

## MINUTES

Cascade Charter Township Planning Commission  
Monday, December 2, 2013  
7:00 P.M.

**ARTICLE 1.** Chairman Sperla called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.  
Members Present: Hammond, Lewis, McCarthy, Mead, Pennington, Sperla,  
Waalkes, Williams  
Members Absent: Robinson  
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 Hammond. Motion carried 8-0.**

**ARTICLE 4. Approve the Minutes of the November 4, 2013 meeting.**

**Motion was made by Member Waalkes to approve the Minutes as written. Support by Member Pennington. Motion carried 8-0.**

**ARTICLE 5. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak to non-agenda items (Comments are limited to five minutes per speaker.)**

There was no one present who wished to speak on non-agenda items.

**ARTICLE 6. Case #13-3163 – Cascade Township  
Public Hearing**

**Requested Action:** Zoning Ordinance Amendments for Cell Towers.

Planner Peterson stated that there are two sets of Amendments. There is an Amendment to Chapter 4- Definitions and to Chapter 17- Regulations. These amendments have been reviewed by our attorney and our Radio Frequency Engineer, Andy Felde. Upon Andy's recommendation we added "other approvals that may be required under MCLA" to the end of the last paragraph in Subsection H: Chapter 17. Other than that, everything else is the same; we are updating the Ordinance to be consistent with new legislation. I am recommending approval for the changes in the Zoning Ordinance for Cell Towers. After your recommendation it will be heard by the Township Board.

**Member Lewis made a motion to open the Public Hearing. Support by Member Waalkes. Motion carried 8-0.**

Chairman Sperla asked if anyone wished to come forward. No one came forward.

**Member McCarthy made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Support by Member Mead. Motion carried. 8-0.**

Chairman Sperla stated that Planner Peterson recommends approval. We have had a close look by our planner, attorney, and consultant to this Amendment and I think it is something we should approve.

Member Lewis asked if the two Amendments should be passed separately or as one.

Planner Peterson stated that it could be approved either way unless you feel it is important to discuss them separately.

Chairman Sperla stated that the two Amendments are interrelated and could be handled as one.

Member Pennington stated that this is just a recommendation to the Township Board.

Planner Peterson concurred that this would be a recommendation to the Township Board and the Board will have the final decision.

**Member Pennington made a motion to forward a positive recommendation to the Township Board for the changes to the Zoning Ordinance Amendments for Cell Towers. Member Mead supported. Motion carried 8-0.**

#### **ARTICLE 7. Any other business**

Planner Peterson stated that the December 16 meeting will not be held.

Member Lewis stated that he was curious as to why Cascade Township does not have an ambulance service. Currently the Fire Department is the First Responder. Then you wait for an ambulance to arrive. I suggested to the Township Board that we have an ambulance on site in the Township. This would be advantageous to all the residents of Cascade Township and more efficient in the long run. We already have a highly trained Fire Department and we could either cross train our staff or have an outside service that has a stall at our fire department.

Chairman Sperla asked what the surrounding Townships are doing for ambulance service.

Planner Peterson stated the surrounding Townships have different plans in place.

Member Lewis stated that this is something we should look into, possibly form a sub-committee to look into costs, and see what other Townships are doing.

Chairman Sperla stated that we may find there are collaborative costs in working with other areas like Lowell, Caledonia etc.

Member Mead asked if the Board had been approached by any other Townships on reciprocating agreements. He stated there will always be an issue of strategically placing an ambulance where the majority of the Township is equally serviced. Maybe we have a presence in the Township but have reciprocating agreements with other locations so that our whole Township has readily available access to an Ambulance.

Member Lewis stated that the DDA could put up a building. The building would have to be in their area and it would be in the center of the Township. I think anything we do would be an improvement from what we have now.

Chairman Sperla stated that it would be easy to add on to the fire station and that is centrally located.

Member Mead asked if we would have a stationary spot or a manned location.

Member Lewis stated that ideally an ambulance service would be looking for a place to have their ambulance and we could build a spot for them. The other way is that we build it, buy our own ambulance, and the Fire Department gets into the ambulance business. We need to do something and start looking into our options.

Member McCarthy stated that she read in the paper recently about some ambulance companies that were looking for locations to have ambulances around the communities of Grand Rapids. I think we should make contact with the independent companies to see if they are interested.

Member Pennington stated that we should make contact with AeroMed to see if they would be interested in an ambulance at the airport. There are a lot of ideas here. How do we proceed?

Planner Peterson stated that first the Fire Department needs to develop a plan with the Board's help and guidance. If the plan included a new building location we would get involved. The Planning Commission will not be involved in developing the long term plans of the Fire Department, only in the building of any structures.

Member Lewis stated that we need to be more proactive in the Township approach to ambulance service.

Chairman Sperla stated that if there are excess funds we should use it to help the Township Village area flourish. He is still keen on cleaning up the corner by the river. We can build a boardwalk and have some high-end restaurants to serve the area. He thinks this will help the township flourish and become a better place to live. He would like to see something happen with Tuffy Muffler because they have too many cars parked in such a small area.

Member Lewis stated that for environmental reasons we should get that business moved away from the river.

Chairman Sperla stated that if we ever had the opportunity of excess funds to purchase this area we should.

Member Pennington stated that we need to be careful in how we word this. We are not trying to put anyone out of business and we do not want it to sound as if we are.

Chairman Sperla stated that maybe we could do a relocation of several businesses because we are not trying to close these businesses. We could make a development area where we could have a tire place, muffler place, and auto body business in one location.

Planner Peterson stated that the owner of Tuffy Muffler has been approached and is not interested in a trade; we would have to purchase the land outright. The Township Board did not want to offer a right of first refusal.

Member Lewis stated that we had approved an area off of 28<sup>th</sup> Street for redevelopment. This is an excellent location to relocate some of these businesses.

Member Lewis asked what is happening at the former lumber yard location by Fox Motors.

Planner Peterson stated that Fox bought the land for additional parking but they are having difficulty in dealing with car manufacturers and their specific regulations.

Planner Peterson requested that everyone fill out the Park Survey. December 11, 2013 is the Open House for the Parks Plan.

**Article 8. Adjournment**

**Member Williams made a motion to adjourn. Member Waalkes supported. Motion carried unanimously 8-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:36 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen McCarthy, Secretary  
Ann T Seykora & Debbie Groendyk, Planning Administrative Assistant