

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
August 23, 2010**

APPROVED

**5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
853-4000, Town Hall Room, 7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Chair Reicosky, Vice-Chair Deits, Secretary Goldsberry, Goodale, Jackson, Jorkasky, Wilcox
ABSENT: Commissioners Beyea, Honicky
STAFF: Principal Planner Gail Oranchak

1. Call meeting to order

Chair Reicosky called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

2. Approval of agenda

Commissioner Wilcox moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Jackson.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0.

3. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Jackson moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of August 9, 2010. Seconded by Commissioner Deits.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0.

4. Public Remarks

Chair Reicosky opened the floor for public remarks.

Ruth Linnemann, 1154 Teakwood Circle, Haslett, spoke in support of Special Use Permit #10-64121, offering additional information stating Haslett Community Church has found an alternate site for the Volunteers of America box which would not require a variance from the north lot line. She noted Volunteers of America has sent a letter which delineates the agreement between Volunteers of America and Haslett Community Church which lists the responsibilities of each party.

Chair Reicosky closed public remarks.

5. Communications

- Chad Walter, B. Chadwick Walter, II, A.I.A. Architect, 4736 Marsh Road, Okemos; RE: Support for SUP #10101 (Rhodes)

6. Public hearings

- A. *Special Use Permit #10101 (Rhodes), a request to construct an addition to a building greater than 25,000 square feet at 1839 Grand River Avenue

Chair Reicosky opened the public hearing at 7:07 P.M.

- Introduction by the Chair (announcement of procedures, time limits and protocols for public participation and applicants)

- Summary of subject matter
Principal Planner Oranchak summarized the special use permit request as outlined in staff memorandum dated August 19, 2010.
- Applicant
Matt Rhodes, owner of Dusty's Cellar, 4674 Woodcraft, Okemos, indicated the intent of this request is to extend the existing seating for year round use.
- Planning Commission discussion:
Commissioner Deits inquired if the American Disabilities Act (ADA) requirement is due to the need for a walkway or for the width of the walkway needed for access.

Principal Planner Oranchak responded she believed it to be both.

Commissioner Deits stated there is existing ADA compliance to the restaurant from the entrance of the restaurant.

Principal Planner Oranchak acknowledged there is compliance to the restaurant, but there is not access along the entire length of the gallery without the walkway. She indicated the idea is to keep a contiguous and continuous opening for access so that an individual may leave the store and travel along the walkway to another facility in the shopping center located west of the dining area.

Commissioner Deits requested clarification if the ADA require that every building have access to every other element of the building via walkway.

Principal Planner Oranchak responded she could not say that was an actual ADA requirement and would need to research the actual wording of the act.

Commissioner Deits expressed concern that the Township is asking the applicant to incur additional expense to remodel that is not a requirement, but an option. He believed if it is an option, it should be left to the applicant.

Principal Planner Oranchak responded staff believed this requirement would be ADA compliant.

Commissioner Jackson inquired if there would be an additional ramp placed on the property for access to the proposed enclosed patio.

Principal Planner Oranchak responded part of the walkway already exists and will be extended to connect the two ends.

Chair Reicosky commented that, from the staff provided photograph, this seems to be a safety issue as people who currently wish to walk all the way down the gallery would have to walk into the parking lot area. He noted that completing this sidewalk and requesting to move the wall back would allow end-to-end gallery access.

Commissioner Deits stated that unless there is clear regulation that a three (3) foot sidewalk across the entire front of the building is required by the ADA, it should be offered as an option during site plan review.

Principal Planner Oranchak added this issue and the current placement of tables, in addition to outdoor seating, will be addressed during site plan review.

Chair Reicosky asked the applicant as to the need for expediting this request tonight.

Mr. Rhodes stated the business is entering its busy season and needs to be completed. He added there is currently complete access inside the walkway for a ramp. He added the planter at the end will be pushed back, just like the structure at the other patio, to create the three (3) foot area.

Commissioner Jackson clarified there are two requests: 1) approve a structure greater than 25,000 square feet and 2) allow an extension to the existing building. She inquired as to the type of material which will be used to enclose the area.

Mr. Rhodes responded it is a double barrier marine vinyl which will create a gap. He added that both the Building and Fire Departments have approved how this structure will be constructed.

Commissioner Jackson asked if this material will be transparent.

Mr. Rhodes responded in the affirmative, stating it will be just like a window. He added that 95% of the area will be "see-through."

Commissioner Goodale inquired if the walkway will be covered by the roof.

Mr. Rhodes responded that it will not.

Chair Reicosky voiced his support for improving commerce within the community and believed this to be a good addition to the Township.

Commissioner Deits stated that while he is 100% certain that the design of the sidewalk is ADA compliant, his concern is whether the sidewalk is actually required by the ADA. He added his intention when he reads the resolution is to remove that condition and have that determination made during site plan review. Commissioner Deits noted there is also an interior passage from one restaurant to another as well.

Commissioner Jorkasky believed this is an appropriate time to construct the addition.

Chair Reicosky closed the public hearing at 7:35 P.M.

- B. *Commission Review #10103 (Township Board), a request for Section 61 review of an approximate 8.1 acre Land Preservation purchase located on the south side of Grand River Avenue west of the Red Cedar River and Meridian Road.

Chair Reicosky opened the public hearing at 7:35 P.M.

- Summary of subject matter
Principal Planner Oranchak summarized the commission review as outlined in staff memorandum dated August 19, 2010.
- Planning Commission discussion:
Chair Reicosky inquired if any thought has been given for potential future uses of this land within the Township's park system or educational opportunities for local schools.

Principal Planner Oranchak responded that use of land purchased with Land Preservation funds is very limited as it must remain in its natural state. It can be visited, but no formal

activities can take place on the site. She added use of the land is stated within the Land Preservation Ordinance.

Commissioner Jorkasky inquired if there are parking areas associated with Land Preservation properties.

Principal Planner Oranchak responded she is not aware of any Land Preservation properties which provide parking.

Commissioner Deits noted there is a small park in Williamstown Township located approximately 100 yards east of this property which has parking available. He noted residents could park vehicles there, and walk to the site.

Chair Reicosky noted this is a unique piece of land which should be preserved through the Land Preservation program. He added that a bog takes a very long time to form and can be used as an educational tool.

Commissioner Jorkasky noted this purchase will help preserve the eastern rural edge of the Township.

Chair Reicosky closed the public hearing at 7:46 P.M.

7. Unfinished Business

- A. Special Use Permit #10-64121 (Haslett Community Church), a request to amend an existing special use permit to install a Volunteers of America donation box at 1427 Haslett Road.

Commissioner Jorkasky moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby approves Special Use Permit #10-64121 (Haslett Community Church), a request to bring an existing donation box at 1427 Haslett Road into conformance with the RB (Single-Family High Density) zoning district, with the following conditions:

- 1. Approval is subject to the application materials submitted as part of Special Use Permit #10-64121, subject to revisions as required.**
- 2. The applicant shall receive site plan approval from the Department of Community Planning and development.**
- 3. The applicant shall apply for and receive all necessary variances from the Zoning Board of Appeals or adjust the box location so a variance is no longer necessary.**
- 4. The applicant is responsible for monitoring the use of the donation box to ensure that it does not become a problem for the neighborhood.**

Seconded by Commissioner Deits.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners Deits, Goldsberry, Goodale, Jackson, Jorkasky, Wilcox, Chair Reicosky

NAYS: None

Motion carried 7-0.

- B. *Special Use Permit #10101 (Rhodes), a request to construct an addition to a building greater than 25,000 square feet at 1839 Grand River Avenue.

Commissioner Wilcox moved to suspend Rule #6.4A of the Planning Commission's Bylaws which states, "A decision on a special use permit, zoning request or ordinance will not be made on the date of the public hearing considering such item. Seconded by Commissioner Jackson.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0.

Commissioner Deits moved [and read into the record] NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby recommends approval of Special Use Permit #10101 for a building greater than 25,000 square feet in size and to construct an addition to a building greater than 25,000 square feet in size located at 1839 Grand River Avenue, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Approval is granted in accordance with the site plan submitted by the applicant dated May 5, 2010.**
- 2. The total square footage of the building on the site shall not exceed 32,343 square feet. Any future building additions will require modification to the special use permit, subject to the approval of the Township Board.**
- 3. The final site plan shall be subject to the approval of the Director of Community Planning and Development.**

Seconded by Commissioner Goodale.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners Deits, Goldsberry, Goodale, Jackson, Jorkasky, Wilcox, Chair Reicosky

NAYS: None

Motion carried 7-0.

- C. *Commission Review #10103 (Township Board), a request for Section 61 review of an approximate 8.1 acre Land Preservation purchase located on the south side of Grand River Avenue west of the Red Cedar River and Meridian Road.

Commissioner Goldsberry moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN approves the location, character and extent of an 8.1 acre parcel of land extending to the water's edge of the Red Cedar River and located south of Grand River Avenue and west of Meridian Road in Section 25 of the Township. Seconded by Commissioner Wilcox.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners Deits, Goldsberry, Goodale, Jackson, Jorkasky, Wilcox, Chair Reicosky

NAYS: None

Motion carried 7-0.

8. Other Business

- A. C-PUD Process Update

Principal Planner Oranchak offered an update on the two proposed forums to be held on August 30, 2010 and September 13, 2010.

Planning Commission discussion:

- Table arrangement of round tables on the floor would foster cross communication and open discussion
- Inquiry if Commissioners would get a packet of information of what was sent to the participants and their responses prior to the first forum
- Offer made in the invitation for participants to receive an e-copy of the draft CPUD ordinance
- No written comments have been received from invitees
- Chair request for Planning Commissioners to receive an electronic copy of both the letter sent to invitees and a copy of the draft CPUD ordinance
- Discussion of draft agenda for the August 30th meeting
- Commissioner Goldsberry to provide a history of the CPUD ordinance and purpose of the roundtable sessions
- Suggestion for the summary to include specific features in the draft which constitute a change in the way the Township will do business
- Chair request for Planning Commissioners and staff to make note of the important topics discussed
- Suggestion for the Chair to delineate for invitees the future steps in this process

B. Master Plan Discussion

Principal Planner Oranchak summarized the Master Plan update as outlined in staff memorandum dated August 19, 2010.

Planning Commission and staff discussion:

- Conduct a partial Master Plan review as information from the US Census is not available to perform a complete analysis
- Planning Commissioner agreement as to which areas will be addressed
- Review of the goals and objectives section in light of Board ends
- Include language in future motion which states Master Plan goals and objectives should link to Board adopted ends
- Alter language in staff recommendation number three (3) to state: Review recent land use decisions to ensure consistency with other nearby land uses
- Staff suggestion to hold a joint session with the DDA
- Suggestion to review Parks and Recreation land as well
- Parks and Recreation Plan is updated every five years and that plan's goals and objectives are incorporated into the Future Land Use Map
- Initiating a review begins with sending out letters to neighboring communities and other agencies which sets the time specific process in motion
- Request for staff to draft a motion to initiate a review in the fall

9. Township Board, Planning Commission officer, committee chair, and staff comment or reports

Chair Reicosky indicated he will represent the Planning Commission in the appeal of All Shapes and Sizes Special Use Permit to the Township Board scheduled for September 7, 2010.

10. New applications (None)

11. Site plans received (None)

12. Site plans approved (None)

13. Public remarks

Chair Reicosky opened and closed public remarks.

14. Adjournment

Chair Reicosky adjourned the regular meeting at 8:26 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra K. Otto
Recording Secretary