

MINUTES

Cascade Charter Township Planning Commission
Tuesday, February 22, 2011
7:00 P.M.

- ARTICLE 1.** Chairman Waalkes called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
Members Present: Hammond, Logue, McCarthy, Sperla, Waalkes, Williams
Members Absent: Lewis, Pennington, Robinson. All excused.
Others Present: Planning Director, Steve Peterson
- ARTICLE 2.** Chairman Waalkes led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
- ARTICLE 3. Approve the Agenda for the Planning Commission Meeting.**

Motion was made by Member Sperla and supported by Member Hammond to approve the Agenda. Motion carried unanimously.
- ARTICLE 4. Approve the Minutes of the December 20, 2010 Meeting.**
Chairman Waalkes wanted clarification in the Minutes; on page 2 in the 6th paragraph "mobile home" should read "RV" or "motor home".

Motion was made by Member Sperla and supported by Member Williams to approve the corrected Minutes. Motion carried unanimously.
- ARTICLE 5. Consider approval of lighted sign on Cascade Road for Watermark Country Club**
Planner Peterson explained that typically the Planning Commission does not get involved in sign permits. He reviewed a little bit of background about when Watermark was developed. The Watermark PUD says, ".....if the Developer desires to light this sign, he must first bring the proposed sign to the Planning Commission for final review and approval." They would like to add an electronic message center on the revised sign out by Cascade Road. Staff feels that it required your approval because of the provision in the Watermark PUD. Our Zoning Ordinance allows for them. There are limitations in terms of how often the message can change; once every 24 hours, and it can't flash, scroll, or move around. The sign itself is 50 square feet including the message board. In the past we have had issues with Watermark utilizing illegal banners and other temporary signs. The electronic copy would be similar to others in the township and would help solve the problem of the use of illegal temporary signage. I am asking for your approval so we can issue a sign permit.

Chairman Waalkes asked if anyone had any questions or comments. Member Sperla asked if there were any other limitations in the Zoning Ordinance or Sign Ordinance and if anything specifically deals with electronic message boards. Planner Peterson said it is in the Sign Ordinance. Member Sperla is concerned with signs that grab your attention, taking your attention away from something else; in particular, driving. He wanted to ask the applicant what the perceived need is for having a changing sign that can potentially be a hazard.

Member Hammond asked if, other than the church and this proposal, had there been any other requests for electronic signage along Cascade Road. The Planner replied that United Bank in the Village has one as well as a few on 28th street. Member Hammond questioned that since we've had issues with Watermark using illegal signage, how will we be able to police them to keep to the Ordinance without having to go back to them. Planner Peterson replied that like any ordinance it requires constant attention.

Chairman Waalkes asked if the applicant had any comments. Doug Boucher was present to represent Watermark Country Club. In answer to Member Sperlas question regarding their need for the sign, Mr. Boucher said there are four businesses back off the street that aren't visible. They would like to make people aware of what's available. They would also like to advertize specials or announcements for the public restaurant, pool club, Snap Fitness, and a banquet facility.

Because Watermark had previously violated the Sign Ordinance, Member Hammond wanted assurance that they would perform in compliance. Mr. Boucher replied that it was "do-able" and that he was sure they could manage that.

There were no other questions or comments for the applicant. Chairman Waalkes offered discussion to consider approval of the request. He commented that the sign did meet the Sign Ordinance regulations and their PUD. He added that if he had a business off the road, he would want to make sure that the business was advertized. He was leaning toward approval.

Member McCarthy thinks this is a good compromise between the previous sign that sometimes had issues. She believes the applicant understands the limitations and the intent is there to comply.

Member Hammond was struggling with the Watermark PUD portion that says, "If the Developer desires to light the sign..." the definition of "light" is being stretched a little bit here. Chairman Waalkes reminded Member Hammond that LED signs are allowed for any business and added that up to 50% of any sign area can be one of these types of signs.

Member Sperla said his concern is that it doesn't strike you as being a commercial area, as there are many homes around there. He feels that there is a hazard present as people, who are driving 55 miles per hour, strain to see the signage. He would like to promote business, but is torn between that and the safety of the residents who live in the area.

Chairman Waalkes said he understood the concerns of Member Sperla and he believes safety is paramount, but the sign designers are going to design the sign so you can read it. Speed dictates the size of the letters. It is about 1" for every 10 miles per hour of speed. If one is going 60 miles per hour the letters have to be at least 6" tall. In addition, this sign will only change every 24 hours.

There were no other comments or discussion. Chairman Waalkes asked for a Motion for approval.

Member Williams made a Motion to approve the lighted sign on Cascade Road for the Watermark Country Club. Support by Member Logue.

Roll call vote as follows:

Hammond - Yes

Logue - Yes

McCarthy - Yes

Sperla - No

Waalkes - Yes

Williams – Yes

The sign request is approved.

ARTICLE 6: Case #11-3021 Expressway Service Zoning Amendments

Work session for possible amendments to Zoning Ordinance regarding the Expressway Service (ES) zoning district.

Planning Director Peterson said that he put a section of the Zoning map in the packets. The expressway district is about 20 years old. Looking on the map provided, it is the blue area around the I-96 Interchange on 28th Street. Before we had the expressway service district it was B-2 commercial with some industrial.

This is one of the tasks/goals that was developed when we did the Master Plan. The amendments are tweaking lot sizes and building height. You will see the actual text; the underlined items are new. Adding “multi-family residential” and also “permitted or special land uses in excess of maximum height standards.” They would be added to the Special Use criteria. Other changes are minimum lot area: going down to 1 acre from 3, and maximum height going to 4 stories or 48 feet with allowances to go taller.

Discussion followed. Chairman Waalkes said he liked it. He had been involved with the Master Plan Development and one of the big things discussed at that time was allowing for taller buildings in certain areas. He likes the fact that there are incentives provided, however, LEED Silver Certification Incentive might better be replaced with LEED Silver Standards.

Member Sperla had a question for the Planner. Do you know what the difference in elevation between I-96 and 28th in this area? Since you are providing for additional height based on the elevation differences, I’m just wondering if the height elevation logistics really support that. Planner Peterson answered that it is limited, since only a limited amount of the ES zone has property that is lower than I-96.

Member Williams was part of the Master Planning process and recalls that there was quite a bit of discussion on the whole LEED Certification issue. As she recalled, we were encouraging efficiency in design and many of the parts of the certification process but she wonders if all of that is necessary.

Chairman Waalkes expressed that if he were a developer he would try to meet as many of those as he could to get a better chance of getting a favorable reaction from the

Township. Member Williams went on to say that the site will determine whether you have enough below the highway to be eligible
Planner Peterson said that we would be determining whether or not they would be able to go over the 48' based on the site.

Member Hammond shared some thoughts regarding the LEED Certification Incentive. LEED is a points gathering process. There are a number of sub-categories. The struggle I have is that you don't need to be LEED to be great. There are other standards out there that offer similar types of incentives towards energy efficiency in a building. By leaving it strictly to LEED I think we're leaving out opportunities there for other standards or certifications or rating systems to be included. I would say, "LEED and or other similar type of rating system that is out there" to give us some leeway in anticipation of the changes that are coming.

Chairman Waalkes agrees with Member Hammond. Possibly we could call it 'Green Building', or 'LEED and or other design guidelines'. Planner Peterson suggested that he would come up with more generalized language.

Member McCarthy pointed out that the opening paragraph of # 7 might read: The Planning Commission shall determine the appropriate height allowance based on one or more of the following incentives:

Planning Director Peterson concluded by stating that we will work on the changes discussed and will prepare a notice for a public hearing.

ARTICLE 7: Any other business:

- 2010 Work Plan Review – 2011 Goals

Chairman Waalkes pointed out that their packets contain the Planning Department 2010 Annual Report and a 2011 Planning Commission Goals, noting the status of each. He asked the Planner to summarize.

Planner Peterson introduced the discussion by saying that he had listed what had been completed in 2010 and the goals for 2011. Completing the work on the development manual will be a priority, followed by completing the zoning amendments for B1 and the Expressway Service.

- Election of Officers/Assignments to other Committees

Election of Officers: Chairman Waalkes said that it is standard practice for officers to stay on in their positions for 2 years. Currently Steve Waalkes is Chair, Member Sperla is Vice Chair, and Member Pennington is Secretary.

Member Hammond made a Motion to nominate the current Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary for the year of 2011. Support by Member Williams. Motion Carried.

Assignments: The current representative for the Village Design Review Committee and the Centennial Review Board is Member Hammond and for the Zoning Board of Appeals, Brian Logue.

Chairman Waalkes made a Motion to keep Member Hammond as the Representative for the Village Design Review Committee and the Centennial Review Board, and also to keep Member Logue as the Representative for the Zoning Board of Appeals. Support by Member Sperla. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 8: Adjournment

Chairperson Waalkes requested a Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion was made by Member Hammond and supported by Member McCarthy to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Al Pennington, Secretary

Carol M. Meyer, Planning Administrative Assistant