

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
March 23, 2015**

**APPROVED**

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

PRESENT: Commissioners Cordill, DeGroff, Honicky, Ianni, Jackson, Scott-Craig, Tenaglia, Van Coevering  
ABSENT: Commissioner Deits  
STAFF: Principal Planner Oranchak

**1. Call meeting to order**

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

**2. Approval of agenda**

**Commissioner Cordill moved to approve the agenda amended as follows:**

- **Change the order in which Agenda Items #7A and #7B come before the Planning Commission**

**Seconded by Commissioner Tenaglia.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 8-0.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

**Commissioner Ianni moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 9, 2015.  
Seconded by Commissioner Jackson.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 8-0.

**4. Public Remarks**

Chair Scott-Craig opened the floor for public remarks.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, pointed out the difficulty in separating what is before the Planning Commission tonight regarding Okemos Pointe is a rezoning request, not the MUPUD project. He believed the project previously shown in the concept plan is a close rendering of what the applicant intends to build. He suggested that since the proposed agenda for the next Planning Commission meeting appears to be light, it would be a good time to complete amendments to the Planning Commission bylaws.

Jim Sherman, 2610 Robins Way, Okemos, spoke in opposition to rezoning the rural residential parcel which is part of Rezoning #15010.

Jay Heath, 2607 Robins Way, Okemos, spoke in opposition to rezoning the rural residential parcel which is part of Rezoning #15010.

Chris Buck, 2642 Loon Lane, Okemos, spoke in support of Rezoning #15010, noting the continued attempts by the developer to address the concern of adjacent and nearby neighbors.

Brent Forsberg, 2422 Jolly Road, Okemos, offered a quick update on the rural residential portion near Kansas Road relative to Rezoning #15010.

Will Randle, Vice President, WestPac, 4409 Dobie Road, Okemos, offered a brief synopsis of WestPac's operations and accomplishments.

Ed Love, 306 E. Henry, Charlotte, outlined Energy Options' mission and its energy and sustainability options for Rezoning #15010.

Debbie Elliott, 3720 Taos Circle, Okemos, voiced concern with the impact Rezoning #15010 would have on her property, rural living in the area and the wetlands.

Mark Clouse, 300 S. Washington, Lansing, availed himself for Planning Commission questions on Rezoning #15020.

Val Nilson, 2565 Robins Way, expressed concern with the density of the project in Rezoning #15010.

Jay Murthy, 2483 Robins Way, Okemos, spoke in continued opposition to Rezoning #15010.

Steve Freemire, 3622 Kansas Road, Okemos, expressed his continued opposition to Rezoning #15010.

Ann Zimmerman, 2344 Coyote Creek Drive, Okemos, voiced her continued opposition to Rezoning #15010.

Chair Scott-Craig closed public remarks.

## **5. Communications**

- A. Anne Hughes, 2734 Lupine Drive, Okemos; RE: Support for Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- B. John Faett, Victory Martial Arts, 3544 Meridian Crossing, Suite 130, Okemos; RE: Support for Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- C. Jim Rypkema, Presidentm Briarwood Home Owners Association, PO Box 226, Okemos, RE: Opposition to Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- D. Patrick Crilley, 2568 Heather Circle, East Lansing; RE: Support for Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- E. James M. Miller, 1982 Cimarron Drive, Okemos; RE: Support for Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- F. Patsy King, 1130 Bonanza Drive, Okemos; RE: Support for Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- G. Robert D. Earl, 5561 Okemos Road, East Lansing; RE: Support for Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- H. Santos Vega, 2332 Sower Boulevard, Okemos; RE: Support for Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- I. Morris Huntley, 3554 Okemos Road, Okemos; RE: Support for Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- J. Persis Indian Grill, 3536 Meridian Crossing, Okemos; RE: Support for Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- K. William Adrian, 1114 Bonanza Drive, Okemos; RE: Support for Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)

- L. James White, 2400 Science Parkway, Okemos; RE: Support for Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- M. CORT Furniture, 3544 Meridian Crossing, Suite 140, Okemos; RE: Support for Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- N. Ahmad Elbast, 3536 Meridian Crossing; RE: Support for Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)

Communications distributed at the March 9, 2015 Planning Commission meeting and filed

- Carol Ogan, 2335 Coyote Creek Dr., Okemos; RE: Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- Joyce Larkin, 2317 Taos Trail, Okemos; RE: Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- Jay Murthy, 2483 Robins Way, Okemos; RE: Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- Jamal Shamsie, 2342 Coyote Creek, Okemos; RE: Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- Dr. Brent Felton & Swapna Hingwe, 2469 Robins Way, Okemos; RE: Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- Christine Beacco, 3683 Sonoma Vista, Okemos; RE: Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)
- Tracie Yurkinas, 2331 Coyote Creek, Okemos; RE: Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family LLC)

## 6. Public hearings (None)

## 7. Unfinished Business

- A. Rezoning #15010 (Forsberg Family, LLC), request to rezone approximately 39.46 acres from I (Industrial), PO (Professional and Office), RR (Rural Residential), and C-2 (Commercial) to C-2 (Commercial) with an offer of conditions to develop as a mixed use planned unit development and restrict density to no more than 18 dwelling units per acre. The site has frontage on Kansas Street and Jolly Oak Road.

Planning Commission discussion:

- Added condition by the applicant for the RR frontage on Kansas Street states the building height will be restricted to a maximum of 35 feet, the building setbacks from adjacent property will be 1.5 times the height of the building with a minimum of no less than 50 feet and a limit of 10 dwelling units per acre
- Appreciation for the applicant's consideration of a grocery store on nearby property which would be a service to area residents
- Reminder that with a conditional rezoning, if the MUPUD is not approved, the land reverts back to its previous zoning designation
- Mix of housing types will be addressed during the MUPUD process
- New condition placed on the RR parcel attempts to maintain the character of the nearby rural neighborhood
- Concern with the major change in intensity from RR to C-2 use without any transition
- Commissioner preference to rezone the six (6) ± RR zoned acres to low density multiple family (RDD-five (5) to RD-eight (8) dwelling units per acre)
- Setback between commercial and any residential designation is 100 feet (or 60 feet with a double row of conifer trees)
- Maximum density of the RR district is one unit per 40,000 square feet (approximately one (1) acre)
- Clarification needed by staff on whether the Planning Commission can recommend only a portion of the conditional rezoning request
- Clarification needed by staff on whether the Planning Commission can modify one of the zoning designations from the applicant's proposed rezoning request

- Concern with increasing the number of allowed residential units from the current six (6) to even 30 as allowed for under RDD rezoning
- Planning Commissioner preference to exclude the RR parcel in the proposed project
- Inquiry if the Planning Commission can negotiate the number of units allowed on the current RR portion during the MUPUD process if the approximately 39.46 acres was rezoned commercial now
- Definition of a unit
- 12 unit difference on the six (6) ± acre parcel from the applicant's offered condition to RD zoning
- Appreciation for the applicant's willingness to show what will be developed prior to the conditional rezoning request to C-2
- Commissioner belief the conditional rezoning will not be detrimental to the neighbors
- Commissioner preference for the applicant to offer workforce housing as a condition
- Commissioner belief uses are not harmonious if buffers/barriers are needed between them
- Single family dwellings could be built on the RR zoned parcel as there are homes "all around it"
- Applicant is currently working on the traffic study updates
- Effect of the setback on Kansas Road as delineated in the proposed new condition

- B. Rezoning #15020 (George F. Eyde Family, LLC) request to rezone approximately 8.7 acres from PO (Professional Office) and RA (Single Family, Medium Density) to C-2 (Commercial) at 1614 and 1622 Grand River Avenue and an undeveloped parcel on Central Park Drive

**Commissioner Ianni moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby recommends approval of Rezoning #15020 to rezone approximately 8.66 acres located on the north side of Grand River Avenue east of Central Park Drive and identified as 1614 and 1622 Grand River Avenue and an undeveloped parcel on Central Park Drive to C-2 (Commercial). Seconded by Commissioner Van Coevering.**

Planning Commission discussion:

- Area north of Grand River and on the east side of Central Park Drive is predominantly commercial
- Unlikely there will be a need for the land's use as PO or RA in the future
- Planning Commissioner concern with the Planning Commission "setting the stage" for all residential properties along Central Park Drive to the north by rezoning the RA parcel
- RA parcel on Central Park Drive is adjacent to RD zoned land
- RD zoning is a multiple family low density district with a maximum of eight (8) dwelling units per acre
- When a C-2 district abuts residential, it requires a 100 foot setback with the option of a reduction to 60 feet with a double row of conifer trees
- Nearby Trilogy project is adjacent to single family subdivision to the north (Central Park Estates)
- Owners of Trilogy have not expressed a concern with the proposed rezoning
- Appreciation for actual statistics on the excess of PO zoned land in Meridian Township
- Area could become very walkable, dependent on the nature of the commercial development

**Commissioner Honicky offered the following amendment:**

- **Rezone parcel 1614 and 1622 Grand River to C-2 and keep the present RA zoning on the undeveloped parcel on Central Park Drive.**

**The motion died for lack of a second.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners Cordill, DeGroff, Ianni, Jackson, Tenaglia,  
Van Covering, Chair Scott-Craig

NAYS: Commissioner Honicky

Motion carried 7-1.

**8. Other Business (None)**

**9. Township Board, Planning Commission officer, committee chair, and staff comment or reports (None)**

**10. New applications (None)**

**11. Site plans received**

- A. Site Plan Review #15-02 (Aaron Hanson), request to establish a brewery at 4903 Dawn Avenue

**12. Site plans approved**

- A. Site Plan Review #15-14-04-2 (Wolverine Building Group), request to amend an approved site plan to add a 3,275 square foot mezzanine to the Whole Food's building under construction at 2750 Grand River

**13. Public remarks**

Chair Scott-Craig opened public remarks.

Jay Murthy, 2483 Robins Way, Okemos, requested clarification on how the rezoning process works, as he was unclear why the applicant was required to provide a traffic study, but earlier comment indicated traffic should not be considered as a reason to deny the rezoning request.

Steve Freemire, 3622 Kansas Road, Okemos, noted Kansas Road is a dirt road with 12 homes located on it. He voiced his continued objection to rezoning the RR portion as presented in Rezoning #15010.

Ann Zimmerman, 2344 Coyote Creek Drive, Okemos, expressed concern that a finalized site plan does not need to be in place for the Forsberg property to be rezoned.

Principal Planner Oranchak explained it is very unusual to have any type of site plan in place prior to a rezoning request, adding a specific site plan will be submitted during the MUPUD phase.

Planning Commission and staff discussion:

- Dwelling units are living units, which is not the same as the number of buildings
- A maximum of approximately four single family (4) dwelling units per acre are possible in RA zoning
- RA zoning on the current RR parcel would require other design elements (i.e., a street)

Chair Scott-Craig closed public remarks.

**14. Adjournment**

Chair Scott-Craig adjourned the regular meeting at 8:24 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra K. Otto  
Recording Secretary