

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS
Minutes October 28, 2014**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, October 28, 2014.

Present were Chair Wayne Harrall, Vice Chair Dave Pierangeli, Secretary David A. VanDyke, Commissioners; Bill Culhane, Mark Prein and Scott Conners. Also present were Township Attorney Jim Scales and Planning Assistant Kara Hammond. Commissioner Bev Wall was absent.

1. Approve minutes of September 23, 2014 meeting.

Scott Conners, seconded by **Dave Pierangeli**, moved to approve the minutes with the following changes;

- ♦ p.1,1st bullet under item 2, insert 'is' between "application" and "to"
- ♦ p.1,2nd bullet under item 2, change the word "right" to 'east'
- ♦ p.2,1st paragraph,2nd sentence, put an 's' on the word "figure"
- ♦ p.3,1st bullet under public hearing, change the word "doing" to 'do', omit the word "it"
- ♦ p.4,3rd bullet under L. Thiel, insert the word "parking" between 'KISD' and 'lots'
- ♦ p.4,1st bullet under J. Thiel, insert the word "that" between 'fact' and 'they'
- ♦ p.4,last paragraph,2nd sentence, omit "it is a good well thought out plan and"

Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

2. Informal Presentation - 2333 EBL/Pinnacle Ventures - Rezoning re-authorization for NC-PUD Zoning for the parcel of land located at 2333 East Beltline Ave NE.

Steve Fry with Concept Design gave a brief presentation;

- ♦ Asking to reinstate the previously approved zoning for that area
- ♦ Entrance point at EBL potentially will remain the same
- ♦ Proposed uses are the same uses that would be allowed in the NC-PUD
- ♦ Less than total square footage than what was proposed/previously approved

Wayne Harrall asked about the future connection to the north, noted the possible grade issues and explained he would like to leave that location somewhat flexible. Steve Fry stated they are doing a bunch of new engineering to try and lower the site to make it work better. Steve showed an updated potential plan that they are currently working on; explaining how it differs from the original, mainly the previously approved L shaped building has been removed and replaced with a building encompassing smaller square footage and more connectivity throughout the parking lots/driveway areas. Steve stated the challenge of this site would have to be the fact there are no storm water outlets, drainage detention will be important. Steve said they will be paving less area and building less square footage therefore eliminating the previously proposed detention under the parking lots.

Dave VanDyke explained he is concerned about the parcel located directly to the west not having access to utilities. Steve Fry noted the previous agreement stated the two parcels will share the cost, 50/50. Wayne Harrall asked if the applicant will give the property owner to the west the opportunity to hook up to utilities. Steve Fry said yes.

Steve Fry explained this new developer does not feel the accessibility to the Celebration location is as important as the previous.

The commissioners voiced their opinions that interconnectivity is important, access is important, the future drive location is important especially with the potential of connecting those two parcels (2333 EBL and the lot located directly to the west). Scott Connors said the planning principle is for connectivity and cross connection with any site.

Wayne Harrall stated he is comfortable with scheduling a public hearing for the rezoning request. Steve Fry pointed out that the buildings on the plan are conceptual, before spending more money his client is making sure the submitted "conceptual plan" will move forward. Steve stated what they are asking is not unreasonable, and once the rezoning is approved they just simply have to rearrange a few items on the site.

Jim Scales gave the legal report.

The commissioners agreed they are comfortable setting the public hearing and moving forward with the rezoning, they just need to make sure the final site plan works and has connectivity to the west (vs. south, as they can't control what happens to the south).

Steve Fry explained they are not against the connection, he just wants to clarify who will be responsible for what cost.

Dave VanDyke, seconded by **Mark Prein**, moved to set the Public Hearing for November 25, 2014.

Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

3. Public Hearing - Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park - R-1 Rezoning and Special Land Use for additional lands at 3300, 3420 & 4300 Leonard Street.

David Hooker, President of Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, gave the presentation;

- ♦ PowerPoint presentation
- ♦ Benefits (of the special land use request);
 - zoning consistency
 - comprehensive with their maintenance plan
 - 4 access points on Leonard Street from the East Beltline to the Buzzita property will be condensed down to 3 (possibly even 2)
 - expand their horticultural mission
 - allow for them to monitor, care and control the pond/wetland in the center of the current UAW property
 - greater opportunity for people to learn and care about nature
 - closure of the golf course and UAW will decrease the amount of traffic
 - removal of dilapidated buildings/home
 - reconnection of lands

Dave VanDyke and Scott Connors explained they are not impressed with the fact the applicant has not provided the items previously asked for at the last meeting, specifically regarding the distance of property from the road that will be maintained.

David Hooker explained he can't make that specific promise, but explained they keep their properties nice as it is a part of their mission statement. David explained to keep it "green" means irrigation and taking care of the property which they do not have the resources to do so.

Dave VanDyke stated an abandoned golf course is an eye sore and explained he is very concerned with the applicant's vagueness. Dave said he would rather table the request in order to have more descriptive plans or something more than pictures.

Jim Scales gave the legal report.

Mark Prein, seconded by **Scott Connors**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 8:04 pm.
Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

**Wayne Harrall read two letters from residents, supporting the FMG rezoning request.*

Joe Rogers, 4170 Leonard St NE

- Asked if FMG was going to fence the golf course properties

David Hooker replied no, stating the large 200 acres will not be fenced.

James P. White, 1074 Whitewood Farms Ct NE

- Concern is similar to Dave VanDyke's and wants to know from the Gardens how deep and specifically how they will maintain that property

David Beach, 1020 Crahen Ave NE

- Concerned what the view will look like, agreed with Mr. White and Dave VanDyke, strongly reinforces that specific concern

Doug Datema, 4175 Crahen Ave NE

- Excited about the Gardens being there, but concurs with all previous statements and would also like to know what is going to happen with that property

James Harger, 4131 Bradford St NE

- Agrees with Mr. Datema's statement

Lisa Harger, 4131 Bradford St NE

- Happy with gardens coming in to that area, wouldn't mind seeing that area go "wild"
- If the Gardens don't want to mow it, it is fine with her

Steve Denolf, 811 Crahen Ave NE

- Originating homestead of the original golf course
- Very concerned with the short term/long term of the maintenance area
- Supportive of the Gardens and believes the Gardens mission is positive, but agrees the Planning Commission should be provided more
- Everyone seems to be concerned about needing more

Archie Miller, 1156 Crahen Ave NE

- Asked what the Gardens can and cannot do within their special land use

Wayne Harrall explained the special land use that will be granted to the Gardens will be in conjunction with the specific special land use requirements of the Grand Rapids Township Zoning Ordinance.

Dave VanDyke, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 8:16 pm.
Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

Wayne Harrall stated based on the comments, it appears one of the concerns is a basic maintenance plan of the golf course property. Wayne suggested giving the Gardens a time frame of coming up with an idea of what they intend to do to that property and then come back with a more detailed plan. Wayne noted he likes the natural idea and thinks a lot of the wetland features on that property will come back nicely.

Mark Prein added the commissioners have to remember that the Gardens own the property, believes they are better off with Wayne's suggestion of approving it but still holding the Gardens accountable.

Dave VanDyke stated he is surprised by the fact the Gardens did not address specifics that were previously requested at the last meeting. Dave explained he is concerned with the lack of detail the Gardens failed to provide. Mark Prein asked if those concerns could be taken care of with verbiage in the resolution. Dave VanDyke stated he has lost confidence after the last SPR meeting with the Gardens, and explained he is more comfortable with having the intentions upfront. Dave said he just wants to see something, it does not have to be extensive, but just something.

David Hooker responded to the concerns;

- ♦ Parking lot F, thought they had healthy dialogue concerning that approval, and the Gardens are now living up to every requirement the SPR requested
- ♦ Regarding the comments from the last meeting, apologized if he did not meet the Planning Commissions expectations; did talk about the drive across from Eaglecrest, the four access points, etc...
- ♦ Do not have the resources to mow and irrigate the property to keep it the way it is now, they do intend to keep the perimeter maintained, most likely 50-100 ft vs 200-500 ft

Bill Culhane brought up the fact the Gardens had talked about using this property for tours, Bill asked how exactly they intend to do that. Will the Gardens be using a trolley? Bill also asked how the Gardens intend to use the UAW property; will the parking lot be maintained or are they going to let weeds grow through the asphalt?

David Hooker replied stating the tours have been conducted as a guided walking tour on the 35 acres to the west of the golf course property. David explained people were blown away and amazed by the natural beauty of the area. David explained in regards to the UAW property, it is a very high probability that the building will be removed. They will recycle and demolish the building, remove most of the parking area as the Gardens are not interested at all in using the parking lot as overflow. David did state that the Gardens are looking to do something with the UAW property sooner than the golf course property.

Bill Culhane asked if the Gardens plan on mowing the entrance to the golf course property and if they have an idea of the depth (how far into the property) they will maintain. David Hooker stated that have not decided on an exact depth, but insured the commissioners it will be properly maintained. Bill explained his concern was that for the neighbors and that the overgrowth does not become a nuisance for them. David stated the Gardens envision some sort of future development for that property although he does not know when or what, but reaffirmed it will be reflective of the Frederik Meijer Gardens vision.

Dave VanDyke stated his concern is about the frequency of the maintenance and the depth (200/300 feet from Crahen) explaining there are a lot of open areas along Crahen Avenue and he is afraid the frontage will become more of a nuisance than natural looking growth. Dave said he wants to see something more than ambiguous verbiage. Bill Culhane added he feels the abandoned holes will not be a desirable look for the neighbors or community.

Mark Prein, seconded by **Dave Pierangeli**, moved to approve the rezoning request of the parcel of property located at 3300 Leonard Street NE.

Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

Dave VanDyke, seconded by **Scott Conners**, moved to table the special land use request until the next regular meeting scheduled for November 25, 2014.

Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

****The Planning Commission considered the SLU request to cover all three proposed parcels under one request, although their main concerns are with the golf course property*

4. Informal Discussion - Sign Revisions & Zoning Ordinance Consolidations - Grand Rapids Township Zoning Ordinance Chapter 30 (signs) revisions and distributions of Zoning Ordinance consolidations, to be recommended to the Township Board.

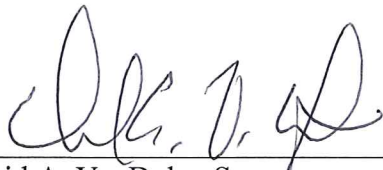
All Planning Commissioners agree on consolidation of both signs and districts.

The Commissioners will continue to look over everything, intertwine both signs and districts, and possibly set a Public Hearing for the beginning of next year.

5. General Public Comment.

No one was present for public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.



David A. VanDyke, Secretary