

MINUTES

Cascade Charter Township Planning Commission

Monday, January 23, 2006

7:00 p.m.

- ARTICLE 1.** Vice-Chairman Robinson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
Members Present: Koessel, Lewis, Logue, MacAllister, McDonald, Postma, Robinson.
Members Absent: Goldberg (excused), Richards (excused)
Others Present: Planning Director Peterson, Planner Deem, Admin. Assistant Hern and Members of the Public.
- ARTICLE 2.** Vice-Chairman Robinson led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
- ARTICLE 4.** Vice-Chairman Robinson requested motion for approval of the December 5, 2005 Minutes. **Member Lewis motioned for approval of the minutes as presented, supported by Member McDonald. December 5, 2005 Minutes approved. All in favor with none opposed, the motion carried.**
- ARTICLE 3.** Vice-Chairman Robinson requested motion for approval of the January 23rd agenda. **Member Koessel motioned for approval of the agenda, supported by Member Logue. All in favor with none opposed, the motion carried.**
- ARTICLE 5.** **Receive and File.**
December 13, 2005 Zoning Board of Appeals Minutes
December 14, 2005 Township Board Minutes
- Member Lewis noted the December 14th Township Board Meeting the budget was reviewed and passed. He asked how big the report is, as he has never seen one and asked if he could obtain a copy of the approved budget. Planning Director Peterson noted the budget is a very large document and is available on the Township's web site. Member Lewis said he has received a couple of comments from citizens and will direct them to review the information on the Township's web site. Planning Director Peterson said he will make sure it is on the web site.
- ARTICLE 6.** **Case #06-2785: Thornapple Pointe Golf Course**
(PUBLIC HEARING)
The applicant is seeking a Type I Special Use Permit to construct a 104' x 54' accessory structure for the golf course.
- Planner Deem began by noting the physical location of the structure is located between the clubhouse and maintenance

building. The Applicant is looking to construct a partially open building with bathroom and kitchen facilities.

The golf course is located at 4747 Champion Circle, on the north side of 48th Street, east of Thornapple River Drive. The course is on one hundred ninety-two (192) acres with the river on the north and east sides, the airport on the west and residential south.

The Applicant is seeking a Type I Special Use Permit to build a 104' x 54' accessory building. An accessory building is allowed to be eight hundred thirty-two (832) square feet by right without a Special Use Permit. This building would be 5,616 square feet.

Planner Deem noted the structure will be located over an existing concrete slab and will have a bathroom, kitchen and storage room. The proposed structure meets all setback requirements.

Planner Deem noted the Findings of Fact stating the structure will be used as a pavilion. It will be partially open with a metal roof. An example of a recent approval for a similar structure is Quail Ridge Golf Course.

Other buildings on the golf course include a clubhouse and maintenance building. The area is clear and flat and the structure will not affect light or air circulation to and adjoining properties. The structure also will not affect the views of any of the adjoining properties and will be accessed through the existing parking lot; no new curb cuts will be needed.

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the Special Use request for the construction of the proposed 104' x 54' accessory structure located at 4747 Champion Circle.

Vice-Chairman Robinson what the prior use of the cement slab was and Planner Deem noted the course is using it for weekend outings and erect a tent over the slab for the events. The Applicant is seeking to add the roof over tables for added protection against the weather.

Member MacAllister asked if elevations and exterior texture material information was available. Planner Deem showed the Commission the appropriate paperwork.

Vice-Chairman Robinson noted the proposed addition in the future, is there a cement slab in place for the other future addition; Planner Deem said when he visited the site, it was snow covered

and he was only reviewing the proposed site, he is not sure if there is an additional slab.

Member Lewis asked if the golf course is considering an additional future maintenance building or if an addition was already done to the maintenance building, he is unclear of the plans within the packets. Planner Deem noted the maintenance building is already there and the Applicant is present to answer any questions from the Commission.

Applicant, Chris Sobieck, General Manager of Thornapple Pointe Golf Course, said the slab has been at Thornapple Pointe since prior to the year 2000, he came on with the course in 2001 and is not sure of when it was installed.

Applicant Sobieck noted the future building on the plans; this is not part of the Special Use Permit request for tonight's meeting. He also said the future building would be constructed if the golf course were to offer thirty-six (36) holes and he does not foresee that happening any time within the near future.

Member Lewis asked if the maintenance building has been built and Applicant Sobieck confirmed it has. Member Lewis asked if the addition to the maintenance building has been built and Applicant Sobieck responded, no.

Vice-Chairman Robinson requested a motion to open Public Hearing. **Member MacAllister motioned to open Public Hearing, supported by Member McDonald. All in favor with none opposed, Public Hearing opened.**

Vice-Chairman Robinson asked Staff if any letters or phone calls have been received regarding this case. Planner Deem noted none received noting opposition or favor.

Scott Rissi, President of the Cascade River Association noted the golf course has a history of misleading the Township.

Back in 1996 the golf course installed restrooms and the Township requested they plant trees along the river to shield the restrooms; they did not. In 2000 the golf course sent a letter to the Township noting it had not planted the trees as required in 1996 but they still planned to do so. He does not believe they have ever done this.

Rissi cautioned the Commission in issuing Special Use Permits and to consider the Applicant's credibility.

Planning Director Peterson noted he does remember meeting with the golf course regarding the tree plantings in their original plans in 1996. He remembers the proposed plantings seemed impractical to do as originally proposed. Staff developed a revised landscape plan that was approved by a Board, but the process took a while and until the revised landscape plan was executed.

Member Lewis recalled some problems with the golf course cutting trees they should not have and Planning Director Peterson said that may have happened and some trees are on the Township's property, along the backwater area. Applicant Sobieck recalled the area to being 6' x 60' and not a lot of room to add landscaping as in the original plan.

Planning Director Peterson noted that he was satisfied at the time with the revised landscape plan that was approved and executed. He was satisfied at the time and considered it a closed matter.

Member Lewis motioned to close Public Hearing, supported by Member Koessel. All in favor with none opposed, Public Hearing closed.

Member McDonald noted he was still unclear if the River Association approved the landscape plan and the River Association believes there is to be a large buffer of trees in this area. Planning Director Peterson said it is his recollection, at the time, that the original plan was not executed. He visited the site and due to varying factors, the original plan could not be implemented due to site restrictions. Staff then developed a revised landscaping plan that was implemented and the Township approved the revised plan.

Member Lewis requested the information and history of the golf course for Commission review. He also suggested possibly tabling the Case until the next Planning Commission Meeting since construction probably will not begin until the winter months have passed. Member McDonald noted he would also like to review the history of the course.

Member Koessel asked Planning Director Peterson if he was pretty certain that the past landscape issues have been dealt with. Planning Director Peterson remembers riding around on the golf carts with snow on the ground to review the site but cannot remember if the Township Board approved or the Planning Commission approved, he can reference the information. He also believes the alternate plan was developed by the Applicant and

Staff but not certain which Board approved the alternative plan. Member Koessel noted the Case not be tabled as long as Planning Director Peterson is confident one (1) of the two (2) Boards approved the revised landscape plan; which Board approved it should not weigh into this Case. Member Koessel would be more concerned if Staff could not recall the approval of the revised plan and which Board approved the revised plan seems to be a non-issue at this point. He noted Planning Director Peterson is confident one of the Boards approved it and the Commission cannot change it now, it is not part of this request. He doesn't believe that tabling the Case would help the Applicant.

Member McDonald noted that the objective, back then, was to block the view of the restrooms from across the river and the view could not be blocked because of building location and easements. Planning Director Peterson could not recall the specifics as to why the original landscaping plan was not executed; he would be more comfortable if all the history was presented to the Commission.

Vice-Chairman Robinson asked Planning Director Peterson if the history of the golf course could be distributed to the Commission for their review and this Case be placed on the Agenda for the February 6th Planning Commission Meeting. Planning Director Peterson said he will do that.

Member Lewis motioned to table Case #06-2785 (Thornapple Pointe Golf Course) so the Commission may review history and Case to be placed on the February 6th Agenda, supported by Member MacAllister. Six (6) in favor with two (2) opposed, motion carried to table Case #06-2785 (Thornapple Pointe Golf Course) until February 6, 2006 Planning Commission Meeting.

ARTICLE 7.

Case #03-2549: Wal-Mart

One-year review of temporary garden center located in the Wal-Mart parking lot.

Planning Director Peterson noted Tony Pierce, from Wal-Mart, is present at tonight's meeting if the Commission has any questions for him.

The Applicant is asking for an additional week for set-up of their garden center in their parking lot, this would allow for a two (2) week set-up period instead of the one (1) for a total of nine (9) weeks the garden center would be set-up. This center has been set-up at Wal-Mart a couple of previous years without any problems.

Since Wal-Mart has had the outdoor garden center, Staff has not had any issues with it. Since the Wal-Mart request is only for one (1) additional week, Staff recommends approval. Staff would also suggest that they allow Wal-Mart to have their request reviewed by Staff if they come back next year with no changes and not have to go before the Commission.

Member MacAllister believes she saw equipment within the center for sale last year and asked how long Meijer has their center up for. Planning Director Peterson said Meijer's has their center up for twelve (12) weeks and does not recall any equipment sales within the center.

Applicant Pierce said they may have had a couple of lawnmowers for sale within the center and will correct the issue and only keep the center for garden supplies.

Member Lewis noted he was quite surprised to find out that Wal-Mart has been a very big supporter and friendly business for us. He was unaware of their participation with the Fire Department to have the children come in and select items that Wal-Mart had purchased for the children in the area. He knows they have contributed and supported the Library and personally believes they have been a very welcomed addition to the Township.

Member Koessel motioned for approval of the outdoor garden center with one (1) additional week for set-up for a total of nine (9) weeks and Staff to annually review their request with no changes, supported by Member McDonald. All in favor with none opposed, motion carried.

ARTICLE 8.

Work Plan

Discussion and consideration of the 2006 Work Plan.

Planning Director Peterson said in order to implement the Master Plan as well as follow through with some of the issues that have come up during the past year; the Planning Department has developed some goals for the 2006 Planning Commission. The goals were included within the Commission packets.

Member Koessel referred to the goal of Centennial Park and improving its zoning regulations and asked for clarification. Planning Director Peterson noted this item really came up with the approval of the Sunrise project. During that project it was very difficult to clearly determine what the underlying regulations were for the Park. Because Centennial Park is one of our oldest

developments it suffers from a lack of clarity. Member Koessel asked if this would create additional opportunities for signage out there. Planning Director Peterson said no, that is not the intent. The intent is to find a way to provide some clarity to assure some consistency in applying the zoning regulations for the Park. Member Lewis noted the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) had frustrations with Centennial Park zoning and noted since no real P.U.D. Ordinance was ever written the ZBA found the situation difficult to handle because there is nothing in writing. He also noted the underlying zoning is agricultural for Centennial Park. Planning Director Peterson noted the park has been treated as B-2 or Office, depending on where the property lies. Staff believes it is important to find options to improve the way we regulate the Park.

Member McDonald asked if Centennial Park is one (1) entity of its own and Planning Director Peterson noted, no, there are a lot of different owners and users within Centennial Park. Member Lewis noted there are P.U.D.s within P.U.D.s and becomes very confusing; this should be cleaned up. Member Koessel asked if Panera Bread is part of Centennial Park and Planning Director Peterson said no. Member Lewis commented that one of their Centennial Park signs is on property that is not really part of the P.U.D. and owned by a separate individual. Member Koessel supported having this item on the 2006 Work Plan.

Member McDonald asked what methods will be employed regarding the zoning and going forward. Planning Director Peterson noted we are not sure of the outcome but would envision a combination of different zoning techniques.

Member MacAllister believes it may be a good time to speak with the road agencies Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) the Kent County Road Commission (KCRC) in directing potential improvements allowing the Township to be more proactive regarding landscaping and sidewalks on MDOT projects. Planning Director Peterson noted the Township Board has already asked the KCRC to be more sensitive to these issues. Member MacAllister asked if the Township has investigated other communities to see what our options are to limit the impact of road construction projects. Planning Director Peterson said we can add it to the work plan of you would like. Member Koessel does not believe MDOT will work with the Township regarding their roads.

Vice-Chairman Robinson requested Staff provide the entire 28th St sidewalk plan and dates of installation at the February 6th Planning Commission Meeting.

ARTICLE 9.

2005 Annual Report

Planning Director Peterson handed out the 2005 annual report and noted the Planning Commission had reviewed eighty-seven (87) new cases last year, which is right on average of the last few years. It also seemed that a couple of our larger projects carried a lot of that work load.

ARTICLE 10.

Election of Officers

Member Koessel asked how many years Secretary McDonald has served on the Commission and Planning Director Peterson noted Secretary McDonald's second term expires at the end of 2006. Planning Director Peterson also noted Vice-Chairman Robinson's first term expires at the end of 2006.

Member Koessel noted that planning for succession on the Board is important and if the Officers remained as currently instated, Member McDonald would only have a chance to serve as chair for one year of the Planning Commission.

Member Koessel motioned for Chairman Goldberg to serve another year as Chairman, Member McDonald serve as Vice-Chairman and Member Robinson to serve as Secretary, supported by Member Logue.

Vice-Chairman Robinson said he hates to step-down from Vice-Chair but understands succession planning and does not have any problems with Member McDonald becoming Vice-Chair.

All in favor of the following Planning Commission Officers for 2006:

Fred Goldberg as Chairman

Tom McDonald as Vice-Chairman

Claude Robinson as Secretary

Jack Lewis as representative to the Zoning Board

Lorissa MacAllister as representative to the Village Design Review Committee

None opposed, motion carried.

ARTICLE 11.

Other Business

Member Koessel announced the Township Board will be holding a goal planning session next week and asked any goals the if anyone had any ideas to please call him or send an e-mail for consideration.

Planning Director Peterson also noted he has distributed information regarding a conference to be held at Michigan State University. He noted he visited the web site for detailed information and it is not displayed on the web site yet. He will provide more information as it becomes available.

Member Lewis asked if the ZBA will have a work plan and Planning Director Peterson stated we have never done a work plan for the ZBA. However they do get invited to attend educational seminars.

ARTICLE 12. Adjournment

Member McDonald supported by Member MacAllister moved to adjourn. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom McDonald, Secretary
Lisa Hern, Recording Secretary