property line and noted the drives are pinch points within the development. Rick Pulaski said they could look at it and possibly reconfigure.

Jim Brown advised that if the Commission is looking at moving streets and building locations then the application should be tabled for the next meeting.

Scott Connors commented that he is okay with Buildings 1 and 2 but would move the clubhouse away from the property line. He thinks there needs to be a buffer for St. John's Home. Wayne Harrall said if Buildings 1 and 2 are close to St. John's Home, then the developer should pay for the fence, if it is within 25 feet. Scott Connors replied that would be a nice enhancement.

Mark Prein said he didn't know if he was comfortable sending the application to Site Plan Review because there are parts that need to be cleaned up. Dan Ophoff agreed and noted that the plan that was previously approved did not match the approved ordinance. Scott Conners observed that the Site Plan Review process isn't transparent enough for the number of changes needed.

Mark Prein, seconded by **Scott Conners**, moved to table the rezoning until the following conditions are met:

- Meet previously set conditions
- Add No disturb areas
- Road reconfiguration by the clubhouse and reconfigure the clubhouse
- Trail needs to be shown on plans
- Photometrics included in plans
- Additional landscaping by parking of buildings 3, 4, 5
- Meet new Kent County Drain Commission standards
- Landscape plan updated
- 35' perimeter outer boundary
- Building 1 and 2 relocation and add landscape/fence
- Extend road width across frontage and resolve road width issues
- Move building 7 and 8 retaining walls off of the property line and reconfigure

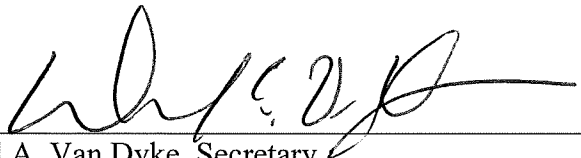
Motion approved, 5-0.

4. **General Public Comment.**

The Planning Commission Chair invited general public comment on Planning Commission matters.

There were none.

It was moved by **Mark Prein**, seconded by **Dave Van Dyke** to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:42 pm.



David A. Van Dyke, Secretary