

## MINUTES

Cascade Charter Township Planning Commission  
Monday, December 17, 2012  
7:00 P.M.

**ARTICLE 1.** Chairman Sperla called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.  
Members Present: Hammond, Lewis, McCarthy, Pennington, Sperla, Waalkes, Williams  
Members Absent: Mead, Robinson; both excused  
Others Present: Planning Director Steve Peterson

**ARTICLE 2.** Pledge of Allegiance to the flag

**ARTICLE 3.** Approve the current Agenda.

Motion was made by Member Lewis to approve the Agenda. Support by Member Pennington. Motion carried.

**ARTICLE 4.** Approve the Minutes of the November 19, 2012 meeting.

Motion was made by Member Pennington to approve the Minutes as corrected by Member McCarthy (typos). Support by Member Hammond. Motion carried.

**ARTICLE 5.** Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak to non-agenda items

Chairman Sperla asked if anyone wished to speak to non-agenda items. No visitors were present to speak on non-agenda items.

**ARTICLE 6.** Case #12-3112 Rogue LLC

**Public Hearing**

**Property Address:** 5258 Thornapple River Dr.

**Requested Action:** The applicant wishes to rezone the property from R-1 Residential to Agricultural Rural Conservation.

Peterson reviewed the location of the property. He noted that the applicant is requesting a rezoning of approximately 5 acres of land from the current zoning of R-1 Residential, to ARC, Agricultural Rural Conservation. The property is zoned R1 and as a result of the M-6 project it is the only R1 zoned property west of M-6. The properties surrounding the subject property are all zoned ARC.

There are currently 4 buffalo on the property; however the applicant would like to have more. There are limits to the number of animals allowed in the R-1 Zone, prompting the rezoning request.

The Master Plan has a recommendation of Industrial for this property; however, the Master Plan also recommends the preservation of the farming element in the Township. The property is also in the vicinity of several other active farming operations.

The applicant also owns the adjacent parcel to the north, which is about 8 acres. Current Township records show the parcels as vacant.

Planner Peterson recommends that the Planning Commission forward a positive recommendation to the Township Board to approve the rezoning.

Chairman Sperla asked if any surrounding neighbors had expressed concern or support. Peterson said that one neighbor had voiced support for the request.

Chairman Sperla requested that the applicant or owner come forward for comments.

Thomas Natale is the owner of 5258 Thornapple River Dr. He stated that he purchased the parcel less than one month ago. He immediately came to the township office to discuss the possible zoning change. The 4 animals arrived about one week ago.

Mr. Natale went on to say that he has spent quite a bit of time and money cleaning up the pastures. He believes that the neighbors like the improvements. He has met with all of the adjoining neighbors and reports that they have been very positive and helpful.

Chairman Sperla asked if he planned to increase the herd. Mr. Natale stated that he does not anticipate going beyond 10 animals; adding that it all depends on if he will be able to purchase more acreage.

Member Williams asked if he plans to live on the property. Natale answered that he does not plan to live there. Member Williams asked if he planned to have buildings on the property. He answered no, and added that he has received approval to erect a shelter for his trough for the buffalo to eat. He would like to buy out neighbors who already have a barn on their property.

**Member Lewis made a Motion to open Public Hearing. Support by Member Waalkes. Motion carried.**

**With no one present for comments, Member McCarthy made a Motion to close Public Hearing. Support by Member Hammond. Motion carried.**

Member McCarthy wished to comment. She called attention to the second factor in the Planners report which states, "Whether there exists changed or changing conditions which make approval of a proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment or rezoning appropriate". The Planners comments were, "Farming is only permitted in the ARC zone, which would make the rezoning appropriate. This is the only property on the west side of M-6 that is zoned R1. All other surrounding property is zoned ARC". Member McCarthy stated that due to the construction of M-6 and the fact that the rest of the surrounding property is zoned ARC, she believes it is an easy decision to make a positive recommendation to the Township Board.

Member Waalkes is in agreement with Member McCarthy's comment.

Member Williams is an animal owner and is in favor of rezoning. She added that there is a mandate in the Master Plan to try to maintain the rural character where possible.

**Member Lewis made a Motion to approve the rezoning request and to forward a positive recommendation to the Township Board. Support by Member Waalkes. Motion carried unanimously.**

**ARTICLE 7. Any other business**

2013 Approved Meeting Schedule  
Implementation Table from the Master Plan

Member Lewis announced that Member Williams has been re-appointed to serve on the Planning Commission.

**ARTICLE 8. Adjournment**

**Motion was made by Member Waalkes to adjourn. Support by Member Hammond. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Karen McCarthy, Secretary

Carol M. Meyer, Planning Administrative Assistant