

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

APPROVED

**November 14, 2016
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
853-4000, Town Hall Room, 7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Commissioners DeGroff, Honicky, Ianni, Jackson, Lane, Opsommer, Scott-Craig, Tenaglia, Van Coevering
ABSENT: None
STAFF: Director of Community Planning and Development Mark Kieselbach, Senior Planner Menser

1. Call meeting to order

Chair Scott-Craig called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

2. Approval of agenda

Commissioner Ianni moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Honicky.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Ianni moved to approve the minutes from the October 24, 2016 Regular Meeting and the October 24, 2016 Work Session Meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Opsommer.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

4. Public Remarks

Chair Scott-Craig opened and closed the floor for public remarks.

5. Communications

- A. Dr. Karen Renner, 6270 Skyline Drive, East Lansing; RE: Rezoning #16060
- B. William and Mary Triola, 6292 Skyline Drive, East Lansing; RE: Rezoning #16060
- C. Joseph D. Reid III, 6340 Skyline Drive, East Lansing; RE: Rezoning #16060
- D. Benjamin Louagie, 6118 Skyline Drive, East Lansing; RE: Rezoning #16060

6. Public hearings

- A. Rezoning #16060 (Summer Park Realty), rezone approximately 157 acres from RR (Rural Residential) to RAA (Single Family, Low Density) at 2874 Lake Lansing Road.

Chair Scott-Craig opened the public hearing at 7:06 P.M.

- Introduction by the Chair (announcement of procedures, time limits and protocols for public participation and applicants)
- Summary of subject matter

Senior Planner Menser summarized the rezoning request as outlined in staff memorandum dated November 8, 2016.

- Applicant

Steven Schafer, Schafer Development, 31400 Northwestern Highway #H, Farmington Hills, provided history on this property as a bank foreclosure. He indicated he met with a group of nearby property owners regarding his thoughts on future development of the property. Mr. Schafer indicated it is his intent to rezone the property to one (1) zoning designation (RAA), stating the RR zoned portion is not a good transitional zoning designation given the zoning of the surrounding RAA parcels, adding its designation as a golf course has spanned over a 125 year period. He believed a residential community with four (4) to five (5) different types of housing options, including multi-generational and senior housing, would be well received. Mr. Schafer stated it also is his desire to have “strong” pedestrian linkage through pathways, possibly utilizing the planned unit development (PUD) concept with an open space option. He noted this concept would provide ample buffers to the adjoining neighborhoods. Mr. Schafer indicated it is his intent to work with the Ingham County Drain Commissioner to preserve the wetlands through conscientious awareness of the drainage patterns.

- Public

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, spoke in support of the letters contained in tonight’s packet, and indicated all options should be considered. He believed the amount of growth proposed does not “fit” the Metropolitan Planning Organization’s (MPO) smart growth model.

Lane Barnett, 6126 W. Longview Drive, East Lansing, spoke in support of Mr. Schafer as a sensitive and thoughtful developer who is interested in what is right for the community. He noted he sits on the Board of Directors of the Greens Association. Mr. Barnett expressed appreciation for Mr. Schafer’s willingness to meet with neighbors early in the process to help determine the type of housing stock needed in the community and learn the “flavor” of the area.

Karen Renner, 6270 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, spoke in opposition to the proposed rezoning and indicated her preference for the zoning in the northern half to remain RR. She noted the subject property is unique and expressed a desire to retain the “park-like” setting. Ms. Renner believed the Township would gain revenue with development under the RR zoning designation. She also believed there is a demand for executive-style homes on larger lots with a greenspace look and thought they would sell well. Ms. Renner encouraged Planning Commissioners to walk the property prior to next week’s meeting to review the wetlands and tree location.

Chester Lewis, 5944 Patriots Way, East Lansing, spoke in opposition to the proposed rezoning. He voiced concern with the speed in which the proposed development is moving forward and believed it to be an “inappropriate” step. Mr. Lewis suggested the Planning Commission consider what is the best use of this property for the Township and then work with the owner to obtain maximum benefit on the parcel. He believed its present use is fine and the rezoning would decrease the value of the property.

Randolph Rifkin, 6280 Pine Hollow Drive, East Lansing, stated approval of the rezoning request will change the dynamics of the entire area, including the traffic pattern, the number of people living in the area and property values. He expressed regret that Walnut Hills can never be replaced and a vote to rezone the subject property will take away history of the area.

Geoff Recktenwald, 6035 Dawn Avenue, East Lansing, requested the rezoning be conditioned upon approval of an acceptable planned unit development (PUD). He requested another meeting be scheduled so the PUD can be thoroughly vetted through dialogue with the developer and the community.

Phil Ballbach, 2723 Lake Lansing Road, East Lansing, stated many residents in the neighborhood are not yet aware the impact this project will have on the area. He requested the Planning Commission not rush this request and provide the public with the timetable and steps involved in making decisions on the subject proposal.

Kelley Minnehan, 6108 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, believed a traffic study is essential to approval of the rezoning request as there is an elementary school right down the street on Lake Lansing Road. He stated traffic is the number one issue, especially with the impending Costco development. Mr. Minnehan was concerned with safety because of increased traffic.

Jan Jenkins, 6030 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, stated her property backs up to Walnut Hills. She believed most of the water from the street drains through her basement into Walnut Hills. Ms. Jenkins voiced concern about the water pattern with the proposed rezoning and resulting development. She believed having the development as far from her back yard as possible would be best.

Karla Hudson, 6009 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, spoke to the current challenge for students attending Donley Elementary School in crossing Lake Lansing Road at Hagadorn Road. She expressed concern over children's safety when the traffic increases due to development on the subject property. Ms. Hudson also addressed the health impact of noise emitted from increased traffic.

Mary Leffler, 5978 Patriots Way, East Lansing, stated a family of sand hill cranes took up residence at Walnut Hills. She expressed disappointment that any heavy equipment on the subject property will end the traversing of wildlife at Walnut Hills.

Connie Maundu-Pajak, 6025 Dawn Avenue, East Lansing, expressed concern over increased traffic as she has a special needs son. She requested a traffic study be conducted. Ms. Maundu-Pajak believed her quality of life will be affected and desired to see the green space remain intact.

- Planning Commission discussion:
Commissioner Ianni noted there were issues with traffic study submitted by the applicant and inquired if an amended traffic study will be submitted to address concerns.

Senior Planner Menser responded the submitted traffic study used a different approach than how the Township usually reviews rezoning requests. He added the Township typically sees a more basic traffic analysis which considered the number of trips generated for the current as well as proposed district. In this instance, Mr. Menser noted the applicant used a specific development scenario of 353 single family homes with points of access on Park Lake Road and Lake Lansing Road. He noted staff supplemented what was submitted by providing background information in the staff report estimating current trips produced by a golf course. Mr. Menser stated it was up to the Planning Commission if they wish to revise portions of the traffic study to cover elements typically discussed during the rezoning process.

Commissioner VanCoevering inquired if the trip generation chart on page 5 of the Planning Commission memorandum was accurate, given the number of trips for the proposed development shown as 3,351 per day and the vehicle trips per day for an existing golf course weekday as 643.

Senior Planner Menser responded staff calculated those numbers using the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, as it did not receive actual counts for the existing use of the property. He explained the guide looks at traffic generation for many types of uses and estimates the traffic generated by those uses.

Commissioner VanCoevering believed the numbers show a significant increase in traffic. She inquired as to the number of proposed trips if the zoning remained the same and the proposed development was constructed.

Senior Planner Menser indicated he would provide information at the next meeting which will generally look at how many trips a household produces and use different development scenarios (e.g., 200, 300, 400 single family homes) to multiply out the equation.

Commissioner VanCoevering asked if the Planning Commission can request a new traffic study.

Senior Planner Menser replied the Planning Commission can certainly request a supplement to what was provided by the applicant.

Commissioner VanCoevering inquired if the current traffic study includes the increased traffic for the Costco development.

Senior Planner Menser responded in the affirmative. He noted the traffic study will look at level of service (LOS) before and after development.

Commissioner VanCoevering inquired if the wetland map shows which wetlands are regulated.

Senior Planner Menser replied that at this time, the regulated wetlands are not known as delineations have not yet been completed.

Commissioner VanCoevering inquired as to what was in the “purple area” of the Greenspace Map shown by staff on the overhead projector.

Senior Planner Menser responded it is the restoration link, where there is potential to connect the fragile link to the right and the priority conservation corridor to the left.

Commissioner VanCoevering inquired as to how that could happen.

Senior Planner Menser stated how that would happen will be determined based on site design and other factors.

Commissioner VanCoevering inquired about the applicant's statement concerning potential senior and empty nester housing. She asked if that type of housing would be multi-unit or individual homes.

Mr. Schafer responded they are looking at five (5) potential housing products, one of which may be a duplex or a three (3) or four (4) plex. He added market studies show attached units do not sell well.

Mr. Schafer expounded on the questions concerning the traffic study by noting they used the maximum amount of trips for the Township to see what is allowed under its ordinance. He stated he would have the traffic engineer revise the numbers based on different density scenarios. Mr. Schafer noted it is his intent to cater to empty nesters, and believed the traffic manual segregates for senior or active adult type housing v. a conventional family.

Commissioner VanCoevering asked if all of the units will be owner occupied.

Mr. Schafer responded they are anticipated to be owner occupied, with a range from the middle \$300,000 to \$800,000.

Commissioner VanCoevering asked if the zoning can be restricted based on the units being owner occupied.

Senior Planner Menser believed the zoning cannot be restricted based on ownership of the units.

Commissioner DeGroff spoke to the price range given by the applicant. He reiterated there is a big need in the community for diverse housing which is affordable for all persons at all income levels. He believed the price quoted would preclude the ability to offer affordable housing.

Mr. Schafer noted more dense development (i.e., townhomes) allow the price to be brought down v. a single family detached home. He added he looked at that, but was unsure the residents in the area would support that concept. Mr. Schafer stated he will consider including those as a component of the various housing products.

Mr. Schafer mentioned it is his desire to preserve the clubhouse and open it up to the neighbors adjoining the proposed development through use of pathways.

Commissioner DeGroff inquired of staff as to the timetable and steps involved in this process.

Senior Planner Menser replied the process for a rezoning is to hold a public hearing which has been noticed in the paper. He stated the next meeting, based on the tone of the conversation this evening, will either constitute more discussion or a potential Planning Commission recommendation to the Township Board. Senior Planner Menser explained the next step will be for the Township Board to discuss the proposed development, adding he will send all communications from the public on to the Township Board at the appropriate time. He clarified the discussion will dictate how quickly the process moves along, although the Board typically discusses a rezoning at one meeting and votes at the next. Senior Planner Menser explained the Board uses a two-step adoption process for rezonings; one for introduction and one for final adoption.

Mr. Schafer added it is anticipated the golf course will be operational in 2017.

Commissioner DeGroff asked if the rezoning approval could be conditioned on development as a PUD.

Senior Planner Menser responded it can be done, but the condition must be offered by the applicant.

Commissioner Jackson expressed appreciation for the applicant's consideration to preserve and/or redevelop the recreational assets on the property. She voiced concern with the number of trips which existed in 2005 on Lake Lansing Road (5,332) according to the Ingham County Road Department (ICRD). She noted the impact of the proposed number of residences would only exacerbate an already existing problem. Commissioner Jackson asked if there are more recent trip generations for Lake Lansing Road and Park Lake Road.

Senior Planner Menser responded he used the most recent traffic counts provided by the ICRD. He stated he will obtain information on when and where the traffic counts are performed. Mr. Menser believed they are not conducted as often or updated as frequently as they had been in the past.

Commissioner Jackson asked staff how far away is the decision on what will actually be built on the property.

Senior Planner Menser did not want to speculate on when a potential project may be submitted to the Township. He added the rezoning process will likely extend through December, 2016.

Commissioner Jackson stated it can be years between a rezoning approval and submission of a specific project.

Chair Scott-Craig asked how quickly a rezoning request must be resolved.

Senior Planner Menser responded there is no specific timeframe in which the rezoning request must be approved.

Commissioner Honicky addressed wage earner housing, as it is an issue that is on the forefront for the Planning Commission. He stated the “graying” of the population has resulted in more extended care facilities, nursing homes, etc. and employees of those facilities currently are not able to afford to live in the area. Commissioner Honicky noted the importance of providing housing for those employees to enable them to live nearby in order to walk or bike to work. He requested the applicant use a ratio of one (1) wage earner housing per ten (10) units, reducing the lower end range to \$100,00 plus. Commissioner Honicky expressed a desire to ask property owners on Skyline Drive and those on The Greens as to the size of their lots. He spoke to the need for a gradation between the two neighborhoods which can be achieved through careful development of the subject parcel.

Commissioner VanCoevering reiterated the acreage size of parcels in Skyline is two-thirds (2/3) to three-quarters (3/4) of an acre.

Commissioner Honicky asked for the acreage of parcels in The Greens.

[Response from the public was inaudible.]

Chair Scott-Craig commented the vast majority of the lots “up and down” Skyline were .4 acres. He noted on the other side, there are 89-91 condominiums within the PUD, adding that 50% of the upland had to be retained as greenspace.

Commissioner Ianni thanked the developer for his offering of amenities, believing the amenities typically surface during the PUD process, not at the time of the rezoning. He believed the developer has thoughtfully worked to make a positive contribution to the surrounding area. Commissioner Ianni noted the proposed RAA zoning designation is consistent with the surrounding uses, and the Planning Commission must consider what is allowed by right in the RR and RAA zoning currently on the property. Commissioner Ianni felt it important to see what is currently allowed, what could be built there and preferred to table the rezoning until an addendum is received which shows the traffic pattern to be generated by the rezoning.

Commissioner VanCoevering inquired if the East Lansing Schools were notified of the rezoning request and if they provided any response.

Senior Planner Menser replied that everyone within 300 feet of the subject property was notified, including residents in Bath Township on the north side.

Commissioner VanCoevering asked that, in the case of the school, would the notice be sent to the school board.

Senior Planner Menser believed it would have gone to the school address.

Director Kieselbach stated it is dependent upon who is listed on the parcel number card as a rezoning is sent to all property owners within 300 feet. He added that in the case of a subdivision plat, it requires notification to the local school district and other reviewing agencies.

Commissioner Opsommer noted the Township has had conditional rezonings in the past. He asked under what conditions could a conditional rezoning revert if a development does not occur within some specific time frame.

Senior Planner Menser responded there have been time limits placed on rezonings in the past.

Commissioner Opsommer noted the public policy purpose of placing a time limit is to ensure it is flagged for a new Board in the future or for the same Board to revisit the issue at the specific time. He asked why the applicant was not looking for a plat on this site instead of a PUD.

Mr. Schafer replied plats are outdated since the evolvement of the condominium ordinance at the state level. He indicated he is unsure at this point whether the streets will be public or private, but the PUD allows the applicant the ability to maintain roads, while in a platted development the roads become public. Ms. Schafer voiced his preference to work through the condominium process.

Commissioner Opsommer inquired if staff was operating under the assumption the project would come forth as a PUD when it analyzed how many units could be developed under the current zoning v. under the proposed rezoning.

Senior Planner Menser responded he was not operating under either assumption, but used the reduction factor (a.k.a. maximum dwelling units per acre) noted in the 1993 Comprehensive Plan to estimate the number of lots. He indicated there is a reduction for road right-of-way.

Commissioner Opsommer stated that under a PUD, the lot widths are different than with a plat, so there is more flexibility to fit in lots.

Senior Planner Menser stated they are not held to the underlying zoning, so it is a negotiation dependent upon what is submitted in the site layout.

Director Kieselbach reminded Planning Commissioners that a PUD is an overlay district, so it depends upon what the underlying zoning calls for relative to overall density. He acknowledged the PUD is an option to be used and allows for all types of housing options, with the idea to cluster units which results in less infrastructure and road costs.

Commissioner Opsommer expressed a desire to have Ingham County Drain Commissioner Pat Lindemann come to a Planning Commission meeting to offer insight.

Chair Scott-Craig reiterated the Planning Commission is a recommending body to the Township Board where the entire process will be repeated before being acted on. He reminded fellow Commissioners that the rezoning goes with the property, even if it is sold to someone else. Chair Scott-Craig stated that many of the uses for RR zoning and RAA zoning are the same. He clarified Planning Commissioners want to know, as soon as possible, what type of development will be constructed on this property. Chair Scott-Craig offered an example of a previously successful rezoning request.

Mr. Schafer stated he will preserve the existing wetlands and any regulated wetland will not be calculated into the site plan. He stated his goal is to retain over 50% of the property as open space and would create significant buffers to the adjacent neighborhoods. Mr. Schafer believed the current zoning on the property is "out of line" as there is no transition to the adjacent properties. He noted the rezoning request complies with the Master Plan and will work to achieve a good PUD plan. Mr. Schafer stated it is his intent to install a stormwater system which can help alleviate the continuous running of sump pumps in neighboring homes. He envisioned not having many back-to-back lots on the single family homes portion of the PUD. Mr. Schafer believed he could provide the Planning Commission with concepts on how to avoid the wetlands, placement of buffers and the various development layouts on the property. He stated he would update the traffic study and have that information available for the next meeting.

Mr. Schafer requested some assurance on the zoning issue as he believed the RR zoning is not consistent with the surrounding area.

Chair Scott-Craig reminded the applicant the area is complicated as the subject property backs up to a functioning farm to the north.

Commissioner VanCoevering asked the applicant if the applicant would provide a concept plan and the date which Commissioners could expect that plan.

Mr. Schafer replied he could make a concept plan available for the next meeting.

Chair Scott-Craig inquired as to the location of a Consumers Energy easement on the property.

Mr. Schafer responded he believed it was in the open space, but, in any event, would not build within that easement.

Chair Scott-Craig requested the applicant attempt to preserve trees, especially on the western border.

Mr. Schafer replied that he will show on the concept plan where the perimeter trees will remain and will construct the roads in such a manner as to avoid more mature trees.

Chair Scott-Craig asked if the applicant saw a problem with the proposed retention of the club house and accompanying restaurant as a commercial entity. He was concerned whether the PUD allowed for such flexibility.

Director Kieselbach stated the club house and restaurant would have to be part of the PUD, which allows 3% of the area to be used for commercial.

Chair Scott-Craig pointed out that a road diet has been under consideration for Lake Lansing Road, which would take a two lane road in each direction and reduce it to one travel lane each way with a center turn lane and bicycle lanes on each side. He believed the center turn lane would affect the traffic pattern in the area of the subject property.

Commissioner DeGroff believed the most productive way for the community to engage in conversation is to imagine an acceptable change for the area.

Commissioner VanCoevering asked if the applicant would have the requested information available to be included in next week's Commission packet which will be delivered the evening of November 18th.

Senior Planner Menser assured Commissioners their packets will be delivered to their homes early in the evening of November 18th. He reminded them the packet will also be posted to the Township website shortly after 5:00 P.M. the evening of November 18th. Senior Planner Menser indicated it is up to the applicant if he can turn the information around within the specified time frame.

Mr. Schafer responded it may be tight, but he would contact his traffic engineer and attempt to provide the traffic information for the next meeting. He added he could provide the concept plan electronically. Mr. Schafer indicated he would try to provide an analysis to look at the surrounding lots in order to obtain an idea of the density for the parcels which abut the subject property.

Chair Scott-Craig closed the public hearing at 8:50 P.M.

- B. Zoning Amendment #16050 (Township Board), amend Section 86-435 and Chapter 38, Article IV, Division 3 of the Code of Ordinances to add instructional centers, mobile food vending units, and outdoor seating as uses permitted in the Industrial (I) zoning district.

Chair Scott-Craig opened the public hearing at 8:50 P.M.

- **Summary of subject matter**
Senior Planner Menser summarized the proposed zoning amendment as outlined in staff memorandum dated November 10, 2016.
- **Public**
Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, stated there was no indication on Dawn Avenue as to the location of Ellison Brewery. He believed extending the "privilege" of allowing a brewery to locate in the industrial district is an "end run" maneuver in order to avoid the strictness of commercial zoning relative to parking, health standards, etc. Mr. Provencher alleged this zoning amendment is for the benefit of the Economic Development Corporation to help its business model. He wondered why the EDC is not considering other commercial areas with the required amount of parking, given the large amount of vacant commercial property in the Township (e.g., empty Chucky Cheese).

Bill McConnell, 4376 Manitou Drive, Okemos, spoke in support of the proposed change to the zoning ordinance. He believed the expansion of the industrial category is forward thinking, as no one could have predicted the current trend ten (10) years ago. Mr. McConnell stated a brewery makes "perfect sense" in an industrial area, as they are manufacturing a product. He noted there is a trend for people to enjoy sampling the wares at the place of manufacture. Mr. McConnell believed the proposed extension of the River Trail along what is currently a dead end will considerably change the character of the area.

- Planning Commission discussion:

Commissioner Ianni supported the proposed amendment as it caters to changing needs in the community. He noted there is a movement throughout the state to have on-site tasting at local breweries and provide visits to manufacturing facilities with an option for food and drink. Commissioner Ianni believed allowing expansion of skilled trades near Michigan State University and a community college will make the Township more of an educational center for the area.

Commissioner DeGroff reiterated earlier public comment on whether this type of activity is more appropriate in traditional commercial locations such as downtown Okemos. He believed that not necessarily to be the case, as turning a brewery into a place where you can drink a beer is not “entirely” commercial, but part industrial and not an activity suitable for pure commercial areas. Commissioner DeGroff believed an industrial zoned area to be the appropriate place.

Commissioner Honicky stated he has visited a number of wine tasting facilities and finds it to be recreational as well as a gathering activity. He believed a brewery offering beer for sale fits together and makes “sense.” Commissioner Honicky spoke to a different experience he has had with mobile food units, as they traveled from one work site to another, offering coffee and doughnuts. He inquired as to why a mobile food unit owner needed a license at each site. Commissioner Honicky offered an example of a barbeque unit next to Tom’s Party Store as the trailer is “fixed” and not mobile, although it includes wheels. He voiced his preference for the vendors to have more leeway, with one license to operate within Meridian Township.

Senior Planner Menser replied that when the mobile food vending unit ordinance was adopted, there were several iterations of language proposed to be placed in Chapter 38, Licenses and Permits. He indicated all the different aspects and provisions of the proposed language were discussed and ultimately approved by the Township Board.

Commissioner Honicky inquired if the Planning Commission could propose an amendment to the present ordinance to provide vendors with more mobility.

Senior Planner Menser responded the Planning Commission can include an amendment in its recommendation to the Township Board.

Commissioner Opsommer reminded fellow Commissioners the mobile food unit ordinance is not what is before the Planning Commission this evening.

Commissioner Jackson inquired if a food truck operator was required to obtain permission from the property owner in order to temporarily locate their food truck and then come to the Township and pay a fee to obtain a license to stop there.

Senior Planner Menser responded in the affirmative. He added the units are required to have an electrical inspection and receive a building/fire review from the Township.

Commissioner Jackson inquired if that activity takes place for each location.

Senior Planner Menser stated the unit is inspected once and would be licensed at whatever number of locations they apply for. He clarified that to date, the three (3) or four (4) mobile food vending units which have been licensed have requested only one (1) location.

Commissioner Jackson wondered if the reason the mobile food vending unit operators have only requested one (1) location is due to the cost of licensure for each location. She noted the Township is already regulating where they can locate by limiting them to certain zoning districts. Commissioner Jackson believed it burdensome and expensive to require operators to obtain a license for each location.

Commissioner Opsommer believed the zoning amendment to be a useful repurposing tool to allow industrial areas to be used for breweries and distilleries. He noted the success of Red Cedar Spirits, which is a former industrial site with outdoor seating. Commissioner Opsommer also indicated there is an abundance of parking on that site. He spoke to the ratio of employees per square foot when the site was used for heavy industrial manufacturing, acknowledging the ratio has been lowered as industrial uses have evolved over time. Commissioner Opsommer noted Lansing has an industrial district directly adjacent to its downtown area, which was renovated into a mid-town district. He spoke in support of the zoning amendment, stating the Township must ensure the industrial areas have a secondary use, as that need will continue to grow.

Chair Scott-Craig also expressed support for the zoning amendment. He recalled that when one of the owners of Ellison Brewery spoke before the Planning Commission, he reminded Commissioners that because they are producing a food product (beer), they have strict health code regulations mandated by the State of Michigan. Chair Scott-Craig noted there is a issue with the appropriate amount of parking, but shared parking with the foundry next door should suffice.

Chair Scott-Craig asked if staff had determined whether smoking would be allowed in the outdoor seating area.

Senior Planner Menser stated he will follow-up on that question and provide an answer at the next meeting.

Commissioner Opsommer clarified that if staff is serving patrons on the patio, smoking is not permitted.

Chair Scott-Craig closed the public hearing at 9:19 P.M.

7. Unfinished Business (None)

8. Other Business (None)

9. Township Board, Planning Commission officer, committee chair, and staff comment or reports

Commissioner VanCoevering congratulated fellow Commissioners Jackson and Opsommer on their election to the Township Board.

Chair Scott-Craig announced the Michigan Association of Planning will host a day-long Transportation Bonanza #8 event on Thursday, December 1st which will be held at the Lansing Center. He reported his attendance at December's Environmental Commission meeting where a one hour work session focused on the Township's Master Plan and the protection of open space. Chair Scott-Craig indicated the latest edition of *Planning and Zoning News* was dedicated to the issue of medical marihuana. He suggested fellow Commissioners read the issue, since medical marihuana will come before the Planning Commission at some point. Chair Scott-Craig reported his attendance at the November 3rd Economic Development Corporation (EDC) meeting, where time was spent on the EDC's goals and objectives. He noted EDC Chair Buck reported his attendance at a Shaping the Corridor meeting in October concerning a Federal Transit Authority grant awarded to CATA to work on form based code for the corridor. At that meeting, Chair Scott-Craig learned the former Meridian Area Resource Center (MARC) building may not be converted into a Tavern and Tap Restaurant. He thanked Commissioners Jackson and Opsommer for their service on the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Jackson voiced her pleasure at serving Meridian Township as a Planning Commissioner for the last 16 years and working with fellow Commissioners. She noted her intent to earn the trust of the Meridian Township residents over the next four (4) years who voted for her in her new capacity as Township Trustee.

Chair Scott-Craig announced Commissioner Lane's agreement to attend the next Zoning Board of Appeals meeting as the Planning Commission representative.

A. New Applications - None

B. Update of Ongoing Projects

i. Site Plans Received - NONE

ii. Site Plans Approved – NONE

10. Public remarks

Chair Scott-Craig opened public remarks.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, thanked Planning Commissioners for their service to the community. He voiced appreciation to the Planning Commission as a whole for its respect shown to one another during proceedings.

Bill McConnell, 4376 Manitou Drive, Okemos, noted the Planning Commission met this evening in a work session on the Master Plan. During the regular meeting, he noted the Commission held a public hearing on a rezoning application to change the zoning on a large parcel within the Township. Mr. McConnell stated that when the Planning Commission and Township Board look back to the last visionary document for guidance on whether to approve the rezoning request, that document indicates it should be a higher residential zoning. He noted the number of residents who are attempting to retain the current zoning on this parcel is much larger than the number of people who participate in making the next vision. Mr. McConnell stated now is the moment for citizens to participate in visioning as to which of the undeveloped properties they would like to remain undeveloped.

Chair Scott-Craig closed public remarks.

11. Adjournment

Chair Scott-Craig adjourned the regular meeting at 8:31 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra K. Otto
Recording Secretary