

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS
Minutes July 28, 2020**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, July 28, 2020.

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

1. Approve minutes of June 23, 2020 regular meeting.

Dan Ophoff, seconded by **Mark Prein**, moved to approve the minutes of the June 23 meeting with the following changes:

On page 2, first paragraph, last sentence add “would remain on” after “security lighting”.

On page 3, second paragraph, correct “timeframe” into two words.

On page 3, in the motion, add “Motion approved, 6-0”.

Motion approved, 6-0.

2. Public Hearing – Grand Forest Townhomes – Rezoning request, R-PUD, for an 11.41 acre parcel located at approximately 1137 Forest Hill Avenue.

Rick Pulaski, Nederveld, gave a brief overview of the project. He said they are proposing 48 townhome units on just over 11 acres. They intend to have 54% open space which would be 6.03 units per acre.

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal review.

Dan Ophoff, seconded by **Steve Waalkes**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 7:21pm.

Motion approved, 6-0.

Stanley Lis, 1190 Farnsworth Ave, has been in his house for six years; has concerns with traffic; believes the project would cause watershed issues; opposes the development.

Ed Schwenke, 1118 Forest Hill Ave, lives across from Medical Park Drive; traffic is bad in front of his house; believes speed limit should be lower; would like to see privacy fence around the development; would like to see Forest Hill Ave widened.

Rachel Ogilvie, 4483 Orchard Creek Drive, concerned about traffic; traffic backs up greatly on Forest Hill – sometimes back to Meadowbrook Elementary School; asked if single family homes could be built in the wetlands; asked about an independent traffic study; believes this development would change the character of the area; commented that rental properties are maintained at different levels; would like to see plans for privacy and protection from lights; asked about the long term plans to make sure the development is maintained.

John Wheeler, Orion Construction, responded to questions about building on wetlands. He said they plan to sell the units down the road. He said the units will rent for \$1800-\$2400 to appeal to a broad audience. He responded that they manage all of their own properties, even after changing them into condos. He also touched on the tree buffers between the development and the established neighborhood.

Dave Van Dyke, seconded by **Dan Ophoff**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 7:49 pm.

Motion approved, 6-0.

Wayne Harrall mentioned other public comments that were submitted via email. He also mentioned the legal memo for the criteria to consider the rezoning. He touched on traffic concerns noting that both uses would have a similar impact. He said the development could be considered a transitional piece and it could be considered compatible with the master plan since it would be residential.

Dave Van Dyke commented on the parallel plan the applicant provided and thinks they have shown more lots than possible. He also noted that there is a shortage of single family lots in the Township. He said he doesn't approve of PUD development on secondary or local roads and doesn't want to start setting that precedent. He also mentioned the master plan and how the proposal doesn't fit the master plan or warrant a change.

Dan Ophoff commented that he shares concerns regarding the master plan. He said he doesn't think it fits or would be compatible with the area. He commented that Heather Hills is the transition building. He said that changing the zoning to a PUD is supposed to provide a substantial benefit to the community and he doesn't think this proposal meets that standard.

Doug Kochneff asked for the length of the leases. John Wheeler responded they are 12 month leases. Doug Kochneff asked if the development at Cascade and Spaulding is the developer's. John Wheeler responded they have 72 units at Cascade and Spaulding and they are all currently rented. Doug Kochneff commented that he doesn't think multifamily development meets the spirit of the ordinance.

Mark Prein commented that he is having a hard time seeing how the proposal meets the requirements for rezoning. He asked what benefit the rezoning would bring to the community.

Dave Van Dyke, seconded by **Dan Ophoff**, moved to deny rezoning request to R-PUD due to the following factors:

- Not compatible with the area;
- Not consistent with the Master Plan and R-1 District;
- Does not provide a recognizable and substantial benefit to the community, which would otherwise be unfeasible or unlikely be achieved through traditional development.

Motion approved, 6-0.

3. General Public Comment.

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

John Wheeler, Orion Construction, commented that he didn't see the value in the vacant nursing home that sits on Forest Hill Ave. He said it could be a problem down the road and they were planning to do something nice with the land.

It was moved by **Dan Ophoff**, seconded by **Steve Waalkes** to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:04 pm



David A. Van Dyke, Secretary