

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
REGULAR MEETING PLANNING COMMISSION **-DRAFT-**
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198
517.853.4000, Township Hall Room
Monday, April 22, 2024, 6:30 pm

PRESENT: Chair Shrewsbury, Vice-Chair Snyder, Commissioners Blumer, Brooks, McConnell, McCurtis, and Scales

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Interim Manager Tim Schmitt, Principal Planner Brian Shorkey, Director Amber Clark

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
Chair Shrewsbury called the April 22, 2024, regular meeting for the Meridian Township Planning Commission to order at 6:31 pm.
2. ROLL CALL
Chair Shrewsbury called the roll of the Board. All board members present.
3. PUBLIC REMARKS
None.
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
Commissioner Scales moved to approve the April 22, 2024, regular Planning Commission meeting agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Blumer. Motion passed unanimously.
5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Chair Shrewsbury asked a change to be made to her remarks about the change in number of commission members regarding space on the dais and quorum.

Commissioner Brooks moved to approve the Minutes of the March 25, 2024, Planning Commission Regular Meeting as amended. Seconded by Commissioner Scales. Motion passed unanimously as amended.
6. COMMUNICATIONS
A. None
7. PUBLIC HEARINGS
A. None
8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
A. None
9. OTHER BUSINESS
A. Village of Okemos Concept Plan

Interim Manager Schmitt instructed that the Commission is to facilitate only and receive feedback, that the staff plays no role, that the developer is looking for feedback on the plan.

The applicant, Eric Helzer, representing the development team for Village of Okemos, gave an overview of the plans. Mr. Helzer clarified that if Plan C is used, the power lines will still need to be buried to complete Phase 2 of the project, that the estimate received six months ago for burial of the power lines will be in excess of \$4 million.

Commissioner McCurtis asked for details regarding the mix of commercial and residential, wanted to know how flooding will impact the project, and asked for clarity about parking structure.

Commissioner Scales remarked that the cost of power line burial has been an issue keeping the project from moving forward and wanted more detail about the differences between both plans.

Commissioner Blumer remarked that Plan C, although more financially available, defeats the purpose of the MUPUD because the parking lot will be the most visible part from Okemos Road.

Commissioner McConnell asked for detail regarding the lane configurations on Okemos Road and the boulevard on Hamilton Road.

Chair Shrewsbury expressed her concern that the current plans being proposed are very different from the original project that was envisioned and asked about the appearance along Okemos Road.

Vice-Chair Snyder asked for clarity regarding the difference between the two plans with regards to commercial space and to whom the residential spaces are to be marketed.

Commissioner Brooks asked for details about the commercial development, parking, traffic, and the amount of State funds that are allocated to this project. Commissioner Brooks also commented that, with consideration to State and local funds allocated to this project, it be thought about holistically.

Mr. Helzer clarified that widening Okemos Rd creates the need to bury the power lines due to the ability to safely accommodate fire apparatus, that the plans have envisioned the corners of Hamilton Rd. and Ardmore Ave as the focal point of the project, and that the current plans will retain the funding from the State.

Commissioner McConnell said that he was pleased with the proposed park and asked about the possibility of grassing the site until it is developed. Mr. Helzer also explained how the environmental remediation limits the space that can be planted, that the concrete and asphalt cannot be removed at risk of spreading existing contamination, and that the contamination cannot be removed, only contained. Mr. Helzer said that if the site was vegetated, it could only be around the perimeter of the site.

B. RN – Village of Nemoka Ordinance Update Discussion

Principal Planner Shorkey detailed the text changes proposed by staff and a recommendation for administratively rezoning one property. He stated that there is no designated historic district, although he found a reference to a study conducted in 1981 regarding a survey of residential needs.

Commissioner Scales moved to encourage staff to schedule a public hearing for the Village of Nemoka text amendment. Seconded by Commissioner Blumer. Motion passed unanimously.

10. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Township Board Update

Interim Manager Schmitt reported that the licenses for recreational marijuana facilities in Zones (1&4) were approved and that the board approved the reduction in number of Planning Commissioners.

B. Liaison Reports

Commissioner McConnell reported from the Environmental Commission that April 27th is the next recycling day at Chippewa Middle School. The Environmental Commission has been allocated a budget for ongoing education activities and are looking for input from other boards and commissions for project within their purview. Recommends that the Planning Commission refer to the implementation list of master plan or from the environmental preservation section of the master plan.

Commissioner Brooks reported that the Corridor Improvement Authority approved Comerica Bank as the holding bank for the Grand River TIF funds and reviewed the first draft for visualizations of the Grand River corridor.

11. PROJECT UPDATES

A. Project Report

Principal Planner Shorkey briefed the Commission on changes to the project report, highlighted in bold text.

12. PUBLIC REMARKS

None

13. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

None

14. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Shrewsbury called for a motion to close the meeting at 8:02 pm.

Commissioner McConnell moved to close the April 22, 2024 regular meeting of the Planning Commission. Seconded by Commissioner Scales. Motion passed unanimously.