

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

APPROVED

June 11, 2018

5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198

517-853-4560, Town Hall Room, 7:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Commissioners Richards, Cordill, Ianni, Premoe, Scott-Craig, Stivers, Trezise, Shrewsbury, and Lane

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Principal Planner Peter Menser, Assistant Planner Justin Quagliata, Planning Intern Juliana Boblitz

1. Call meeting to order

Chair Ianni called the regular meeting to order at 7:02 P.M.

2. Public Remarks - None

3. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Richards moved to approve the agenda as written.

Supported by Vice-Chair Scott-Craig.

VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes

A. May 21, 2018 Regular Meeting

Commissioner Premoe moved to approve the minutes as written.

Supported by Commissioner Cordill.

VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

5. Communications - None

6. Public Hearings

A. Commercial Planned Unit Development #18024 (Affinity 9 Investments), construct a 4,534 square foot Panera restaurant with drive-through window at 2080 Grand River Avenue.

Chair Ianni opened the public hearing at 7:04 p.m.

Principal Planner Menser outlined C-PUD #18024 for discussion.

Mr. Jeff Kyes of KEBS Engineering spoke representing the applicant. He commented the existing site does not meet a number of ordinance requirements and under the proposed plan they worked hard to minimize the number of waivers required. He stated a traffic study was reviewed by the Michigan Department of Transportation and they were in agreement with the proposed plans for the time being.

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Richards asked about the quality of the existing wetland.

Principal Planner Menser replied the quality was high enough that the wetland is regulated by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality as well as the Township.

Vice-Chair Scott-Craig asked for details about installing a right turn lane from Grand River Avenue.

Mr. Kyes stated installing a dedicated right turn lane on westbound Grand River Avenue for traffic to turn into the business can only be done if the Michigan Department of Transportation determines it's necessary.

Vice-Chair Scott-Craig asked if the compensating cut in the floodplain would remove the possibility of a secondary access road.

Mr. Kyes stated the compensating cut would not limit a secondary access drive because it is between the parking lot and sidewalk.

Vice-Chair Scott-Craig asked about the reduced parking.

Mr. Kyes explained the parking reduction was kept to the very minimum but was warranted to reduce the amount of impervious surface.

Vice-Chair Scott-Craig stated the surrounding intersections already have failing Level of Service traffic grades and while the proposed project won't help, it certainly won't make it too much worse. He said he was concerned about flooding in the area and stated the topic would have to be addressed.

Commissioner Cordill stated she was glad to see the improvement to the site that the proposed development offers but said the number of waivers is still very significant.

Principal Planner Menser explained the waivers requested based on the proposed plan and stated the C-PUD waiver process takes the place of the variance process.

Commissioner Cordill stated she was not in favor of having a drive-thru in this location as she would like to see less impact on traffic for this area.

Mr. Kyes explained the business needs the drive-thru and the proposed plan has maximized every possible area on the lot to accommodate the drive-thru.

Commissioner Stivers asked if the building could be moved closer to Grand River Avenue to conform to the possible adoption of Form Based Code.

Mr. Kyes explained with the access required for the drive-thru and any emergency vehicles that would have to get around the building it would not be possible to move the building closer to Grand River Avenue.

Commissioner Lane asked how the square footage of the proposed development compared to the applicant's existing site in the Township.

Mr. Brian Barnard, a representative of Panera Bread, stated the square footage was close to the same for the proposed and existing sites.

A straw poll indicated the Planning Commission would be in favor of recommending approval of the proposed C-PUD at the next meeting.

Chair Ianni closed the public hearing at 7:32 p.m.

B. Special Use Permit #18051 (Singh), construct a multiple family housing development with seven dwelling units at 1954 Saginaw Highway.

Chair Ianni opened the public hearing at 7:33 p.m.

Principal Planner Menser outlined Special Use Permit #18051 for discussion.

Mr. Jeff Kyes spoke representing the applicant. He gave details about the development and said the proposal was to build in phases. The existing home would remain and the detached garage would be converted into a dwelling with an attached two car garage. The revenue generated from renting those two units would be used to run water to the property so phase two construction could begin.

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Premoe asked if the existing garage and home were separate buildings.

Mr. Kyes explained the existing garage is separate from the home and is not a living unit at this time but would be converted into a dwelling with an attached garage.

Commissioner Lane asked if there was adequate parking for two dwellings.

Mr. Kyes replied the plan calls for creating two parking spaces for the existing home and the converted garage would have an attached garage for parking.

Vice-Chair Scott-Craig commented he was happy to see the plan called for leaving as many of the mature trees as possible on the lot.

Principal Planner Menser stated a RDD special use permit would be valid for one year and with the possibility of a one year extension if necessary.

Vice-Chair Scott-Craig asked about the fact that the existing structures are in the setback areas of the lot.

Mr. Kyes explained the footprint of neither structure would change under the proposed plan.

A straw poll indicated the Planning Commission would be in favor of approval of SUP #18051.

Chair Ianni closed the public hearing at 7:55 p.m.

- C. Mixed Use Planned Unit Development #18034 (Meridian Investment Group, LLC), construct 70,213 square foot mixed use building with 88 dwelling units at 2875 Northwind Drive.
- D. Special Use Permit #18031 (Meridian Investment Group, LLC), construct building greater than 25,000 square feet in size at 2875 Northwind Drive.
- E. Special Use Permit #18041 (Meridian Investment Group, LLC), placement of fill and grading in the floodplain of the Red Cedar River at 2875 Northwind Drive.

Chair Ianni opened the public hearing combining items C, D, and E at 7:56 p.m.

Principal Planner Menser outlined MUPUD #18034 and SUP #18031 and SUP #18041 for discussion.

Mr. Ron Calhoun spoke representing the applicant. He commented the building currently on the property was built in 1978. The proposed redevelopment would decrease the amount of impervious surface and would result in a net reduction in traffic on the road. He said the proposed building would be primarily residential with some professional offices on the first floor. The number of proposed dwelling units is 88 with a total of 111 bedrooms and would have a façade similar to the Red Cedar Flats project.

Commissioner Lane asked if improvements were planned for the private portion of Northwind Drive.

Mr. Calhoun responded the road is scheduled to have improvements prior to construction starting.

Commissioner Stivers asked if the applicant had an idea of what type of retail tenants would occupy the commercial space.

Mr. Calhoun stated the commercial space would likely be destination related or professional office space due to being removed from Grand River Avenue.

Vice-Chair Scott-Craig asked if the area's demographics supported a project of this size and what type of resident would most likely be living there.

Mr. Calhoun remarked the market has shown a need for larger one to two bedroom apartments which would seem to appeal to young professionals.

Vice-Chair Scott-Craig asked about the trail easement related to the property.

Mr. Calhoun replied the trail easement would provide pedestrian and bicycle access along the Red Cedar River and will require improvements along the river's edge.

Mr. Kyes gave a brief explanation of the grading and fill on the site.

Vice-Chair Scott-Craig stated by his count the residential building would have 116 parking spaces and 36 overflow spaces adjacent to the property, the majority of which would be in the floodplain. He asked what the emergency parking plan was during flooding.

Mr. Calhoun responded during flood events stack parking may need to occur.

Vice-Chair Scott-Craig said flooded parking areas is a major issue and he would like to know exactly how many spaces would be in the flooding area. He also asked how far above the flood plain the lower level apartments are planned.

Mr. Calhoun replied the lower level apartments would be one foot above the floodplain.

Vice-Chair Scott-Craig asked what building materials are proposed for the exterior of the proposed building.

Mr. Calhoun replied it would be cement block similar to the Red Cedar Flats project.

Vice-Chair Scott-Craig reminded the applicant that the amenities are meant for the public as well as the residents and while the river trail is a great amenity they should keep the public in mind as they select the other amenities.

Commissioner Stivers asked if the detention basin would help with the flooding issue.

Mr. Kyes responded the detention basin is a pre-treatment system for storm water discharge, and is utilized to slow down the flow of storm water but would not be enough to keep the area from flooding.

Commissioner Richards asked if a study was done to determine the number of units that are needed for the area. He asked if the market was already saturated.

Mr. Calhoun responded the development was primarily driven by market demand for an overall blend of housing.

Commissioner Cordill remarked there was too much impervious surface included in the project.

A straw poll indicated five Commissioners would likely recommend approval of the request. Two Commissioners were undecided and two would not recommended approval.

Chair Ianni closed the public hearing at 8:53 p.m.

7. Unfinished Business -None

8. Other Business-None

9. TOWNSHIP BOARD, PLANNING COMMISSION OFFICER, COMMITTEE CHAIR, AND STAFF COMMENTS OR REPORTS

Commissioner Cordill stated a review of the amenities list in the MUPUD ordinance should be done. She stated public Wi-Fi shouldn't count as an amenity, and connecting to the Township pathway system is a requirement and therefore should not be counted as an amenity.

Vice-Chair Scott-Craig gave a brief summary of the most recent Economic Development Corporation meeting.

Principal Planner Menser commented the Township Board may review the MUPUD ordinance, including possible revision of the amenities list. He announced Justin Quagliata has graduated from Michigan State University and is now a full-time Assistant Planner for the Township. Principal Planner Menser also introduced Juliana Boblitz, the new Planning Intern.

10. PROJECT UPDATES

- A. New Applications - None
- B. Site Plan Received
 - 1. Site Plan Review #18-07 (Wieland), construct 29,270 square foot church at 6322 Newton Road.
- C. Site Plans Approved -None

11. PUBLIC REMARKS - NONE

12. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Cordill moved to adjourn the meeting.
Supported by Vice-Chair Scott-Craig.
VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Ianni adjourned the regular meeting at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela M. Ryan
Recording Secretary