

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

APPROVED

**December 16, 2019
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
517-853-4560, Town Hall Room, 7:00 P.M.**

**PRESENT: Commissioners Lane, Hendrickson, Trezise, Richards, Premoe, Shrewsbury
Clark and Cordill
ABSENT: None
STAFF: Director of Community Planning & Development Mark Kieselbach, Economic
Development Director Chris Buck, and Principal Planner Peter Menser**

1. Call meeting to order

Chair Lane called the regular meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

2. Public Remarks - None

3. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Richards moved to approve the agenda as written.
Seconded by Commissioner Premoe.
VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes

A. December 9 2019 Regular Meeting

Commissioner Hendrickson moved to approve the minutes as written.
Seconded by Commissioner Cordill.
VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

5. Communications

Chair Lane noted the communication listed in the meeting packet for consideration.

6. Public Hearings

- A. Mixed Use Planned Unit Development #19034 (Hudson Senior Living), construct a 146,743 square foot independent senior apartment building with 133 dwelling units at 1673 Haslett Road.**
- B. Special Use Permit #19181 (Hudson Senior Living), construct an independent senior apartment building over 25,000 square feet in size at 1673 Haslett Road.**

Chair Lane opened the public hearing at 7:05 p.m.

Principal Planner Menser welcomed everyone and stated the Mixed Use Planned Unit Development #19034 and Special Use Permit #19181 proposals would be combined in the public hearing and staff overview.

The applicant, Jeff Buck, with Hudson Senior Living, 280 W. Maple Road, Suite 230, Birmingham, MI 48009 provided additional information about the proposed project. Mr. Buck expressed his excitement about the project and the vibrancy it would bring to the area. He said each apartment would have a full kitchen and noted other amenities which include: a full commercial kitchen with a dining room and an outside dining patio, a café and pub, salon, art studio, home health care office, fitness room, library, game room, a multipurpose room, chapel, two commercial laundry rooms, and numerous gathering spaces throughout the complex.

He also noted residents who do not drive or own a car will have access to additional transportation options including an on-site community van and public transportation.

Mr. Buck stated he would be available to answer any questions.

Public Comment: None

Planning Commission Discussion:

- The funding source for this project would not include a PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes).
- The applicant was asked a question about what other projects Hudson Senior Living has done and he responded with the following information: The proposed building would be modeled after a similar project done recently in St. Clair Shores, Michigan. He also noted another senior living project completed in Traverse City, Michigan of similar size.
- While reviewing the multiple family parking standards, the proposed project would require a total of 270 parking spaces and the applicant is seeking a 163 space waiver as part of the MUPUD approval. Planning Commission members expressed their concerns with the limited parking spaces and questioned if parking for employees, family members visiting and special events have been considered. In the future when the east side of the property is redeveloped they shared concern that there may not be enough parking.
- The applicant, Jeff Buck, was asked a question about the sign waiver and he noted it was to request larger signs than allowed in the ordinance to advertise community classes and space that is planned for the complex in the salon and art studio.
- A comment was made regarding another senior living complex that didn't have enough parking to accommodate extra parking spaces when needed.
- The Site Engineer, Greg Petru of Kebs, Inc. located at 2116 Haslett Road noted they are proposing to fill in the current detention basin and relocate it to the southeast corner of the property.
- Belief that the proposal would provide an opportunity for the local elderly population to continue to live locally and remain socially active in the community.
- The applicant stated that each wing of the building would have its own elevator.
- Planning Commission belief the project could provide the opportunity to enjoy bike paths and live in a walkable community as well as easy access to public transportation.

A straw poll indicated the Planning Commission would be in support of recommending approval of both Mixed Use Planned Unit Development #19034 and Special Use Permit #19181 at the January 13, 2020 meeting.

Chair Lane closed the public hearing at 7:50 p.m.

- C. Rezoning #19100 (Durow), rezone approximately 1.487 acres located at 1259 Grand River Avenue from RR (Rural Residential) and RRA (Single Family-Suburban Estates) to C-2 (Commercial).

Chair Lane opened the public hearing at 7:51 p.m.

Principal Planner Menser provided a brief overview of the proposed rezoning. He noted the split zoning was discovered when staff conducted research on the proposal but did not show up on the zoning maps.

The traffic assessment shows a mischaracterization of the current land use due to the lack of a land use category for comparison. The property is and has not been used as a shopping center and the numbers are inflated compared to the actual amount of traffic realistically generated.

Principal Planner Menser noted he would be available to answer questions.

The owner/applicant Gary Durow, 1259 West Grand River Avenue, Okemos, Michigan said he has owned the business on the property since 1955. He resides in the farm home that was built in 1928 and said the noise from traffic is deafening on Grand River Avenue where the 5 lane state highway has a speed limit of 50 miles per hour. He stated the Rural Residential zoning is wrong for his property and this is the reason his property has been for sale for 7 years and no one is interested in leasing the property unless it is rezoned.

Public Comment:

1. Chris Potterpin, 4534 Ethel Street, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #19100.
2. Pete Potterpin, 1250 Ethel Street, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #19100.
3. Tom Saad, 4554 Cornell Road, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #19100.
4. Amanda Hopper, 5485 Martinique, spoke in support of Rezoning #19100.

Planning Commission Discussion:

- This is a challenging site because it has been a commercial use for a long time.
- The eastern portion of Meridian Township was Rural Residential and is part of the Master Plan. The line for commercial uses is considered west of Cornell Road.
- Consideration that C-2 zoning may not be appropriate for the property. The property is on a major highway and maybe there could be a compromise for the property owner and less intrusive for surrounding neighbors.
- The property owner has significant limitations with the property as it is currently zoned.
- There is a school nearby and already a lot of traffic on the busy, narrow road as well as congestion during certain times of the day.

A straw poll indicated the Planning Commission would not be in support of approving Rezoning #19100.

Chair Lane closed the public hearing at 8:31 p.m.

7. Unfinished Business - None

8. Other Business - None

9. Reports and Announcements

A. Township Board updates.

Principal Planner Menser provided a summary of the December 10, 2019 Township Board meeting and provided a preview of what is on the agenda for the January 7, 2020 Township Board meeting.

10. Project Updates

- A. New Applications - None
- B. Site Plans Received - None
- C. Site Plans Approved - None

11. Public Remarks

- 1. Bill McConnell, 4376 Manitou, spoke in support for Mixed Use Planned Unit Development #19034 and Special Use Permit #19181 proposals but shared concerns regarding the walkability and safety for the senior residents when shopping at nearby businesses.

12. Adjournment

Commissioner Richards moved to adjourn the meeting.

Supported by Commissioner Hendrickson.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Lane adjourned the regular meeting at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Debbie Budzynski, Recording Secretary