

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

APPROVED

March 8, 2021

**Meeting held virtually using the Zoom web conferencing application
7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Commissioners McConnell, Hendrickson, Cordill, Shrewsbury, Premoe, Snyder, Blumer, Trezise, and Richards

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Director of Community Planning & Development Mark Kieselbach, Principal Planner Menser, Neighborhoods and Economic Development Director Amber Clark, Information Technology Director Stephen Gebes, and Multimedia Producer Samantha Diehl

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

2. PUBLIC REMARKS

- A. Shereen Tabrizi and John Faichney, 3566 Kansas Road and 3917 Sheldrake Avenue, spoke representing 17 individuals who signed a petition, in opposition to Rezoning #21020.
- B. Jim Halm, 3535 Kansas Road, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #21020.
- C. Ken and Brenda Miller, 3681 Kansas Road, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #21020.
- D. Carlene Hooker, 3663 Kansas Road, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #21020.
- E. Piotir Lupa, 3575 Kansas Road, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #21020.
- F. Joell Ackerman, 3521 Indiana Road, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #21020.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Blumer moved to approve the agenda.

Seconded by Commissioner Premoe.

VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. February 22, 2021 Regular Meeting

Commissioner Premoe moved to approve the minutes.

Seconded by Commissioner Trezise.

VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

Commissioner Cordill commented on a few bullet points in the Planning Commissioners discussion, on page two, should note "according to Trustee Opsommer".

Commissioner Premoe accepted as a friendly amendment.

VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Hendrickson noted four communications and a petition in opposition to rezoning #21020 was received in the packet.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. Rezoning #21020 (Martin Investment Properties, Inc.), rezone approximately six acres (three parcels) located on the north side of Jolly Road, east of Kansas Road from I (Industrial) and RA (Single Family Medium Density) to PO (Professional and Office).

Chair Hendrickson opened the public hearing at 7:18 p.m.

Principal Planner Menser provided an overview of the request and noted the documents could be found starting on page 15 of the staff memo.

Chris Buck, the applicant's representative, 1111 Michigan Avenue, with Martin Investment Properties, spoke about the request and stated the intent for the request at this time is for the rezoning and use of the land and not the potential future development. He stated he would be available to answer questions.

Public Comments:

- A. John Faichney, 3566 Kansas Road, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #21020.
 B. Jim Halm, 3535 Kansas Road, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #21020.
 C. Joell Ackerman, 3521 Indiana Road, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #21020.

Planning Commission Discussion:

- Would all three parcels be necessary for the potential future development or could the request be split and use less space.
- The applicant's responses to the questions in the application do not satisfy the necessary criteria for the request.
- Reviewing the configuration of the property appears like the future potential development might be towards the north end and adjacent to the west, is residential property.
- 2446 Jolly Road is a two-acre parcel that could be rezoned to Professional/Office but there are concerns with 3532 Kansas Road and 3558 Kansas Road as there is too much intrusion into the surrounding residential area.
- There are so many current office space/commercial vacancies now in Meridian Township and is there a demand for building additional office space.
- The applicant's representative, Chris Buck, stated the Jolly Road frontage is a good space for a future project and would allow space for buffering between the project and the residential area.
- According to the traffic study provided there could be a significant increase in traffic. A more thorough traffic report would be done during the site plan review process and the Ingham County Road Department would determine any future traffic changes in the area.
- Looking at an aerial photo map would demonstrate a dramatic change to the northern two

parcels.

- There would be a significant impact to 3 residential lots on the west side of Kansas Road.
- There does not seem to be a justification for rezoning the northern two lots.
- The request should be divided into two separate requests. The industrial piece could be rezoned to PO (Professional and Office) but the two residential properties would be a different rezoning request.
- The southern parcel, 2446 Jolly Road, Midwest Power lot could be rezoned as PO Professional office PO and operate as a nonconforming use if there is a change in zoning,
- If the request is split, would the applicant find it helpful? The applicant's representative, Chris Buck, asked to be able to table this until the next meeting so he could meet with his applicant and return at the next meeting for further discussion before action is taken by the Planning Commission.

Chair Hendrickson asked Principal Planner Menser if by resolution the Planning Commission could bifurcate the request. Two resolutions will be drafted for the March 22, 2021 Planning Commission meeting in order to be prepared.

A straw poll indicated the Planning Commission would not be in support of the proposal as presented in its current form. This would be a recommendation for denial.

A second straw poll indicated the Planning Commission would be in favor of changing the request to only rezone the southernmost parcel at 2446 Jolly Road parcel to PO (Professional Office).

Principal Planner Menser noted the change, if made, would not require another public hearing because it would be a reduction in the request.

Chair Hendrickson closed the public hearing at 8:18 p.m.

- B. Special Use Permit #21011 (Lansing Mart Associates, LLC), excavate approximately 23,813 cubic feet (approximately 881 cubic yards) of soil from the floodplain to construct a retention pond at 2020 Grand River Avenue that will serve several commercial properties in the surrounding area

Chair Hendrickson opened the public hearing at 8:18 p.m.

Principal Planner Menser provided an overview of the request. He further noted a consultant will be onsite to verify the wetland on March 9, 2021. The consultant is hired by Meridian Township.

Applicants Michelle Shumaker, 3135 Pine Tree Road, Lansing, Michigan, with LSG Engineers and Robert Cohon, representing Lansing Mart Associates, 31500 Northwestern Highway, Farmington Hills, Michigan were in attendance and noted they would be available to answer questions.

Public Comments: None

Planning Commission Discussion:

- The proposed excavation will create a retention pond as there are only wetlands currently in the location and will serve the surrounding businesses with better drainage.

A straw poll indicated the Planning Commission would be in support of the Special Use Permit #21011. A resolution will be provided at the next meeting on March 22, 2021.

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

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A, Zoning Amendment #21010 (Township Board), amend the Code of Ordinances to require Township Board approval of special use permits for motor vehicle sales and service establishments and automobile dealerships in the C-2 and C-3 (Commercial) zoning districts.

Principal Planner Menser referenced page 71 in the packet includes the staff memo. The only changes to the text of the draft ordinance since the public hearing were to replace the word “new” with “used” in the definition of Used Automobile Dealership. In addition, clarification was made regarding the special use permits requiring final approval from the Township Board after a review by the Planning Commission and the requests include buildings greater than 25,000 square feet in size and commercial medical marihuana facilities.

Planning Commission Discussion:

- The ordinance is changing to add a secondary step to approving new auto dealerships.
- No permissions have been changed in C-2 and C-3 by Special Use Permits. Advisory by Planning Commission and final decision will be made by the Township Board.
- The minimum lot area standards are the same for both districts.
- The resolution applies the review is more rigorous (procedural or looking at the development differently).
- Perhaps change the wording from rigorous to expanded review.
- The review may be more vigorous and not rigorous since the standards are not changing.
- Similar to the Township Board dealing with buildings greater than 25,000 sq feet, other important criteria discussion include significant ground cover and water surface permeability issues so added input is good by the Township Board.

Commissioner Trezise moved to adopt the resolution recommending approval of Zoning Amendment #21010 in accordance with the revised draft ordinance language dated March 4, 2021.

Supported by Commissioner McConnell.

Request to tweak the resolution wording in the fourth WHEREAS paragraph to be changed from rigorous to expanded review.

A friendly amendment was made by Commissioner Trezise.

VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

YAYS: Commissioner Trezise, McConnell, Cordill, Shrewsbury, Richards, Blumer, Snyder and Chair Hendrickson.

NAYS: Commissioner Premoe

MOTION CARRIED: 8-1

8. OTHER BUSINESS - NONE

9. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Township Board update.

Principal Planner Menser provided a summary of the Township Board meetings held on February 23, 2021 and March 2, 2021 and noted the next Township Board meeting will be March 16, 2021.

B. Liaison reports.

- Chair Hendrickson provided an update from attending the February 24, 2021 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting. The Planning Commission has been asked to re-evaluate the Sign Ordinance due to the increase in variance requests for commercial wall signs.
- Commissioner Blumer attended the Downtown Development Authority meeting on February 1, 2021.
- Commissioner McConnell provided an update from attending the Environmental Commission meeting on March 3, 2021.

The Planning Commission would like to invite Deputy Township Manager Perry to attend a future meeting so he can share the plan for when road construction takes place during the spring of 2022 on Okemos Road and Grand River Avenue.

10. PROJECT UPDATES

A. New Applications

1. Special Use Permit #21021 (Mr. R's Driving School), install a driver's education road test course in the parking lot behind the shopping center at 1575 Haslett Road.

B. Site Plans Received

1. Site Plan Review #21-01 (Woodward Way LDHA), construct multiple family development consisting of three townhouse buildings and one apartment building with a total of 49 dwelling units

C. Site Plans Approved - None

11. PUBLIC REMARKS - NONE

12. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Cordill moved to adjourn the meeting.

Supported by Commissioner Shrewsbury.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Hendrickson adjourned the regular meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Debbie Budzynski, Recording Secretary