

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS
Minutes November 23, 2010**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, November 23, 2010 at 6:59 pm.

Present were Chair Susan Molhoek, Secretary Wayne Harrall, Commissioners; Edward J. Robinette, Mark Prein, and Beverly Wall. Also present was Township Planning Director Richard Sprague Jr. Absent were: Vice Chair Stephen Fry and David VanDyke.

1. Approve minutes of September 28, 2010.

Wayne Harrall, seconded by **Ed Robinette**, moved to approve the minutes with the following changes:

- p. 3, 3rd paragraph, add a period after the word “space” and begin the next sentence by replacing “it” with “a site plan”.

Motion approved unanimously.

2. Preliminary Development Plan – Cascade and Forest Hills Ave.

The applicant is requesting a rezoning and site plan approval for the southwest corner of Forest Hill Avenue and Cascade Road.

Doug DeKock, applicant, presented the project. The building is not a “typical” Walgreens store as they have made upgrades in the exterior materials to make it compatible with the neighborhood.

Todd Stuive, with Exxel Engineering, presented a detailed description of the site plan.

- The driveway on Forest Hill Avenue will line up opposite a drive for Forest Hills Foods.
- The building will be brick construction.
- An access drive has been connected to Macatawa Bank.
- Pedestrian access has been improved by adding sidewalks. Crosswalks have been added in the parking lot.
- Stormwater will be contained on site and designed for a 100 year storm event.
- Does not feel traffic will be impacted enough to justify a traffic study as the stores do not generate a lot of additional traffic on the roadways. The driveway has been adjusted to improve traffic flow along Forest Hill Avenue.

- Spoke with Heather Hills about combining and realigning driveways with Cutter Parkway but they are not interested as they feel it would negatively impact their site.
- Greenbelts have been provided where possible.
- A fence has been added along the South property line to screen the back of the building from Heather Hills.

Susan Molhoek asked if all Walgreens have a drive through. Mr. Stuive replied that all new Walgreens do.

Mark Prein asked how stormwater detention would be handled with a retaining wall next to it. Mr. Stuive explained that the underground detention would be sealed and would not leach vertically through the retaining wall.

Planning Director Sprague summarized his staff report.

Wayne Harrall inquired further about the ability to work with Heather Hills to realign the drive on Forest Hill Avenue. Doug DeKock explained that they met with the Facility Manager who, in turn, discussed it with the owner and they decided they were not interested in pursuing the option as they felt it would negatively impact their property.

Wayne Harrall mentioned that the Kent County Road Commission would like to see more consideration given to connecting with Heather Hills. In addition they would also like to see a driveway cut at Macatawa Bank removed as it is too close to the intersection to safely allow left turns out.

Sue Molhoek asked the proposed hours of operation. Doug DeKock stated that they had not yet been set but it is not planned to be a 24 hour store.

Mark Prein asked where the loading would take place. Doug DeKock said the South side of the building.

Doug DeKock asked if the Township would require a Traffic Study. Wayne Harrall said that he had spoken with the Kent County Road Commission's Director Traffic and Safety Engineer and they did not feel it would be needed but they did recommend closing the Macatawa Bank driveway on Forest Hill Avenue. Mark Prein asked how it would hurt to have a traffic study done. He would feel more comfortable making a decision based on a traffic study.

Sue Molhoek asked about the need for a drive through. Doug DeKock said all new Walgreens have a drive through. Ed Robinette said he was concerned with setting a precedent.

Discussion about signage occurred and resulted in Planning Director Sprague stating he would get back with the applicant to confirm requirements. An LED automatic changeable copy sign will not be permitted.

Beverly Wall asked if an easement exists between the Macatawa Bank and the Walgreens site. Doug DeKock stated that an easement document would be created.

Mark Prein asked if something could be done on the West side of the building to improve the architecture and avoid a long blank wall. Doug DeKock said they could add an archway to mimic the other side of the building.

Wayne asked about sidewalk along Medical Park Drive. Doug DeKock said they would look into it. Wayne also asked about the private road, who pays for the upkeep? Doug DeKock said that each property pays for their frontage. Planning Director Sprague indicated that a Private Road Maintenance agreement would be helpful in solving current and future problems with the roadway. Doug DeKock said they would pursue an agreement with the neighbors.

Doug DeKock asked if they are able to remove a driveway at Macatawa bank, relocate and lineup their drive on Forest Hill Avenue with Cutter parkway, would the Planning Commission consider the project without a traffic study. Wayne Harrall stated that he felt it would solve problems a traffic study would likely find and he didn't have a problem if they can accomplish those items.

No action was taken.

3. Conceptual Plan Review – “The Orchards” Site Condominium

The applicant is requesting to add a Site Condominium project to the North West corner of Knapp Street and Maguire Avenue. The project is approximately 107 acres.

Brad Rottschafer, applicant, presented the project. The housing development would have 19% open space. The plan calls for 217 lots. All roads are currently planned to be private.

Discussion about traffic and driveway locations occurred.

A stormwater management plan would need to be developed and soil testing will need to take place.

Planning Director Sprague indicated that a wetlands determination would have to be completed to determine if all of the lots and roads shown could be built without mitigation. MDNRE permits will be needed if wetlands mitigation is required.

No action was taken.

4. General Public Comment.

No Township residents were present for Public Comment.

5. Update from the Township Planning Director.

Planning Director Sprague informed the Planning Commission that there will not be a meeting in December but there will be a meeting in January.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Wayne A. Harrall - Secretary