

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

APPROVED

**November 21, 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
ABSENT: Commissioner VanCoevering
STAFF: Director of Community Planning and Development Mark Kieselbach, Senior Planner Peter Menser, Associate Planner/Economic Development Coordinator Ben Motil

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 8-0.

3. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Ianni moved to approve the Work Session Meeting Minutes of November 14, 2016. Seconded by Commissioner Jackson.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 8-0.

4. Public Remarks

Chair Scott-Craig opened the floor for public remarks.

Bill McConnell, 4376 Manitou, Okemos, believed the request contained in Rezoning #16060 is in line with the current Future Land Use Map (FLUM) contained in the Master Plan.

Greg Gray, 3381 Canopy Drive, DeWitt, a member of Walnut Hills Country Club for 30 years, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #16060. He believed the rezoning request is in direct conflict to Goal #2 of the Master Plan.

Pat Bridson, 6336 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #16060.

Paul Kindel, 2915 Margate Lane, East Lansing, expressed concerns about several issues with Rezoning #16060. He addressed proper handling of water on the site, protected wetlands, site walkability and connection, and installation of pocket parks.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, spoke to the lack of a concept plan for Rezoning #16060. He reminded the Planning Commission it should consider all possible uses on the site allowed through the proposed rezoning from RR to RAA. He offered his calculation of the number of dwelling units on the approximately 157 acre parcel, stating it could be from 500-600 dwelling

units in a planned unit development (PUD). Mr. Bowlby alleged the proposed layout is an impediment to free flow of wildlife.

Thomas Collins 6116 E. Longview, East Lansing, a member of Walnut Hills since 1977, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #16060.

Rex Foster, 5857 Troyes Road, East Lansing, believed the property owner of Rezoning #16060 is seeking a maximum profit through this rezoning request. He asked the Planning Commission to consider whether the proposed development benefits the Township. Mr. Foster indicated there are people willing to purchase Walnut Hills to retain it as a golf course

Patrick Crilley, 2568 Heather Circle, East Lansing, addressed Goal #1 and #2 of the Master Plan, alleging Rezoning #16060 is in conflict with both of the stated goals. He stated the Township purchased 40 acres of land from Walnut Hills in 2005 at the end of Skyline Drive to be designated as greenspace. Mr. Crilley indicated no nearby neighborhood would benefit from the rezoning request.

Karla Hudson, 6009 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, addressed the walking school children in the area. She spoke to the safety of the Donley Elementary School children who walk to school due to increased traffic as a result of development of the subject property. Ms. Hudson addressed what she believed would be a decrease in the children's quality of life.

Linda McCardel, 9432 Lookout Point, Laingsburg, a member of the Walnut Hills Country Club for over 20 years, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #16060.

Karen Renner, 6270 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #16060. She suggested the Township purchase a portion of the site which would be adjacent to the 40 acre parcel it purchased from the owner in 2005. Ms. Renner voiced concern with drainage off the property due to the potential number of dwelling units.

Bruce McFee, 6217 Island Lake Drive, East Lansing, a member of Walnut Hills for 24 years, spoke to the value of homes which abut the Walnut Hills Golf Course. He voiced concern over a decrease in home values if the property is rezoned.

Bill Triola, 6292 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, spoke to the traffic which will come to the area with Rezoning #16060 and the proposed Costco development. He voiced concern with what he believed would be a diminished quality of life. Mr. Triola suggested the Township seek input from Donley Elementary School officials before the proposed rezoning moves forward. He expressed concern over water runoff which would come from any proposed development.

Chris Triola, 6292 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, spoke to the Walnut Hills Golf Course as open space, which forms an undisturbed green corridor in conjunction with a sod farm to the north and a nature preserve to the west. She requested the Planning Commission "do the right thing" for the land, wildlife and residents.

Chester Lewis, 5944 Patriots Way, East Lansing, believed the Master Plan validates why Rezoning #16060 should be denied.

Ken Ketchom, 8445 Cutler Road, Bath, believed retention of the Walnut Hills land to continue to be

used as a golf course is economically feasible. He addressed the nearby residents attempt to purchase the golf course.

Anyssa Marvin, 2914 Margate Lane, East Lansing, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #16060 and any additional homes constructed on the subject property.

Steven Marvin, 2914 Margate Lane, East Lansing, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #16060.

David Johnson, 6503 Park Lake Road, East Lansing, stated the drainage system in the area is fragile and voiced concern with water problems as a result of Rezoning #16060.

Erin Recktenwald, 6035 Dawn Avenue, East Lansing, spoke to increased traffic along Lake Lansing Road. She voiced concern with the additional traffic which would be created if Rezoning #16060 is approved. She addressed the potential for increased noise pollution in the area.

Ellie Heusner, 6216 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, stated her preference for Walnut Hills to remain as a golf course. She requested the zoning remain RR as it would allow for much fewer additional homes in the area.

Gay Heusner, 6216 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, spoke to the abundance of wildlife which traverse the grounds of Walnut Hills. She voiced concern with development in the already established wetland areas as depicted on the map. Ms. Heusner expressed concern with increased traffic.

Donna Bozgan, 2715 Skyline Court, East Lansing, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #16060 as it would allow for twice the number of homes to be constructed than under the current RR zoning.

Ben Louagie, 6118 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #16060. He noted he built his home in the area because of the greenspace and proximity to Donley Elementary School. Mr. Louagie expressed concern about the increased traffic from the development which would use Lake Lansing Road and the safety of school children who walk to and from Donley and White Hills elementary schools.

Scott Murray, 1550 Stan Lake Drive, East Lansing, a member of Walnut Hills Country Club for 34 years, believed Summer Park Realty is not a developer, but a speculator. He reiterated the zoning goes with the property and once this land is rezoned, it is changed "forever." Mr. Murray voiced opposition to Rezoning #16060.

Rob McDonnell, 5947 Highgate Avenue, East Lansing, addressed the amount of traffic which currently cuts through the Heritage Hills neighborhood to avoid the light at Hagadorn and Lake Lansing Roads. He requested if development of 2874 Lake Lansing Road happens, some measures be put in place to prohibit traffic cut through.

Mary Hoffmann, 6324 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #16060.

Robert Baker, 6010 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, made a decision to purchase a home in the area near Walnut Hills last year based on criteria which would no longer apply if the rezoning is approved.

Bill Flynn, 6086 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, believed Rezoning #16060 will diminish property

values in the area. He questioned the need for additional housing given the number of homes for sale within the Township. Mr. Flynn voiced concern with increased traffic and opposed the rezoning.

Helena Clark, 5998 Highgate, East Lansing, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #16060 due to increased traffic.

Fred Stacks, 5913 Highgate, East Lansing, believed Rezoning #16060 is a “good idea gone bad.” He requested the Planning Commission not make a decision this evening to allow for more information to be provided. Mr. Stacks spoke to a study conducted which stated no homes in Meridian Township were needed until 2030. He addressed the potential for declining property values because of the sale of the Walnut Hills property.

Candace Bennett, 6305 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, spoke in opposition to Rezoning #16060.

LaNita Campbell, 6049 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, President of the Skyline Hills Association, stated residents of Skyline Drive are not transient and the greenspace in Walnut Hills acts as a buffer for noise from Lake Lansing Road.

5. Communications

- A. Jennifer Louagie, 6118 Skyline Drive, East Lansing; RE: Opposition to Rezoning #16060
- B. Chester Lewis, 5944 Patriots Way, East Lansing; RE: Rezoning #16060
- C. Ryan Henry, Owner, Kincaid Henry, 934 Clark Street, Lansing; RE: Rezoning #16060
- D. Anne Hirschel, 5990 Highgate, East Lansing; RE: Opposition to Rezoning #16060
- E. Dr. Karen Renner, 6270 Skyline Drive, East Lansing; RE: Rezoning #16060
- F. Howard Majors, 6310 Island Lake Drive, East Lansing; RE: Opposition to Rezoning #16060
- G. Bill and Chris Triola, 6292 Skyline Drive, East Lansing; RE: Rezoning #16060
- H. Larry and Jane Schneider, 6295 Skyline Drive, East Lansing; RE: Opposition to Rezoning #16060
- I. Donna Rose, 6207 Cobblers Drive, East Lansing; RE: Rezoning #16060
- J. Dr. Karen Renner, 6270 Skyline Drive, East Lansing; RE: Opposition to Rezoning #16060
- K. Jim Bartow, 6164 W. Longview, East Lansing; RE: Support for Rezoning #16060
- L. Chester Lewis, 5944 Patriots Way, East Lansing; RE: Rezoning #16060
- M. Allison Parker, 6150 Skyline Drive, East Lansing; RE: Concerns with Rezoning #16060
- N. Rex Foster, 5857 Troyes Road, East Lansing; RE: Rezoning #16060

6. Public hearings

- A. Special Use Permit #16101 (Gillett), install outdoor barbeque smoker at 1754 Central Park Drive. Chair Scott-Craig opened the public hearing at 8:21 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 special use permit request as outlined in staff memorandum dated November 16, 2016.
- Applicant
Matt Gillett Saddleback BBQ, 837 Fred Street, Lansing, stated he and his business partner have an opportunity to expand his current business with an additional location in Meridian Township.
- Public
Eric Chagnon, NAI Mid-Michigan, 1754 Central Park Drive, Okemos, and a representative of the landlord, spoke in support of the proposed use for this prospective tenant.
- Planning Commission discussion:
Commissioner Ianni inquired if the smoker runs mostly in the evening.

Mr. Gillett replied two (2) individuals come in at 10:00 P.M. to operate the smoker throughout the evening.

Commissioner Ianni stated if there were any odors from the smoker, they would be emitted at night.

Mr. Gillett indicated that if necessary, the smoker can be run during the day. He indicated there is a three (3) to four (4) hour window at the current establishment in the late afternoon and early evening where it is cleaned out. He added the BBQ smoker is operated by hard wood and uses white oak and cherry wood.

Commissioner Honicky inquired if the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) would have any comment regarding air pollution as a result of use of the smoker.

Mr. Gillett responded he did not know, but will look into that question.

Commissioner Honicky noted the EPA has proposed a catalytic converter on top of wood burning stoves to limit the amount of air pollution.

Mr. Gillett replied this issue was raised in the Austin, TX area and the concept of a “purifier” machine was explored. He noted it was determined to be not workable.

Commissioner Lane asked the applicant if he has had any interactions with other business owners in the existing shopping center.

Mr. Gillett replied he has had discussions with the current business owner where the pad is to be located, but has not reached out to the other businesses.

Commissioner Jackson asked if the pad is considered a structure and must comply with the setback requirements.

Senior Planner Menser responded the pad is considered an accessory structure which must be ten (10) feet from any other structure and five (5) feet from the property line.

Commissioner Jackson reiterated there are setback requirements from the natural features in the rear.

Senior Planner Menser replied in the affirmative.

Chair Scott-Craig encouraged Mr. Gillett to reach out to the neighboring businesses to apprise them of the possible new business.

Chair Scott-Craig closed the public hearing at 8:36 P.M.

7. Unfinished Business

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

Senior Planner Menser summarized the process to date and information provided in the staff memorandum dated November 17, 2016.

Planning Commission, applicant and staff discussion:

- Number of lots contained in the traffic engineering addendum were based on the current zoning, the rezoning request if approved and a PUD
- Applicant's "parallel plan" took a conservative approach in order to provide comparisons
- Proposed project will function within the current acceptable levels of service (LOS)
- Analysis contained in the November 14th staff memorandum regarding potential density was based on any residential development and used a factor which originated in the 1993 comprehensive plan as a guide
- Applicant's plans to mitigate capacity constraints for the westbound movement at Lake Lansing and Hagadorn Road intersection include the possibility of accelerate and decelerate lanes, turn lanes, additional lanes or resignaling
- Applicant's belief that under the Township's Master Plan it "contemplates" for such changes
- Planned residential development (PRD) asks for the rezoning and provides a plat
- Density of the PRD is based on the underlying zoning
- PRD requires 25% open space
- Commissioner concern with changing the zoning designation on an 157 acre parcel which has unique assets
- Scope of the Planning Commission is to discuss and interpret the 13 rezoning review criteria
- Planning Commission can limit the number of units placed on the parcel by placing conditions on its approval
- Buffers between uses making those uses harmonious is an odd concept
- Reminder that the zoning stays with the land
- Examples of harmonious uses
- Draft layout plan does not provide a greenway or path for wildlife to traverse
- Inquiry if the applicant has a contingency plan if the rezoning request is not approved
- Applicant is amenable to having a discussion with the Township regarding potential purchase of a portion of the property
- Applicant's belief the current RR zoned parcel is spot zoning

- Rezoning request is consistent with the Township's FLUM
- Lack of detail regarding intersection improvement to retain current LOS
- Inquiry as to how the applicant would address the rezoning criteria regarding community need for the proposed development
- Applicant had a market analysis performed which indicated approximately 20,000 households are over the age of 65 and these households would benefit from the type of "empty nester" housing contemplated
- Demand exists for quality one-story housing for aging residents
- Golf courses are typically infill development sites
- Compliance with the Master Plan is more than compliance with the FLUM
- Concern with the direction of water flow
- Preference for the applicant to provide "visuals" of the manner in which it is changing the community
- Preference for the applicant to demonstrate plans for walkability on the property
- Commissioner preference to have more information regarding traffic patterns
- Applicant will work with residents of Skyline and the Greens in extending pedestrian walkways
- Applicant is attempting to preserve the clubhouse for community use
- Clubhouse will be taken down if a conventional subdivision must be built
- Commissioner belief this is not necessarily spot zoning
- The Planning Commission is the recommending body to the Township Board
- Upzoning is considerable given the site is 157 acres
- Concern this upzoning request offers nothing to the Township
- Applicant request for clarification as to the level of plan detail expected
- Preference for the applicant to provide detailed conceptual plans to the Planning Commission prior to making a decision on the rezoning
- Applicant can offer development conditions (e.g., PUD) in conjunction with the rezoning request
- Commissioner preference for affordable housing (\$100,000+) to be included in the conceptual plan
- Applicant statement affordable single family housing is not "doable" based on today's development costs as they have increased 41% over the last seven (7) years

It was the consensus of the Planning Commission for the applicant to provide additional information.

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

Commissioner DeGroff moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby recommends approval of Zoning Amendment #16050, to amend Section 86-435 to allow instructional centers, outdoor seating, and mobile food vending in the Industrial Zoning District. Seconded by Commissioner Honicky.

Planning Commission discussion:

- All of the new uses will benefit the community
- Appreciation for Meridian Plumbing's innovation in developing an instructional center and requesting a rezoning which will produce needed skilled laborers

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners DeGroff, Honicky, Ianni, Jackson, Lane, Opsommer, Tenaglia, Chair Scott-Craig

NAYS: None

Motion carried 8-0.

8. Other Business

A. 2017 Meeting Schedule

Commissioner Tenaglia moved [and read into the record] NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN as follows:

1. **The Planning Commission will meet for regular meetings on certain Mondays, January through December in 2017 in the Town Hall Room of the Meridian Municipal Building, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864, 517-853-4560.**

2. **The specific dates for meetings are as follows:**

January	9 - regular meeting 23 - regular meeting
February	13 - regular meeting 27 - regular meeting
March	13 - regular meeting 27 - regular meeting
April	10 - regular meeting 24 - regular meeting
May	8 - regular meeting 22 - regular meeting
June	12 - regular meeting 26 - regular meeting
July	10 - regular meeting 24 - regular meeting
August	14 - regular meeting 28 - regular meeting
September	11 - regular meeting

	25 - regular meeting
October	9 - regular meeting 23 - regular meeting
November	13 - regular meeting 27 - regular meeting
December	11 - regular meeting 18 - regular meeting

3. **Meetings will begin at approximately 7:00 p.m.**
4. **Special meetings of the Planning Commission may be called pursuant to the applicable statute.**
5. **Regular meetings may be canceled, recessed, or postponed by members of the Planning Commission pursuant to the applicable statute.**
6. **A summary of this resolution stating date, place, and time shall be posted in the Meridian Municipal Building within ten (10) days after the first regularly scheduled meeting of the year in accordance with MCL 15.265.**

Seconded by Commissioner Ianni.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners DeGroff, Honicky, Ianni, Jackson, Lane, Opsommer, Tenaglia, Chair Scott-Craig

NAYS: None

Motion carried 8-0.

9. **Township Board, Planning Commission officer, committee chair, and staff comment or reports**
Commissioner DeGroff attended the last meeting of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) where discussion took place regarding form based code. The DDA also entered into dialog regarding its on-going debt obligations.

Commissioner Honicky spoke to a recent article in the *Lansing State Journal* where the City of Lansing is beginning its discussion of medical marihuana dispensaries. He believed Meridian Township will be faced with a similar discussion.

Commissioner DeGroff added over the last eight (8) years, the federal government has used its prosecutorial discretion relative to marihuana violations in states which have approved the use of medical and/or recreational marihuana as such use continues to be prohibited under federal law.

Chair Scott-Craig announced a form based code training session will be held on December 5, 2016 in East Lansing.

Director Kieselbach announced the Township will hold a session on form based codes for Township Board and Commission members on December 7, 2016 beginning at 3:30 PM at the Meridian

Township Hall.

A. New Applications

1. Commercial Planned Unit Development #16014 (Saroki), construct a gasoline station at 1619 Haslett Road
2. Rezoning #16070 (Singh), rezone 1.6 acres from RR (Rural Residential) to RDD (Multiple Family) at 1954 Saginaw Highway
3. Wetland Use Permit #16-06 (Stockwell), discharge stormwater runoff to regulated wetland at 1560 Grand River Avenue

B. Update of Ongoing Projects

1. Site Plans Received
 - a. Site Plan Review 16-15 (Okemos Pointe, LLC), construct phase one of a mixed use planned unit development located northwest of Jolly Oak Road
2. Site Plans Approved - NONE

10. Public remarks

Chair Scott-Craig opened public remarks.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, inquired if a professional opinion can be obtained from the Ingham County Drain Commissioner relative to the storm water issues for Rezoning #16060 prior to any action being taken on this rezoning request. He expressed continued opposition to Zoning Amendment #16050 as he believed it is being amended to deal with one individual businesses in Meridian Township.

Chair Scott-Craig closed public remarks.

11. Adjournment

Chair Scott-Craig adjourned the regular meeting at 10:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra K. Otto
Recording Secretary