

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
REGULAR MEETING PLANNING COMMISSION
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198
517.853.4000, Township Hall Room
Monday, June 10, 2024, 6:30 pm

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

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Principal Planner Brian Shorkey

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Shrewsbury called the June 10, 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

Chair Shrewsbury opened public remarks at 6:32 pm

Trustee James McCurtis thanked the commission for the honor and privilege of serving with them during his term.

Roger Taylor, Township resident, asked the Commission how many dispensaries the Township needs.

Debora Dantus, Township resident, spoke against marijuana dispensaries.

Clara Regal, Township resident, spoke against marijuana dispensaries, specifically the location of one of the dispensaries.

Dr. David Pawsat, Township resident, spoke against marijuana dispensaries.

Jay Meyer, Township resident, spoke against marijuana dispensaries.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner McConnell moved to approve the June 10, 2024, regular Planning Commission meeting agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Scales. Motion passed unanimously.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Shrewsbury asked that the wording of the adjournment of the meeting be changed to reflect the word “adjourn” instead of the word “close.”

Commissioner Scales moved to approve the Minutes of the May 13, 2024, Planning Commission Regular Meeting as amended. Seconded by Commissioner Blumer. Motion passed unanimously as amended.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Kalyani Vangala re: SUP #24009 (Email)
- B. Mohan Madala, MD re: SUP #24009 (Email)
- C. Soumya Madala re: SUP #24009 (Email)
- D. Liz Kesler re: SUP #24009 (Email)
- E. Judith Leibinger/Richard York re: SUP #24009 (Email)
- F. Seth Kesler re: SUP #24009 (Email)
- G. Ellen Hoekstra re: SUP #24009 (Email)
- H. Satish Udpa re: SUP #24009 (Email)
- I. Xiaoping Li re: SUP #24009 (Email)
- J. Daniel Thompson re: SUP #24009 (Email)
- K. Sonh Su Kim re: SUP #24009 (Email)
- L. Zhichao Cao re: SUP #24009 (Email)
- M. Howard and Marlene Stover re: SUP #24009 (Email)
- N. Williamston Township Intent to Plan (Email)
- O. Alison Kochan re: SUP #24009 (Email)

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Principal Planner Shorkey gave an overview of the Public Hearing process. Principal Planner Shorkey noted that, with regards to the rezoning hearing, it is only in regards to the rezoning. The ensuing special use permit will come up for a public hearing in the future if the rezoning is approved.

- A. TA #24010 – Sec. 36-377 – RN – Village of Nemoka Ordinance Update

Chair Shrewsbury opened the Public Hearing at 6:48 pm.

Principal Planner Shorkey explained the project submitted for text amendment.

Chair Shrewsbury closed the public hearing at 6:54 pm. By voice vote, the Planning Commission indicated support for the application.

- B. SUP #24012 – Consumers Transfer Station (Rutherford Drive)

Chair Shrewsbury opened the public hearing at 6:54.

Principal Planner Shorkey explained the project submitted for SUP.

Anthony Stepke and Amy Gilpin, representatives for Consumers Energy, explained the need for the project. The current station provides gas to the neighborhood. It is in the right-of-way and it is outdated, issues that can be corrected if the SUP is approved. Mr. Stepke gave additional details regarding the upgrades that will be provided by creating a new station.

Commissioner McConnell asked for more information about the variance application for the fence. Mr. Stepke explained that a fence height is a requirement for safety, and in this instance part of the fence will be opaque as part of an agreement with the neighboring landowner. Principal Planner Shorkey clarified that concerns about the fence can be directed to the ZBA.

Commissioner Scales asked for the density of the population that the station will serve with regards to consideration of critical infrastructure. Mr. Stepke indicated that he will need to return to the Commission with the number of people served. Mr. Stepke stated that part of the reason for the application is because it serves many people and gave detail about how the station works to regulate gas pressure.

Vice-chair Snyder asked for more details about the appearance. Mr. Stepke gave details about what components will be visible above grade.

Roger Taylor, township resident, asked if a geological survey will be done to assess where rainwater will go with the change in grade and if an environmental survey will be done on the valves that are in the ground.

Chair Shrewsbury closed the public hearing at 7:20 pm. By voice vote, the Planning Commission indicated support for the application.

C. REZ #24013 – Fedewa Holdings (Dobie Road)

Chair Shrewsbury opened the public hearing at 7:20 pm.

Principal Planner Shorkey explained the project submitted for REZ.

Jerry Fedewa, David Fedewa, and Greg Fedewa, representatives for Fedewa Holdings, explained the need for the rezoning. Explained that their plans avoid the need for a variance request.

Commissioner Scales asked for clarity about the number of units. Jerry Fedewa explained that the number is still flexible because he has not spoken with the engineers to get details about the specific needs of the site. Once the details are available, the exact number of units will be determined. Principal Planner Shorkey clarified that if the REZ is approved, the project will need to gather more information to provide specifics when they apply for an SUP.

Chair Shrewsbury asked if affordability was being considered. Jerry Fedewa clarified that affordable units would result in higher density and would not provide garages and commented that there is a need in the community for the planned type of housing.

Joel Major, Township resident, spoke against the application, citing the denial of the 2019 rezoning application.

Michael McIntosh, Township resident, spoke against the application.

Kristina Kloc, Township resident, spoke against the application.

David Kloc, Township resident, spoke against the application.

Cecelia Kramer, Township resident and Faith Lutheran member, spoke in favor of the application. Ms. Kramer clarified that the church will be moving the driveway, not eliminating it.

John McCracken, Faith Lutheran member, spoke in favor of the application. Mr. McCracken stated that the only interest in the property has been multi-family development.

Wayne Popard, Township resident, spoke against the application.

Commissioner Blumer asked the applicant if they had architectural plans. Jerry Fedewa returned to clarify that there are currently no architectural drawings in this preliminary stage. Mr. Fedewa also commented that the Drain Commissioner's Office will require the development have appropriate drainage and that office will need to approve the plan.

Chair Shrewsbury closed the public hearing and opened Board Member comment at 8:03 pm.

Commissioner Blumer spoke in support of the developer but spoke against the application because it is not consistent with the neighborhood regarding density and land use planning. Commissioner Blumer asked if the western-most block of buildings could instead be planted as a buffer for view and traffic for the neighborhood.

Commissioner McConell spoke in support of the application because it is consistent with the Master Plan and in appropriate proximity to amenities but spoke against it because he acknowledges the inconsistency with the neighborhood.

Commissioner Scales acknowledged residents concerns and stated that the application is consistent with the Master Plan and he would like to hear more about the proposed development.

Chair Shrewsbury clarified to residents that this is just one step in a multi-step process and Commission support at this step does not mean the project is approved.

Vice-chair Snyder expressed her concern that this application does not meet the Master Plan goal to increase middle-housing development and does not support the application for this reason. Vice-chair Snyder asked if the Commission could be provided with the number of projects in the last year that cater to the demographic of multi-family housing rented for greater than \$2,000 per month.

Commissioner Brooks expressed concern about drainage from this property and stated that he would like the development to be middle level housing. He asked for more details about the differences this proposal has to the proposal that was rejected in 2019. Principal Planner Shorkey noted that the Master Plan changes are the main difference, and he would have to look deeper to have more specifics.

By voice vote Chair Shrewsbury, Commissioners McConnell and Scales support the project; Vice-chair Snyder and Commissioner Blumer oppose the project; Commissioner Brooks undecided.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. SUP #24007 – Lilliac LLC (5681 Shaw)

Principal Planner Shorkey gave an overview of the process that has occurred regarding this permit to date and stated that this would be approval of the permit and it would not go before the Township Board.

Commissioner McConnell moved to adopt the attached resolution approving Special Use Permit #24007, a request to reconstruct an existing building at 5681 Shaw Street into a four-unit residential building. Supported by Commissioner Scales. Motion passed unanimously.

B. SUP #24008 – Radmoor Montessori (2745 Mt. Hope)

Principal Planner Shorkey gave an overview of the process that has occurred regarding this permit to date and stated that this will proceed to site plan approval.

Commissioner Scales moved to adopt the attached resolution approving Special Use Permit #24008, a request to expand the parking lot to add 12 spaces at 2745 Mt Hope Road, known as the Montessori Radmoor School. Supported by Vice-chair Snyder. Motion passed unanimously.

C. SUP #24009 – SANDDS (3520 Okemos Road)

Principal Planner Shorkey gave an overview of the process that has occurred regarding this permit to date and confirmed that the Commission’s recommendation will go before the Township Board.

Commissioner Scales moved to adopt the attached resolution recommending approval of Special Use Permit #24009, a request to establish an adult use recreation marijuana retailer in an existing commercial center located at 3520 Okemos Rd. Supported by Commissioner Blumer. Motion passed unanimously.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Zoning Board of Appeals Appointment

Principal Planner Shorkey outlined the need for a Planning Commissioner to sit on the Zoning Board of Appeals and gave information about the topics reviewed by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Commissioner Brooks indicated his interest in being the appointee. Commissioners unanimously appointed Commissioner Brooks to the Zoning Board of Appeals

10. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Township Board Update

Principal Planner Shorkey said that there was no report.

B. Liaison Reports

Commissioner McConnell updated the Commission about the applications for Climate Sustainability related funding that the Environmental Commission has reviewed.

Commissioner Scales reminded the community that the EDC has planned a Juneteenth Festival at Lake Lansing South Park.

11. PROJECT UPDATES

A. Project Report

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

12. PUBLIC REMARKS

Chair Shrewsbury opened public remarks at 8:42

Chair Shrewsbury closed public remarks at 8:42

13. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner McConnell complimented the layout of the project report and asked to see an aerial map view of the projects at a future meeting. Commissioner McConnell asked if a column could be added that will indicate the price-point of rental units on the project report.

Commissioner Brooks asked for an outline of how public hearings should be conducted. Chair Shrewsbury concurred and added detail as to what would help the Commission conduct them smoothly.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Shrewsbury called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 pm

Commissioner Blumer moved to adjourn the June 10, 2024 regular meeting of the Planning Commission. Seconded by Commissioner Scales. Motion passed unanimously.