

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS  
Minutes of the April 27, 2010 Meeting**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, April 27, 2010 at 7:00 pm.

Present were Chair Susan Molhoek, Vice Chair Stephen Fry, Commissioners; Edward J. Robinette, Mark Prein, David VanDyke and Beverly Wall. Also present were Township Planning Director Richard Sprague Jr. and Treasurer Clerical Assistant Kara Ronda. Secretary Wayne Harrall was not present.

**1. Approve minutes of February 23, 2010.**

**Steve Fry**, seconded by **Mark Prein**, moved to approve the minutes with the following changes;

- 1<sup>st</sup> page, 5<sup>th</sup> bullet under item #2, change the word “to” to “of”
- 2<sup>nd</sup> page, 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet under Rick Sprague, add “of the zoning ordinance” after 30.13
- 4<sup>th</sup> page, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph, add the word “sign” between ground and in
- 4<sup>th</sup> page, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph, add the name “Crouse” after Angela

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**2. Previously Tabled – PUD Amendment for Signage – 618 Kenmoor Ave.**

Sue Molhoek informed the commissioners and the public that because this item had previously been tabled, there would not be a public hearing held.

Rick Sprague updated the commissioners that Global Forex is no longer going with the proposed wall sign, just the ground sign.

Mark Prein noted the emblem on the ground sign is now larger and verified with the applicant the elimination of the wall sign and modification of the ground sign. The applicant responded that is correct.

Steve Fry clarified the actual size of the ground sign, which it is the same as the original sign and believes this is not an unreasonable request from the applicant. Ed Robinette agreed with Steve Fry.

Steve Fry asked the applicant which part of the sign is back lit. The applicant replied that the front is lit.

Dave VanDyke noted he did not see a problem with the lion, the emblem, being larger.

**Steve Fry**, seconded by **Ed Robinette**, moved to approve the request of the sign as drawn in the new sketch provided and the ground sign will not exceed 57.5 square feet, and the adoption of the document prepared by the Township attorney page 2, C and E filled in.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**3. Public Hearing – PUD Amendment for Parking – 618 Kenmoor Ave.**

Todd Stuive of Exxel Engineering, Global Forex Trading, requests to amend an approved PUD-4, Office PUD (Ordinance #201 and #220) to allow for additional parking;

- add 37 spaces, West of existing parking lot
- 6 additional spaces North of entry drive
- total of 43 spaces on site
- all spaces meet ordinance requirements
- some trees will be removed but will be replaced

Kirk Vandenberg, Katerberg Verhage, explained the landscape plan;

- follows green belt requirements
- going to save as many plants as possible
- planting Crabapple and Red Maple, of good size to meet Township requirements

Sue Molhoek clarified the Hawthorns are listed as Crabapple on the plan.

Kirk Vandenberg discussed the landscaping that was previously disturbed in the rear of the building. According to Kirk there were originally 20 trees that were impacted, 14 Evergreen and 6 smaller Crabapple. 6 of the Evergreen trees are still there along with 3 of the Crabapple, the others died. Kirk noted they are coming back with the same amount of trees, but now all Evergreen, (20 Evergreen instead of 14).

Ed Robinette asked Kirk how big the Evergreens they intend to plant will be. Kirk stated the trees will be anywhere from 8 ft to 16ft tall.

Sue Molhoek asked what kind the trees will be. Kirk Vandenberg said the trees will be White Pine and Norway spruce.

Sue Molhoek asked Kirk who maintained the grounds while the building sat vacant for so long. Kirk replied he had no idea. Sue stated the grounds may not have been maintained at all.

Rick Sprague gave the staff report and noted some items:

- based on the calculation the building would be allowed 125 parking spaces
- applicant is requesting to exceed the Zoning Ordinance by 31 spaces, which would create a total of 156 spaces on site.
- Township Engineer has no concerns with the additional drainage

- maneuvering lane exceeds code requirements, all spaces meet the width and length requirement

**Ed Robinette**, seconded by **Steve Fry**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 7:32 pm.  
**Motion approved unanimously.**

Paul Rissi, 4228 Baywood

- explained his neighborhood has been negatively impacted by this project
- does not understand why GFT is asking for these ordinances now, but did not when they removed the green belt
- read from Ordinance 220, explained the ordinance is supposed to take care of the neighbors
- asking to postpone or have the Commissioners come to see the 6 homes impacted
- explained 20 Evergreens will have no impact
- expects the green belt to be maintained

Sue Molhoek clarified Grand Rapids Township was not aware of the removal of the trees.

Kirk Vandenberg, Katerberg Verhage

- stated as the progress went along, nothing was listed with a specific green belt, or any regulations

Dave VanDyke stated if the building is thirty years old, the trees and undergrowth have grown substantially in that time. Dave explained thinning out trees to spruce up the lawn and landscape is understandable.

Steve Fry noted the amount of plant material exceeds the original amount and it appears the applicant is trying to do right. Steve explained he is confused if they are discussing parking spots or landscape.

Judy Benson Fowler, 525 Greenbrier

- explained she would like one thing taken care of before they move on to something else, why move forward with something before fixing the previous problem

Paul Rissi, 4228 Baywood

- explained this is not an issue of parking spaces, it is about the green space that no longer exists

**Steve Fry**, seconded by **Mark Prein**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 7:50 pm.  
**Motion approved unanimously.**

Ed Robinette asked Rick Sprague what is it going to take to resolve this. Rick mentioned meeting with the neighbors, come up with a reasonable way to come to a solution.

Mark Prein noted the parking issue is what is in front of them.

Rick Sprague stated the landscape plan is under violation and this is an opportunity to take action on the landscaping that is on site.

Ed Robinette explained he would like a submittal from the applicant.

Dave VanDyke stated he would like to the language and wording from the original resolution.

**Dave VanDyke**, seconded by **Ed Robinette**, moved to table the request for additional parking and asked for the following;

- the applicant provide a new comprehensive landscape plan
- give the staff the opportunity to prove previously approved minutes and resolution

YES: Ed Robinette, Mark Prein, Sue Molhoek, Dave VanDyke, Bev Wall

NO: Steve Fry

**Motion passed.**

**4. Public Comment.**

Paul Rissi, 4228 Baywood, stated he wants to get back to Ordinance 220. He would like the property to be substantially screened like it was in the past.

**5. Update from the Township Planning Director.**

Planning Director Rick Sprague explained to the commissioners the Township will be reviewing PUD ordinance language to comply with a recent court ruling. Rick also said Master Plan requested changes may be coming up as well.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 pm.

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Wayne A. Harrall – Secretary