

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
April 9, 2012**

APPROVED

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

PRESENT: Commissioners Cordill, Deits, Goodale, Honicky, Jackson, Norkin (7:03 P.M.), Scales, Scott-Craig
ABSENT: Commissioner Hildebrandt
STAFF: Principal Planner Gail Oranchak

1. Call meeting to order

Chair Deits called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

2. Approval of agenda

Commissioner Scales moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Jackson.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 8-0.

3. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Scales moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 26, 2012 as amended. Seconded by Commissioner Cordill.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 8-0.

4. Public Remarks

Chair Deits opened the floor for public remarks.

Mark Clouse, representative for Eyde Company, 4660 S. Hagadorn Road, Suite 660, East Lansing, spoke to discussion with the Ingham County Road Commission (ICRC) regarding shared use of the roads by cars and bicycles in Mixed Use Planned Unit Development #12014 (Capstone).

Jamerson Ries, Kebs, Inc., 2116 Haslett Road, Haslett, indicated interested parties met with the ICRC to discuss a traffic signal and bikability for MUPUD #12014. He noted the ICRC is working with Kebs' consultant to see if SEMAC funds are available for the traffic signal as it would assist with reducing congestion and delays. Relative to bikability, he stated a test pilot program for shared lanes and the shared roads markings (sharrows) in this area (Hannah Boulevard, Eyde Parkway and Esoteric Way) is being explored.

Tim Potter, member of Mid-Michigan Active Transportation Coalition, 4632 Van Atta Road, Okemos, spoke in support of the use of shared lane markings where there is insufficient width to have proper bicycle lanes. He spoke in support of a higher density of bicycle parking within student housing developments.

Bill McConnell, 4376 Manitou, Okemos, spoke to using the MUPUD process to introduce sharrow symbols to marked share lanes here in Michigan. He stated these symbols are already popular in many states throughout the country.

Chair Deits closed public remarks.

5. Communications (None)

6. Public hearings

- A. Special Use Permit #12011 (Capstone), request for a group of buildings totaling more than 25,000 square feet in floor area on approximately nine acres south of Hannah Blvd.

Chair Deits opened the public hearing at 7:13 P.M.

- Introduction by the Chair (announcement of procedures, time limits and protocols for public participation and applicants)
- Summary of subject matter
Principal Planner Oranchak summarized the special use permit (SUP) request as outlined in staff memorandum dated, April 5, 2012.
- Applicant
John Acken, Capstone Development, 431 Office Park Drive, Birmingham, Alabama, requested his previous comments be incorporated into the SUP. He requested the Planning Commission allow married or other couples to rent a one bedroom unit.
- Public
Bob Lovell, 6185 Graebear Trail, East Lansing, encouraged the Planning Commission to consider the number of bicycle parking spaces needed for 1100 units of student housing, citing statistics which indicated a minimum of one bicycle parking space for every two (2) students.
- Planning Commission discussion:
Commissioner Cordill spoke to the need for designated bike lanes for Hannah Boulevard, Eyde Parkway and Esoteric Way, while acknowledging shared bike lanes for the internal circulation within the development would be reasonable.

Chair Deits suggested the bike lane discussion be deferred as the subject of the public hearing is specifically on the size of the building.

Commissioner Norkin asked if the issue of the largest building appearing to look like barracks had been addressed by the applicant.

Chair Deits indicated that other than quality, the Planning Commission cannot dictate aesthetics. He once again reminded the Planning Commission that the subject of this public hearing is the size of the building.

Commissioner Honicky expressed appreciation to the applicant for allowing Planning Commissioners to walk the property. He requested an explanation on the wetlands area, mitigation area and the drain.

Chair Deits requested Commissioner Honicky's question be deferred until the discussion of the MUPUD.

Commissioner Honicky inquired if the subject of this public hearing was the configuration of the buildings.

Chair Deits clarified the only issue of this public hearing is the size of the buildings.

Chair Deits closed the public hearing at 7:24 P.M.

7. Unfinished Business

- A. Mixed Use Planned Unit Development #12014 (Capstone), request for 153 multiple-family (student) apartments on approximately nine acres south of Hannah Blvd.

Planning Commission, staff and applicant's representative discussion:

- Request for explanation by the applicant's engineer regarding the intersection of the current drain, the proposed drain and the mitigation area
- Entire wetland mitigation area is within the 100-year floodplain
- Retaining wall which will support the parking lot is at the edge of either a no-build easement, a 100-year floodplain or a drain easement
- Wetland mitigation could build up water and overflow into the detention basin or the Hannah Farm Drain
- Hannah Farm Drain could build up and overflow back into the property's system
- Proposed new drain is catch basins and storm sewer throughout the property which would discharge through an opening in the retaining wall
- Long linear depression where water would sheet flow over into the mitigation area to provide equal distribution v. point sourcing the water
- Existing motorcross jump depression would be filled and used as part of a maneuvering road for the parking lot
- Hannah Boulevard, Esoteric Way and Eyde Parkway need dedicated bike lanes
- Need for sufficient streetlighting in the area
- Discussion with the ICRC during a March 30th meeting included offsite road improvements within the entire Hannah Park area (e.g., speed)
- Hannah Boulevard, Eyde Parkway and Esoteric Way are all two-lane roads
- ICRC expressed concern bicycle lanes will experience maintenance, snow removal and trash problems
- ICRC was receptive to marking shared road lanes in this area as a "pilot" program, given it is a confined location directly across from the MSU campus, will experience higher bicycle traffic than other areas in the Township and can be monitored
- ICRC was amenable to work with the applicant to place shared lane markings, post 25 mile per hour speed signs and signs coming into the community announcing it is a shared roadway environment
- Applicant request to work with the Township and the bicycle clubs/associations to send out educational materials to people who live and work in the area regarding shared road lanes
- Suggestion to include a condition which requires the applicant to continue to work with the ICRC and the Township to solve automobile/pedestrian conflicts
- Township will likely have a complete streets ordinance (as required by state law) when the next phase of this entire development comes forward
- Hannah Boulevard is not a high traffic road
- A boulevard or a three (3) lane road where left turns are available in a separate lane and are used by 35,000 cars or less per day could include a dedicated bicycle lane
- MSU already has bicycle lanes on portions of the service road leading up to Hannah Boulevard
- As MSU continues construction on the remaining segments, bike lanes are included
- Argument that the budget for the ICRC will be an issue does not have merit as the cost would be for marking the lanes
- Island in the middle of Hannah Boulevard is problematic for reducing it down to three (3) lanes
- Condition should indicate that consideration will be given to the aforementioned issues as the development moves forward
- Belief the big picture relative to the specifics will be included in the next phase

- Development is occurring according to what the local and immediate market will allow, which is student housing
- Access is intrinsic to the entire project
- Proposed development is driving the need for better circulation
- Inquiry as to the possibility of the property owner constructing a second road parallel to the two-lane segment of Hannah Boulevard
- Planning Commission has a circumscribed area for discussion of this project
- Suggestion to table the MUPUD until an explanation is received by the ICRC for its approval of this development without regard to safety of the bicyclists along Hannah Boulevard
- Planning Commissioners must confine their ideas to the proposed project
- Off site improvements do not fit with the request being made by the applicant
- Planning Commission has not established any level of need for this mode of transportation
- Proposed complex has multiple transportation options for the students
- Availability of minutes for meetings between Capstone, Eyde Co. and the ICRC
- No minutes would be available as the meetings did not take place with Road Commissioners, but staff of the ICRC
- Applicant suggestion that a Township staff person also attend meetings with the ICRC and the applicant

Commissioner Scott-Craig moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby recommends approval of Mixed Use Planned Unit Development #12014, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Approval of the mixed use planned unit development design is in accordance with the site plans prepared by KEBS, Inc. dated March 6, 2012; conceptual Landscape Plan, Signage Plan, and Site Lighting Plan prepared by Cottage Builders, Inc. dated March 6, 2012; building elevations and floor plans prepared by Dungan Nequette Architects dated February 24, 2012. All plans are subject to revisions as required.**
- 2. MUPUD #12014 (Capstone) to construct a group of three apartment buildings with 153 units shall be contingent on the approval of SUP #09011 (Capstone).**
- 3. Waivers shall be granted for those sections of the Code of Ordinances listed in the applicant's attachment to the MUPUD application titled "Required waivers based on proposed site plan" as deemed necessary.**
- 4. Approval is subject to the following amenities as identified on the Amenities Plan: a swimming pool; pool building/community center/clubhouse with WiFi; covered bus shelter; fountain; outdoor gathering spaces near the fountain and pool, covered bicycle racks near each building; balconies; and sidewalks.**
- 5. The character and quality of the building materials and general architectural design of the buildings shall be consistent on all four sides of each building. The majority of the buildings shall be comprised of brick or masonry products.**
- 6. The final design of the trash compacter/recycling center enclosure shall be subject to the approval of the Director of Community Planning and Development.**
- 7. Site accessories such as railings, benches, trash and recycling receptacles, exterior lighting fixtures, and bicycle racks shall be of commercial quality, and complement the building design and style. Final design and location shall be subject to the approval of**

the Director of Community Planning and Development.

- 8. Any future building additions or expansions to the buildings will require modification to the MUPUD #12014 and SUP #12011.**
- 9. The three residential buildings which comprise MUPUD #12014 shall accommodate no more than 399 tenants; one resident per bedroom except the six two-bedroom units may house no more than two persons per bedroom.**
- 10. A plan shall be submitted clearly indicating all trees to be preserved on the subject site. If deemed necessary by the Director of Community Planning and Development, the trees shall be properly protected prior to the commencement of grading or construction activities related to the proposed mixed use project. Tree protection shall be provided as outlined in Section 22-179 of the Code of Ordinances.**
- 11. Results of soil borings shall be submitted with the site plan review application. Buried construction or other materials, any existing debris found on the subject site, and debris resulting from clearing, grading, or construction activities related to the proposed project shall be removed from the site and shall be properly disposed.**
- 12. Street trees shall be installed along Hannah Boulevard. Species and location of the trees shall be subject to the approval of the Director of Community Planning and Development and the Ingham County Road Commission.**
- 13. Landscaping shall generally comply with the provisions of the Code of Ordinances, including the mixed use planned unit development standards as outlined in Section 86-440(d)(4) and other applicable sections of the Ordinance pertaining to landscaping.**
- 14. Site and building lighting shall comply with Article VII in Chapter 38 of the Code of Ordinances and shall be subject to the approval of the Director of Community Planning and Development. Streetlights shall not exceed 15 feet in height. LED lighting shall be used where feasible.**
- 15. A final sign program shall be submitted as part of site plan review and shall be subject to the review and approval of the Director of Community Planning and Development.**
- 16. All mechanical, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and similar systems shall be screened from view by an opaque structure or landscape material (if at street level) selected to complement the building. Such screening is subject to approval by the Director of Community Planning and Development.**
- 17. The applicant shall obtain all necessary permits, licenses, and approvals from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Ingham County Drain Commissioner, Ingham County Road Commission, and the Township. Copies of all permits and approval letters shall be submitted to the Department of Community Planning and Development.**
- 18. The utility, grading, and storm drainage plans for the site shall be subject to the approval of the Director of Public Works and Engineering and shall be completed in accordance with the Township Engineering Design and Construction Standards.**

19. **The applicant shall apply to the Township for a land division; once approved, documents shall be recorded with the Ingham County Register of Deeds and proof of recording submitted to the Township prior to issuance of occupancy permits.**
20. **A copy of the site plan information that exists in a computer format for the development project and construction plans shall be provided to the Township Engineering staff in an Auto Cad compatible format.**

Seconded by Commissioner Cordill.

Planning Commission discussion:

- Building student housing in close proximity of the MSU campus is in the interest of the Township and the City of East Lansing

The maker offered the following friendly amendment:

- **Add condition #21: The developer shall continue to pursue discussions with the Ingham County Road Commission to alter Hannah Boulevard, Eyde Parkway and Esoteric Way to accommodate bicycle lanes.**

Seconded by Commissioner Norkin.

The seconder offered the following amendment to the friendly amendment:

- **Amend condition #21 by inserting “The developer will communicate to the Township the substance of these discussions.” after “lanes.”**

The maker of the friendly amendment accepted the amendment.

Chair Deits offered the following friendly amendment:

- **Amend condition #21 by deleting “bicycle lanes” and inserting “multimodal transportation, especially bicycles.”**

The amendment was accepted by the maker.

Continued Planning Commission discussion:

- Discussion at the previous public hearing to waive the cap on the number of bicycle racks allowed
- If the Planning Commission believes additional bicycle racks are needed, it could place an additional condition within the approval
- Township Board will have an opportunity to consider the issues raised by the Planning Commission before it makes a final recommendation
- Suggestion to have the Township monitor bicycle rack usage
- Staff concern as to how the Township would monitor bicycle rack usage as it typically operates on a complaint basis
- Suggestion to use language out of the statute
- Only mode of transportation which has been “neglected” is bicycles, and the Planning Commission keeps “watering down” the amendment

VOICE VOTE ON THE AMENDMENT: Motion carried 8-0.

Chair Deits offered the following amendment:

- **Add condition #22: The Planning Commission recommends that the developer be allowed to increase bicycle storage capacity as needed.**

Seconded by the maker of the main motion.

Continued Planning Commission and staff discussion:

- Request that upright storage be considered
- Township has a specific design for bicycle racks contained in its ordinance
- Concern that this condition requires violation of the current Township ordinance
- Planned unit developments allows for negotiation and flexibility
- Intent of the ordinance was that the Township would not require an applicant to install more than 50 bicycle parking spaces

VOICE VOTE ON THE AMENDMENT: Motion carried 7-1 (Scales)

Continued Planning Commission discussion:

- Possibility of amending condition #9 to allow married and other couples to occupy a one bedroom unit
- Phase 1 approval contained the one resident per bedroom condition
- Suggestion to simultaneously bring the change which accommodates couples for both Phase 1 and Phase 2 MUPUDs to the Planning Commission
- The Township has not received a request to make an amendment to the MUPUD for Phase 1
- MUPUD #12014 for Phase 2 has not been approved
- The applicant could make such a request to the Township Board
- Intent of condition #9 is a statement of occupancy as a multiple family residential project has limitations as to how many unrelated individuals can occupy a unit
- Subject property has a PO zoning and the Township's ordinance regarding PO zoning does not set limits regarding unrelated individuals

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners Cordill, Goodale, Honicky, Norkin, Scales,
Scott-Craig, Vice Chair Jackson, Chair Deits

NAYS: None

Motion carried 8-0.

- B. Special Use Permit #12011 (Capstone), request for a group of buildings totaling more than 25,000 square feet in floor area on approximately nine acres south of Hannah Blvd.

Commissioner Norkin moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby recommends approval of Special Use Permit #12011 (Capstone) to construct five buildings totaling more than 25,000 square feet in gross floor area subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Approval of the special use permit is recommended in accordance with the site plans prepared by KEBS, Inc. dated March 6, 2012; conceptual Landscape Plan, Signage Plan, and Site Lighting Plan prepared by Cottage Builders, Inc., dated March 6, 2012; and building elevations and floor plans prepared by Dungan Nequette Architects dated February 24, 2012. All plans are subject to revisions as required.**
- 2. Special Use Permit #12011 is subject to all conditions placed on Mixed Use Planned Unit Development #12014 (Capstone) by the Township.**

Seconded by Commissioner Scott-Craig.

The maker offered the following amendment:

- **Amend the eighth WHEREAS clause by deleting “ has sufficient capacity” and inserting “is currently under review” relating to the 153 additional units**

Seconded by Commissioner Honicky.

Planning Commission discussion:

- The Planning Commission must use caution in approving the SUP and using the amended language which, in effect, states it does not meet a requirement of the SUP

The maker withdrew his amendment.

The maker offered the following amendment:

- **Amend the eighth WHEREAS clause by inserting “relating to the additional 153 units” after “capacity”**

Seconded by Commissioner Honicky.

Continued Planning Commission and staff discussion:

- This resolution addresses the entryway to Phase 2
- No issues with capacity on Eyde Parkway and Hannah Boulevard
- Issue raised was the need for a light on Hagadorn Road
- Existing road system within the development is sufficient
- ICRC has approved the different access points on Eyde Parkway and Hannah Boulevard
- Whereas clause which states that the surrounding road system has sufficient capacity contradicts concerns expressed by the Planning Commission during the concept plan review
- Clarification that the concept plan review was for Phase 3, not Phase 2
- Phase 3 will come before the Planning Commission for discussion
- Planning Commission can alter the language contained in the special use permit resolution as it believes appropriate

VOICE VOTE: Motion failed 4-4. (Cordill, Deits, Scales, Scott-Craig)

Without objection, it was the decision of the Chair to call the roll on the amendment.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners Goodale, Honicky, Norkin, Vice Chair Jackson

NAYS: Commissioners Cordill, Scales, Scott-Craig, Chair Deits

Motion failed 4-4.

Commissioner Jackson moved to suspend Bylaw #6.4a to proceed with making a decision on Special Use Permit #12011 (Capstone) the same night as the public hearing.

Seconded by Commissioner Scales.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-1 (Honicky).

Without objection, Commissioner Scales requested a roll call vote on suspending the rules.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners Cordill, Goodale, Norkin, Scales, Scott-Craig,
Vice Chair Jackson, Chair Deits

NAYS: Commissioner Honicky

Motion carried 7-1.

ROLL CALL VOTE YEAS: Commissioners Cordill, Goodale, Honicky, Norkin, Scales,
ON THE MAIN Scott-Craig, Vice Chair Jackson, Chair Deits
MOTION: NAYS: None
Motion carried 8-0.

8. Other Business

A. Master Plan Amendment

Principal Planner Oranchak summarized the amendment to the 2005 Master Plan as outlined in staff memorandum dated April 5, 2012.

Planning Commission discussion:

- Rationale for not using the Township Board's recommendation for the urban service boundary line
- Staff will create a list of the communities and agencies which will be notified
- Communities and agencies have 63 days to respond to the notice of intent to prepare a plan amendment
- Public hearing will take place
- Planning Commission will revisit goals and objectives at a future date

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

Commissioner Cordill expressed frustration at not being able to discuss the Hannah Farms development in its entirety.

Principal Planner Oranchak clarified that the largest issue was the traffic signal at Hagadorn Road and Eyde Parkway, and the applicant is in current discussions with the ICRC for installation of that traffic light.

Commissioner Deits spoke to his discretion in having a computer at his station on the dais during this evening's meeting, since the vote last year was 5-4 against allowing Planning Commissioners to use computers during meetings. He added that four (4) members are using computers during this meeting and wondered if the Planning Commission would like to revisit this issue.

Commissioner Scales moved to allow computers to be utilized during meetings, but not as a distraction between Commissioners and the public.

Seconded by Commissioner Cordill.

Planning Commission discussion:

- Recollection that discussion included allowing the use of computers during work sessions, but it may not send the right message when interacting with the public
- Tablets are more environmentally friendly than hard copy
- Concern with additional information being brought forth through electronic research during a public hearing
- Difficulty of reviewing site plans as a PDF file
- Preference to have staff reports sent electronically while receiving maps in hard copy form
- Preference for Commissioners to have an option on how to receive documents
- Concern with staff time on creating all documents electronically and sending in paper format
- Suggestion to defer this item until staff can discuss this issue and give guidance to Commissioners

Without objection, the motion was tabled by the maker.

10. New applications (None)

11. Site plans received

- A. Site Plan Review #12-92-05 (Gilmour), Reface building façade for the Nissan dealership addressed as 1728 Grand River.

12. Site plans approved

- A. Site Plan Review #12-01 (Sparrow), raze an existing restaurant building and construct new urgent care facility at 2682 Grand River.

- B. Site Plan Review #12-02 (Bret Story), add a roof top patio to the Mayfair restaurant at 1525 Lake Lansing Road.

13. Public remarks

Chair Deits opened and closed public remarks.

14. Adjournment

Chair Deits adjourned the regular meeting at 8:59 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra K. Otto
Recording Secretary