

Meeting Minutes

Cascade Charter Township Planning Commission

Airport Commerce District Zoning Review Sub-Committee

Thursday, November 10, 2022, 7:30 am

Cascade Charter Township Offices – 5920 Tahoe Drive

Article 1. Call the meeting to order

Meeting was called to order at 7:32 am by Chairman Rissi. Members present included Windy Korstange, Ralph Moxley, Scott Rissi and Planning Director Brian Hilbrands. Ralph Moxley will record today's meeting minutes. A cell phone will be utilized for the recording of our discussion.

Article 2. Approve the Agenda

Motion to approve was made by member Korstange. Motion seconded by member Moxley. Motion approved.

Article 3. Approve minutes of the Sept. 29 and Nov. 3 meetings

Motion to approve minutes of Sept. 29 was made by member Korstange. Motion seconded by member Moxley. Motion approved.

Motion to approve minutes of Nov. 3 was made by member Korstange. Motion seconded by member Moxley. Motion approved.

Article 4. Disclose any Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts were noted.

Article 5. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak

Greg Bol from Visser Corp. attended the meeting. Also joining the meeting were Heath Baxter of EG Development, and Doug Todd of JADA Development (Berkshire Hathaway).

Article 6. Discussion of possible Overlay zoning districts

A. Concern voiced by member Korstange that we have not yet defined what **AC-1** or **AC-2** will be as an Overlay zoning district, but yet we are beginning to approve

locations of the Overlay districts. We should define the Overlay districts first before selecting locations.

B. We had discussed at the last meeting that the **AC-2** districts along Patterson should become **AC-1** districts. The only exception was the parcel at the NW corner next to the railroad ROW. That parcel should be shown as Industrial (**I**).

C. We discussed at the last meeting that the **AC-2** parcel at the east side of the airport, next to and on both sides of 48th street, should become **AC-1**.

D. We discussed at the last meeting that the **AC-2** parcel at the NE corner next to Thornapple River Drive and the long thin **AC-2** parcel extending along Thornapple River Drive should become **AC-1**.

E. The sub-committee should have a meeting with the Township's Economic Development Director. That staff member should bring us a report on future land use, and be prepared to present to the Planning Commission and the Board of Trustees. What is the demand for Industrial (**I**) zoned land in this Township? What properties in Cascade Township are available in Industrial zoned areas?

F. Developers attending the meeting noted that there is "zero" Industrial zoned land available for sale in Kent County. Cascade Charter Township provides an opportunity for future Industrial zoning near the airport.

G. For the areas being considered for Overlay Industrial (**I**) what should be the limitations on the developers - density, height, setbacks, and landscape? We need to discuss Industrial zoning limitations with our Legal Counsel. Transitional Industrial (**TI**) zoning specifically spells out the restrictions. Chair Rissi prefers Industrial (**I**) standards on setbacks because they are greater than Transitional Industrial (**TI**) setbacks.

H. The Future use Industrial area could be zoned either Transitional Industrial (**TI**), or Industrial (**I**).

I. Existing **AC-2** areas on west side of the airport (near Patterson) are more appropriate for restaurants and motels/hotels. Existing **AC-2** areas on east side of airport are more appropriate for Industrial uses.

J. We will need Legal Counsel's assistance in defining what "Overlay A" area should include: Agricultural (**ARC**), Industrial (**I**), or Transitional Industrial (**TI**)?

K. Planning Director Hilbrand made copies for members of Chapter 13. "**I-Industrial District**" and Chapter 13a. "**TI-Transitional Industrial District**".

L. Original meetings with Legal Counsel focused on **AC-2** and **AC-1** zones. Later discussions expanded into the **ARC** zones on the east side of the airport. Planning Commission Chair Noordyke requested that we look at the **ARC** areas and what future uses could be allowed in this area.

M. Member Korstange is open to hearing from the Developers as to what they see as realistic requirements for an Industrial (**I**) Overlay zone.

N. Sub-Committee members need some time to read, absorb and react to the documents handed out at this meeting (Chapter 13 and Chapter 13a).

O. Mr. Bol stated that they feel most developers would be looking for very light Industrial zoning - mostly Assembly, Storage, Warehousing and Distribution. Manufacturing is not needed. Parcels would need to be reviewed for compliance with Township planning requirements.

P. We should propose the Overlay zones as **PUDs** and then require the Developers to come into the Planning Commission for site plan approval for setbacks, building heights, landscaping, fencing, etc.

Q. Warehousing and Storage uses are already in **AC-2** zones.

R. Member Korstange is very concerned about possible Warehouses in these Overlay zones. The existing Amazon warehouses next to M-6 are enormous structures and would not be a good fit for the Overlay areas.

S. Major issue along Thornapple River Drive east of the airport is the lack of public utilities in this area. There is money available at the State of MI to help local communities with utility development. Genesee County is getting help on utility upgrades from the State of MI.

T. Member Korstange feels that while it may be hard for us to define what is to be included in the Overlay districts, the clearer we can be in defining what is an acceptable use, our chances of getting PC and BOT approval improves. She also has concerns about Distribution facilities because of the truck traffic related to this usage.

U. Our job now as a sub-committee is to give Planning Director Hilbrands recommendations that he can send to legal counsel to develop the language for new Overlay districts. We need to outline acceptable uses for the Overlay districts.

V. Larger lot sizes will help determine lower density and create larger setbacks.

W. Mr. Bol noted that setbacks from Thornapple River Drive will be crucial. Setbacks between the buildings along Thornapple River Drive will be less crucial.

X. Front yard setbacks should require berms and landscaping to soften the view of the buildings from the Thornapple River Drive roadway.

Y. Mr. Bol stated the fact that **one acre = 43, 560 SF**. He also noted that Visser currently owns 76 acres east of the airport.

Z. Current Industrial minimum lot size is 2 acres. Preferred minimum should be 5 acres.

AA. Member Korstange prefers to see a mix of buildings along Thornapple River Drive as opposed to all large buildings or warehouses. A smaller number of possible uses may help us achieve a lower density look.

BB. Chair Rissi feels that setback minimums along Thornapple River Drive should be greater than any side yard setbacks. Also, we should try to minimize curb cuts on Thornapple River Drive.

CC. Member Korstange feels that there needs to be a traffic light at 52nd Street and Thornapple River Drive. Several businesses could face onto 52nd Street. There could be many trucks coming out onto Thornapple River Drive at that intersection.

DD. Mr. Bol noted that to attract future employees and future customers the businesses in this area will want to have generous setbacks and visually appealing landscaping.

EE. Member Moxley discussed the draft zoning map that he developed based on past sub-committee discussions. Revisions discussed: 1) Make the parcel at Patterson and railroad ROW an Industrial zone; 2) Make parcel east of Kraft and north of 52nd Street Overlay B; 3) Areas north of Railroad ROW to be shown as Overlay A; 4) Plan to be updated and then sent over to Director Hilbrands to send to legal counsel to update overlay district language.

Article 7. Goals of next sub-committee meeting

Discussion of what uses should be included in Overlay A and Overlay B.

Article 8. Any other business

None noted.

Article 9. Acknowledge our visitors and those wishing to speak

Visitor attendance is welcome and interaction was greatly appreciated by sub-committee members.

Article 10. Adjournment

Our next meeting will be held on **Wednesday, Nov. 16th at 7:30 am**. This date will allow member Rapin and Planning Director Hilbrands to join us.

There will be no sub-committee meeting on **Thursday, Nov. 24** (Thanksgiving).

Legal counsel Abdoo will be asked to attend the **Thursday, December 1st** meeting.

Motion to adjourn was made by member Korstange. Motion seconded by member Moxley. Motion approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:35 am.

Ralph W. Moxley, AIA, LEED AP
Interim Recording Secretary