

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

DRAFT

**March 27, 2023
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
517.853.4000, Town Hall Room, 6:30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Chair Blumer, Vice-Chair Trezise, Commissioners Brooks, McConnell, McCurtis, Richards, Scales, Shrewsbury, Richards

ABSENT: Commissioner Snyder

STAFF: Senior Planner Brian Shorkey

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Blumer called the regular meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Chair Blumer called the roll of the Planning Commission. Commissioner Snyder is absent, all others present.

3. PUBLIC REMARKS

Chair Blumer opened public remarks at 6:32 pm.

NONE

Chair Blumer closed public remarks at 6:32 pm.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vice-Chair Trezise moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Seconded by Commissioner Shrewsbury.

VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. February 27, 2023 Regular Meeting

Vice-Chair Trezise moved to approve the Minutes of the March 13th, 2023 Planning Commission Regular Meeting as submitted. Seconded by Commissioner Shrewsbury.

Commissioner Scales noted that in REZ#23006 he asked the applicant if she was aware of the fact that if 50% of her home was damaged, it cannot be rebuilt. He further noted that he would like to see the applicant's response to the question as part of the minutes as well.

Vice-Chair Trezise accepted the friendly amendment.

VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously

6. COMMUNICATIONS

A. NONE

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. SUP #23007 – 1502 River Terrace Drive

Senior Planner Shorkey outlined SUP #23007 – Work of Christ Community to Construct Religious Offices in a Residential District

Commissioner McCurtis asked if this was an already existing structure, or if it was just renovation.

Senior Planner Shorkey confirmed that this was a renovation project.

Commissioner Brooks asked if a traffic study would be necessary.

Senior Planner Shorkey explained that this particular case did not trigger the needs for a traffic study.

Commissioner McConnell made a comment that the property isn't currently being used in a way that is maintaining the upkeep or value of the property, so considering a different permitted use for the property seems like a great thing.

No public commented during this hearing.

Chair Blumer moved to hold a straw vote on the approval of this special use permit.

STRAW VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners Richards, Shrewsbury, McCurtis, Brooks, Scales, McConnell, Vice-Chair Trezise, Chair Blumer

NAYS: None

Results: 8-0

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. REZ #23006 – Worful Rezoning

Senior Planner Shorkey outlined REZ #23006, noting this is the second time it has been in front of the Planning Commission. He explained a public hearing has been held with no opposition.

Vice-Chair Trezise noted this has been discussed on two occasions, and this rezoning would be bringing the property into alignment with its current use, rather than a non-confirming use. It

will allow the home owner to be subject to the rules and regulations of home expansion, or rebuilding should something happen.

Commissioner Richards moved to hold a straw vote on the approval of this rezoning. Seconded by Commissioner McCurtis.

STRAW VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners McConnell, Brooks, Scales, McCurtis, Shrewsbury, Richards, Vice-Chair Trezise, Chair Blumer

NAYS: None

Motion Carried: 8-0

9. OTHER BUSINESS - NONE

10. MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Senior Planner Shorkey noted that there are not many updates to the current land-use map being proposed by Staff since the 2017 map, but there are areas that staff are looking for Planning Commission's input on. He further noted that Faith Lutheran Church is wishing to rezone the northern third of their land. He explained they had tried to rezone to residential before, but it was denied as the future land-use map didn't agree with it.

Cecelia Kramer, 4560 Oakwood Dr., Okemos, MI, explained the history of the Church and its land-use. She reiterated this proposal had been turned down twice in 2019 due to differences in the land-use map.

Commissioner McConnell requested clarification on the handout.

Vice-Chair Trezise asked about how the driveway would be surveyed.

Ms. Kramer stated that placement would be in the 50ft setback area.

Vice-Chair Trezise stated that the placement of the driveway would be set by town rules. He further stated that the top of the parcel is 220ft, while the bottom is 200ft.

David Fedewa, 278 Haslett Rd, Haslett, MI, explained why the difference in lengths was present, as a rough draft example of what they'd like to do.

Vice-Chair Trezise asked Senior Planner Shorkey how staff would process this rezoning.

Senior Planner Shorkey noted this is now in the future land-use map, and also noted that when the time comes it would be a simple process to do a land division.

Commissioner Scales asked what the next steps are.

Senior Planner Shorkey stated that staff will create a draft Master Plan to present to the Board, who will then endorse it and finalize it. He also stated that if there were no objections, this will be processed in the Planning department.

Commissioner Scales stated that he would like to see a straw vote to formally put the Planning Commission's vote in the books.

Commissioner Shrewsbury asked about the previous denial or objection of this rezoning.

Vice-Chair Trezise noted the initial hesitation was due to an overcrowding.

Commissioner Richards mentioned several neighboring residents objected over concern of additional bus stops due to the change of density.

Chair Blumer asked how this would change the density to the map, or how it change the landscape of the neighborhood.

Senior Planner Shorkey stated that he knows that it will change the neighborhood, as it is currently just lawn.

Commissioner McConnell noted the multi-residential status of the building compared to the single-residence housing in the neighborhood.

a. Copper Creek

Senior Planner Shorkey explained the landowner would like to see the vacant portion of their land be consistent with the rest of Copper Creek. This is within Urban Services Boundary.

Commissioner Shrewsbury asked if this changed specifically for this property.

Senior Planner Shorkey noted this was drawn this way specifically for this property.

Commissioner McCurtis asked what the plan for this land is.

Senior Planner Shorkey said it would go through the same planned unit development process if it follows the rest of Copper Creek.

Commissioner Brooks made a comment that if we adjust this specific spot, it would make sense to adjust other spots along Copper Creek and in the area, and suggested marking known wetlands in the area to better assist in their future decisions.

Senior Planner Shorkey noted the wetlands would never change regardless of the zoning.

b. Raines Property

Senior Planner Shorkey explained this area is currently shown on the future land-use map as parks, however it was intended to be a residential area. Updating this would be bringing this land to be in line with the vision of the area.

c. Driving Range on Grand River Ave.

Senior Planner explained this area is shown as residential, but the owners would like to make this a commercial area, remove the driving range, and place a business there.

Commissioner Richards made note that there is no waterline in that area.

Commissioner Brooks asked about an urban service boundary change.

Senior Planner Shorkey stated that it would help, as they would need utilities on this property and noted that Director Schmitt has spoken multiple times on straightening the urban service boundary line change to stop the map from being so jagged.

Vice-Chair Trezise noted there would be one sliver of land between Powell Road and the driving range. This still has a single-family residence on it.

Commissioner McCurtis brought up another piece of land that a business had started processing, but then backed out.

Senior Planner Shorkey confirmed that this was still zoned commercial, and that it would be worth looking at combining these options.

d. Section of land intersecting E. Lake Lansing Road and E. Saginaw Street

Senior Planner Shorkey explained this area is zoned commercial in the future land-use map, however at this time there are only residential properties. He asked the commission whether they want to leave it as is, or if they'd like to rezone these areas to match what is on the land currently.

Commissioner Shrewsbury questioned whether the residents of the area are in conformance with the zoning.

Senior Planner Shorkey confirmed the residents are coded as urban residential, and they are in compliance.

Commissioner McConnell commented this area is considered an area of great potential change.

Senior Planner Shorkey suggested looking at a corridor study, but noted the commission cannot go around MDOT's right-of-way developments.

Commissioner McConnell noted that one of the goals of the Master Plan is to reduce driveway entrances when possible, and make them one entry.

Commissioner Brooks commented this is a major corridor and a "major artery" into the township. He spoke in support of the corridor study.

e. Church property north of Mt. Hope

Senior Planner Shorkey explained that in 2017, it was thought that the way to get this developed was to have it put in a denser residential location. It was later thought that utilizing the space as offices would work so it was rezoned to professional office space. He further explained the church building is still on the property, but is no longer being utilized. The land owners were given notice on ideas for the land, but there were limited responses from them. The property owner still maintains the land and building.

Commissioner McConnell commented that brick-and-mortar offices are becoming less common, and likes the idea of looking at alternative professional options.

Commissioner Brooks offered the idea of utilizing the wetlands in the area and creating a park.

Senior Planner Shorkey noted that these were not wetlands.

Senior Planner Shorkey offered the idea of utilizing the land for business technology.

Commissioner Brooks supported this idea.

Commissioner Scales commented that the township needs affordable single-family housing for retirees who are looking to downsize and stay in the area, as well as young families looking to start out in the area.

Senior Planner Shorkey reported that his team will have a full-draft map within the next two to three months for the commission to review.

11. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Township Board Update-NONE

B. Liaison Reports

Commissioner Brooks

- Attended March 15th Corridor Improvement Authority meeting

Commissioner Scales

- Suggested the Planning and Zoning Essentials training course for all new Commissioners.

12. PROJECT UPDATES

A. Commissioner Richards asked Senior Planner Shorkey about the ongoing Trader Joe's project.

Senior Planner Shorkey had not heard anything as of yet, but will talk to his team and have an answer at the next meeting.

13. PUBLIC REMARKS

Chair Blumer opened public remarks at 8:13 pm.

NONE

Chair Blumer closed public remarks at 8:13 pm.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Richards moved to Adjourn. Seconded by Commissioner McCurtis.

VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

Chair Blumer adjourned the regular meeting at 8:13 pm.