

MINUTES

Cascade Charter Township
Planning Commission
Monday, August 15, 2016
7:00 P.M.

ARTICLE 1. Chairman Waalkes called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.
Members Present: Katsma, Lewis, Mead, Pennington, Rissi, and Sperla
Members Absent: Robinson (E) and Williams (E)
Others Present: Community Development Director, Steve Peterson and those listed on the sign in sheet.

ARTICLE 2. Pledge of Allegiance.

ARTICLE 3. Approve the current Agenda.

Motion was made by Member Mead to approve the Agenda. Supported by Member Lewis. Motion carried 7 to 0.

ARTICLE 4. Approve the Minutes of the August 8, 2016 Meeting.

Motion was made by Member Rissi to approve the Minutes as presented. Supported by Member Pennington. Motion carried 7 to 0.

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

No visitors who were present wished to speak about non-agenda items.

**ARTICLE 6. Case #16:3324 Bob Verburg
Property Address: 6915 Cascade**

Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting site plan approval for a 700 sq. ft. addition.

Director Peterson stated that the Applicant wants to construct a new addition on to the building to accommodate additional car storage. This project will also include the removal of the existing 573 sq. ft. shed to the north. Neither project will increase the amount of impervious space since the area is paved now. Because the site is in the B1 zoning district and due to the fact that the addition is valued at over \$60,000, the design requirements of the B1 zone must also be met. The owner has already asked and received three variances to accommodate this addition (a front setback of 16 feet, a mansard roof style, and a combination of wrought iron fencing in front and vinyl coated chain link in the back). The Township Engineer has reviewed the plans and does not require any changes.

Director Peterson recommends approval of the site plan addition with the condition they obtain an SESC from the Kent County Road Commission.

Chairman Waalkes asked the Applicant to come forward with any comments.

Applicant did not come forward with any comments.

Motion was made by Member Rissi to approve the site plan addition with the condition that they obtain an SESC from the Kent County Road Commission. Motion was supported by Member Lewis. Motion was carried 7 to 0.

ARTICLE 7. Case #16-3321 Growney Mixed Use P.U.D. Amendment

Property Address: 2899 Thornapple River Drive

Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting a base plan review to rezone property at 2899 Thornapple River from B-1, and add it to the Thornapple Hilltop P.U.D.

Director Peterson stated that Applicant (G Place LLC) is requesting Basic Plan Review in order to construct a new mixed use building. This building would include about 5,000 sq. ft. of retail/restaurant space with 7 residential units.

The building is designed at 35 feet tall, an exception of 5 feet. The B1 zone allows for 30 feet tall for mixed use projects that include residential units. The developer should provide a prospective of the building from Thornapple River Drive, because at a height of 35 feet it would be important to understand how the building would look.

The B1 zoning district allows for up to 9 units per acre, this would come to 8 units per acre. As the current Master Plan designation for this property is Village Commercial, he feels this project is a reflection of the current B1 zoning district. This project includes a path to the north connecting to the residential uses in the Thornapple Hilltop PUD. It also shows a sidewalk along Thornapple River Drive. This sidewalk would ultimately provide a connection to Cascade Road. This pedestrian connection would be consistent with the Master Plan.

The storm water design for the site will need to meet Cascade's storm water ordinance. The developer has also been working on plans to address sewer and water to accommodate the project. These will all need to be approved prior to scheduling the Planning Commission public hearing.

Director Peterson feel that before proceeding to the Preliminary Development Plan Review (Public Hearing), he recommends that the following issues be addressed:

1. The Applicant provide the required site plan information;
2. Provide elevation drawings of all proposed buildings;
3. Revise the site plan to include the necessary storm water information;
4. Revise the plans to provide the required sewer and water system as approved by the Township Engineer;
5. Provide a sidewalk along the Thornapple River Drive frontage that is at least 7 feet wide; and
6. Supply the township with building prospective drawings from Thornapple River Drive.

Chairman Waalkes asked the Applicant to come forward with any comments.

Jack Barr of Nederveld came forward to clarify a couple of issues regarding the storm water and a gap between the condo project to the north and this project. Both which have been addressed.

Ken Dixon of Dixon Architecture came forward to discuss the building itself. The street facing façade, aesthetics, café and outdoor seating, the residential (rental) units, retail area and the reasoning behind the height of 35 feet.

A brief discussion commenced mostly with regard to issues of setback, parking, type of residential units, slope, retaining wall issues, and elevation drawings.

No action was required at this time.

ARTICLE 8. Case #16:3318 Wolverine Building Group

Property Address: 5505 52nd Street

Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting site plan approval for a 30,000 sq. ft. warehouse addition.

Director Peterson stated that the Applicant is requesting site plan approval in order to construct a 30,000 sq. ft. addition to the building. The building conforms to the setback, building height and parking regulations of the Meadowbrooke PUD zoning district. No new access is being created to serve the site, no new landscaping is needed and the only lighting plan they propose complies with the township regulations. The Township Fire Department has reviewed and approved the plan and the Gerald R. Ford Airport has been made aware of the project and has indicated only the need for construction permits. The Meadowbrooke Review Board has reviewed and approved the project. Also, the Applicant will need to obtain a SESC permit from the Kent County Road Commission prior to grading. With that said, the site plan does not meet the Cascade Township storm water ordinance.

The original building was approved in 2002 and is part of the larger Grooters development. During that process the developer placed the areas outside the building and parking area in a conservation easement. While this is generally a good practice, one of the results of this is that the storm sewer system that was originally designed and approved by the engineer has not been maintained and no longer functions as originally designed. As a result, the neighbor to the west has experienced some storm water problems coming from this site. The Applicant has a couple of options. Modification of the conservation easement, redesign the storm sewer system problem, or possibly the modification of the wetland pond along 52nd. The MDEQ inspected the site on August 10, 2016 and indicated the items that needed to be addressed.

After discussions with the Cascade Township attorney regarding this project, it was decided that the site plan should not be approved without the existing problem being corrected. As a matter of fact, even if the Applicant were to decline to do the project, the township would need to pursue the owner fixing the site to the satisfaction of the township engineer.

Director Peterson recommends that the Planning Commission deny or table the case until the site plan can be addressed to the satisfaction of the Township Engineer and MDEQ. Chairman Waalkes asked the Applicant to come forward with any comments.

Mr. Mike Kelly of Wolverine Building Group came forward to give comments with regard to the storm water issues. The conservation easement is regulated by the State. Cascade Township is asking them to maintain the storm water system and the MDEQ is telling them emphatically that they cannot go into the conservation easement to maintain it without going through a lengthy process. The runoff from the new building will run into two ponds that were created to handle a 60,000 sq. ft. building addition. The conservation easement has nothing to do with this project. He stated the owner may feel the need to leave Cascade if this project cannot be approved.

Member Sperla inquired if they could get permission from the MDEQ to maintain the system. Mr. Kelly stated that they didn't realize this was an issue until the planning staff informed him during this process. He feels water from the northeast development and the L3 neighbors are every bit guilty of contributing to the problem as anyone.

Mr. Justin Longstreth of Moore & Bruggink then came forward and gave a historical overview of the property layout from 2003 regarding the storm sewer system draining into the conversation easement. This issue is a neighborhood issue, not one owner's issue.

Discussion followed about the storm water issue, specifically that the storm water ponds do drain into the conservation easement, possible modification of the conservation agreement, and if there is a way around the issue without dealing with the MDEQ. Consensus from the Planning Commission was that the applicant has not explored alternatives to address the issues.

Member Meade asked if there was ever any communication, since the 2004 conservation easement, by the MDEQ to the owner that the criteria was not met. Mr. Longstreth did state during conversation that the process to try to amend the conservation agreement could take up to 18 months and then it has to go to Lansing. It is pretty tough to get Lansing to make changes to and/or disturb a functioning wetland. So after months of waiting, there would be no guarantee Lansing would approve the amendment.

Mr. Scott Steiner from Rhoades McKee came forward on behalf of neighbor L3 stating L3 is directly impacted by this decision. L3 feels there are ways to do this and asks that the issue be tabled so that all options can be explored.

Motion was made by Member Sperla to table the matter to allow the applicant time to develop a plan to address the storm water and wetland issues with the site to the satisfaction of the Township and MDEQ. Motion was supported by Member Rissi. Motion carried 7 to 0.

ARTICLE 9. Any other business.

There was no other business.

ARTICLE 10. Adjournment.

**Motion was made by Member Lewis to adjourn. Supported by Member Katsma.
Motion carried 7 to 0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,
Scott Rissi, Secretary