

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
August 26, 2013**

**APPROVED**

**5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198  
853-4000, Town Hall Room, 7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Commissioners Cordill, Deits, Hildebrandt, Honicky, Ianni, Jackson, Norkin (7:03 P.M.), Salehi (7:05 P.M.), Scott-Craig  
ABSENT: None  
STAFF: Principal Planner Gail Oranchak

**1. Call meeting to order**

Chair Jackson called the regular meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

**2. Approval of agenda**

**Commissioner Scott-Craig moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Hildebrandt.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

**Commissioner Cordill moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of August 12, 2013. Seconded by Commissioner Hildebrandt.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0.

**4. Public Remarks**

Chair Jackson opened and closed the floor for public remarks.

**5. Communications (None)**

**6. Public hearings**

A. \*Special Use Permit #13061 (Caring Hand), request to establish an adult day care center in the International New Life Church addressed as 2630 Bennett Road

Chair Jackson opened the public hearing at 7:04 P.M.

- Introduction by the Chair (announcement of procedures, time limits and protocols for public participation and applicants)
- Summary of subject matter  
Principal Planner Oranchak summarized the proposed special use permit as outlined in staff memorandum dated August 22, 2013.
- Applicant  
Danelle Lofton, 5130 Wexford Road, Lansing, spoke in support of this adult day care community outreach for International New Life Church. She believed this day care program will be a coaching mechanism to achieve a good quality of life while allowing

adults to remain in their own home as long as possible. Ms. Lofton indicated Michigan's Office of Services to the Aging (OSA) guidelines will be followed when operating this adult day care center.

Pastor Phillip Moore, 3665 Ponderosa Drive, Okemos, spoke to the community need for an adult day care facility to allow attendees to maintain a specific quality of life and urged the Planning Commission to move forward on this request.

- Kim Carpenter, 4080 Hulett Road, Okemos, believed state regulations for adult day care facilities are vague and inquired if the Township would impose additional regulations. She expressed concern with how drugs which will be stored on the premises and if ex-convicts would be allowed at the facility.

Planning Commission discussion:

Commissioner Honicky requested the applicant explain reimbursement the day care facility will be receiving through insurance.

Ms. Lofton indicated she is working with the employee who oversees adult day care funding for the State of Michigan and will be reimbursed the standard hourly rate for care.

Commissioner Honicky asked how the applicant would identify clients who no longer fit the level of care the facility could provide.

Ms. Lofton indicated staff will work with clients' primary care physicians as well as other agencies to properly screen in order to ascertain the appropriate care needed.

Commissioner Honicky inquired if the applicant has a screening device it will utilize to determine if the current level of care is still appropriate.

Ms. Lofton indicated day care staff will observe clients on a daily basis and perform an assessment as needed.

Pastor Moore added day care staff will be working with each client's physician on an ongoing basis.

Commissioner Salehi asked if Ms. Lofton was a church member or church employee and if she has been involved in setting up other adult day care facilities.

Ms. Lofton answered she is a church member, has worked with the elderly for more than 16 years, although she has not previously been involved in setting up other adult day care facilities.

Commissioner Salehi noted that earlier the applicant referred to OSA guidelines and inquired what the acronym OSA stands for.

Ms. Lofton replied OSA stands for Office of Services to the Aging, a state umbrella agency which provides operating standard guidelines for adult day care.

Commissioner Salehi asked the applicant to summarize OSA guidelines for adult day care facilities.

Ms. Lofton noted the guidelines are available online, and are 100+ pages in length. She stated pages 52- through 57 specifically speak to adult day care.

Commissioner Salehi inquired if the applicant had provided the OSA guidelines for the Planning Commission.

Principal Planner Oranchak replied they had not.

Commissioner Salehi asked if OSA guidelines must be met in order to acquire federal or state funding.

Ms. Lofton responded in the affirmative.

Chair Jackson inquired if OSA was a State of Michigan agency or an industry agency.

Principal Planner Oranchak clarified OSA is a state umbrella which developed the standards required in order to receive federal or state funding.

Commissioner Scott-Craig expressed appreciation that the applicant will adhere to the OSA requirements. He asked the applicant if they were in agreement with condition #2 of the resolution which limits enrollment to 25 senior adults, 65 years or older.

Pastor Moore expressed concern with the limitations placed on both the number of clients and the age of those clients stated in the resolution. He believed it unfair for the previous child day care which operated in this facility to be allowed 38 children, while not allowing him the same number of clients.

Chair Jackson inquired, based on OSA standards and requirements, how many individuals could be cared for based on the size of the building.

Pastor Moore responded that according to OSA standards, they would be allowed well over 75 clients within the building.

Ms. Lofton added the time each client is in attendance at the adult day care facility will vary, e.g., some clients may attend on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings, while other will attend on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

Commissioner Deits stated his "quick calculation" of an 8,000 square foot building, supposing 200 square feet for each client, results in the ability to care for 40 clients. If the square feet per client is reduced to 100 square feet, the results would allow 80 clients. He expressed concern with condition #2, noting he did not believe an age restriction was necessary and believed the number of clients should be for clients in the facility at any given time.

Commissioner Cordill inquired if there are OSA standards regarding square footage per client in an adult day care facility.

Commissioner Scott-Craig indicated OSA standards do not contain any such regulation, noting the State of Michigan has chosen not to license and, therefore, not regulate adult day care facilities like child care facilities. He stated 200 square feet per client is not a lot of space, and offered his support for a number between 40 and 80 clients as well as removing the age restriction.

Commissioner Salehi suggested not placing a cap on the number of clients to be served, as there is no indication in the OSA guidelines of any client limit or space requirement.

Commissioner Hildebrandt believed there needs to be a reasonable number of clients contained in the resolution.

Commissioner Honicky indicated the proposed age requirement is a way to screen drug users, felons, ex-convicts, etc. as clients. He expressed concern with the ratio of one caregiver to ten (10) clients when dealing with medically fragile individuals without an employee contingency plan. Commissioner Honicky expressed a desire to see a plan in place to deal with emergencies.

Commissioner Ianni stated the zoning amendment initiated by the Planning Commission specifically excluded half-way houses and like facilities from the definition of an adult day care facility, so that is already specifically excluded under the ordinance.

Principal Planner Oranchak reminded Commissioners that while a public hearing was held on the proposed zoning amendment, the ordinance has not passed the Board and the definition is not in place within the Township's Code of Ordinances.

Commissioner Deits added facilities to treat drug users and ex-felons are regulated under separate state regulations.

Commissioner Honicky voiced his reluctance to give "carte blanche" to a facility that could take individuals under treatment since there is no definition of adult day care. He did not believe the community would be prepared to allow such a broad range of persons.

Commissioner Salehi indicated he could not support an age restriction unless there is empirical rationale for setting such a limitation. He requested information on what other cities and Townships have done that have approved adult day care centers. He believed the lack of an age contained in the OSA guidelines was purposeful.

Commissioner Deits stated there is no language contained in the application that it is to be a senior day care center. He believed it highly inappropriate to use age as a screening tool.

Principal Planner Oranchak noted the draft was written based on comments made by the applicant in its first meeting. She indicated the applicant has yet to provide a floor plan on how the building will be used and stated the Planning Commission may wish to add a condition regarding occupancy rates.

Commissioner Deits believed the Planning Commission should respect state regulations, since the Commission is not a regulatory body in this regard.

Chair Jackson asked at what age OSA standards apply to individuals.

Principal Planner Oranchak replied OSA has standards on how to operate facilities and cannot override building code standards for the Township. She indicated the Commission cannot assign a specific number of clients which cannot comfortably or legally be accommodated in the structure.

Chair Jackson asked if the proposed use has to go through the building permit process, since the building is not being altered.

Principal Planner Oranchak responded they are possibly adjusting the capacity of the building.

Commissioner Norkin also expressed concern with an age limitation for these types of facilities. He asked Commissioner Honicky what other criteria could be used other than age to screen out undesirable situations to ensure a use which is in “sync” with the community’s objectives.

Commissioner Honicky indicated that people who live past the age of 65 will likely live an additional 15-20 years so people who have the potential for serious illness have already been “screened out.” He voiced concern staff would have sufficient training to recognize when a client develops a debilitating condition and no longer belongs at the facility. Commissioner Honicky believed it necessary to have a registered nurse (RN) at the center.

Commissioner Salehi indicated OSA guidelines require a RN to administer medical service as well as a full-time program director with a bachelor’s degree in health and human services related areas.

Commissioner Ianni expressed concern with burdening this particular applicant on this property more than others in the community.

Commissioner Cordill noted incongruities in the paperwork submitted as to who is allowed to dispense medication. She inquired if it is the intent of the applicant to have a registered nurse on duty during hours of operation.

Commissioner Salehi read from the appropriate section of the OSA guidelines.

Commissioner Deits again stated it is not the responsibility of the Planning Commission to legislate regulations within the context of this single land use.

Commissioner Salehi noted the state distinguishes between adult day care services and dementia adult day care services. He inquired if the applicant would be providing care for clients with dementia.

Ms. Lofton responded the applicant will not be providing services to dementia adults.

Chair Jackson closed the public hearing at 8:05 P.M

Chair Jackson reopened the public hearing at 8:06 P.M.

- Public

Joseph Guzman, 4084 Hulett Road, Okemos, expressed opposition to this special use permit, noting this location is near his home and across the street from an elementary school. He voiced concern that this business activity within the church is setting a precedent for all other churches in a residential community. Mr. Guzman believed the Planning Commission's objectives are two-fold: 1) What is in the best interest of the community and (2) what is called for by the neighbors. He reminded Commissioners that this use is not a right and the Planning Commission does not have to approve this activity within the church.

Chair Jackson closed the public hearing at 8:10 P.M.

- B. Special Use Permit #13101 (St. Paul's Lutheran), request to use the building at 3407 Lake Lansing Road for philanthropic, educational and social programs

Chair Jackson opened the public hearing at 8:10 P.M.

- Summary of subject matter  
Principal Planner Oranchak summarized the proposed special use permit as outlined in staff memorandum dated August 22, 2013.
- Applicant  
Pastor Richard A. Moe, St. Paul Lutheran Church, 1553 Woodside, East Lansing, requested this SUP to make better use of the property. Since the church is landlocked, he believed this SUP would allow additional church activities (quilt making, youth activities, food pantry, personal needs closet) in the subject building without losing parking in order to expand the existing church building itself to accommodate those additional activities.

Planning Commission discussion:

Commissioner Salehi inquired about the potential impact on the neighbor to the west.

Julie Anderson, church member, 1961 Riveria, East Lansing, indicated her husband spoke with the neighbor who was pleased to have the church purchase the property and "clean" it up.

Commissioner Salehi inquired as to the use of the building since purchased in 2008.

Ms. Anderson responded small Sunday school classes, youth group rooms, quilt making, etc.

Commissioner Salehi asked if the SUP request was formalizing existing activity.

Principal Planner Oranchak responded in the affirmative, adding the food pantry was a recent addition.

Ms. Anderson added there would be no significant change in the amount of activity which takes place in the building.

Commissioner Cordill inquired about the hours of operation for the pantry.

Ms. Anderson responded the pantry is run on an appointment basis, having served 45 families since January.

Commissioner Deits inquired about the process for any future expansion.

Principal Planner Oranchak answered the applicant would need to make a request to modify the special use permit.

Commissioner Deits asked for the size of the church parcel.

Pastor Moe believed it to be approximately 2.3 acres.

Commissioner Deits asked staff what would be the impact of the SUP if this was a single parcel of land.

Principal Planner Oranchak responded the applicant wouldn't need a variance for the size, but would still need a variance for the setback.

Commissioner Deits requested landscaping between the subject building and the neighbor to the west as a condition to address the possible ownership change for that parcel to the west in the future.

Commissioner Salehi asked if the ingress and egress is only on the eastern side of the building.

Pastor Moe indicated there is no door on the western side of the building.

Commissioner Salehi believed, given no access on the western side of the building, that the neighbor to the west cannot see activity taking place on this parcel. He also thought landscaping between the two buildings would not be necessary.

Commissioner Deits clarified he thought landscaping would assist with noise penetration.

Chair Jackson noted this parcel, used by a church, is zoned office in the City of East Lansing. She believed there needs to be a legal recording of the association between the two properties.

Principal Planner Oranchak believed the chair's suggestion could be addressed through a condition in the resolution. She added there may need to be a formal agreement regarding the two properties as one is located in Meridian Township and one in East Lansing.

Commissioner Cordill asked where people park who come to the food pantry.

Pastor Moe responded clients park in the church parking lot. He added that clients come to the building, choose the desired food, and then church staff packages the selection and brings it to the client in a wagon down the ramp and then loaded into the clients' car.

Chair Jackson closed the public hearing at 8:32P.M.

- C. \*Special Use Permit #13111 (Meridian Township), request to construct a pedestrian-bicycle pathway across the Red Cedar River on the west side of Okemos Road

Chair Jackson opened the public hearing at 8:32 P.M.

- Summary of subject matter

Principal Planner Oranchak summarized the proposed special use permit as outlined in staff memorandum dated August 22, 2013.

- Applicant

Director Severy indicated the pedestrian bridge will be constructed on the west side of Okemos Road. He added the Township will remove the existing sidewalk so there will no longer be a connection from the existing pathway to the bridge once the new pathway is built. Director Severy stated new pilings and supports will be constructed on both sides of the river, acknowledging the structure itself is well above the floodplain. He added the fill in the floodplain is approximately 1-1/2 feet deep and four feet wide, and explained the computation to obtain the 7.8 cubic yards of fill.

Director Severy explained the proposed compensating cut is west of the bridge along the bank of the river.

- Public

Roger Simkin, 2032 Central Park Drive, Okemos, expressed support for the placement of a proper walkway in this area for safety of both bikers and walkers.

Vance Kincaid, 4530 Nakoma Drive, Okemos, spoke in support of the proposed project, indicating it is long overdue.

Planning Commission discussion:

Commissioner Salehi inquired as to the cost of this project.

Director Severy estimated \$400,000-\$500,000, adding it has not been let for bid as the footings have not yet been designed. He added this bridge is similar to an existing bridge on the west side of Marsh Road, south of Haslett Road.

Commissioner Salehi inquired as to the length of the bridge.

Director Severy responded approximately 215 feet.

Commissioner Salehi asked if there have been incidences of injuries on the old bridge due to its hazardous nature.

Director Severy responded he was not aware of any, but the Township has closed the bridge in the winter for the last two (2) to three (3) years for safety reasons.

Commissioner Ianni believed granting this special use permit will make it safer for pedestrians and bicyclists, will increase nearby property values and is in line with our complete streets concept.

Commissioner Deits believed this bridge will be a centerpiece for downtown Okemos, and encouraged the Township to look at aesthetics, i.e., color, design, etc. when letting this project out for bid.

Commissioner Cordill inquired about the fence along the bridge on Marsh Road, specifically covering the top.



Director Severy responded the bridge on Marsh Road has eight (8) feet of vertical clearance and has a fence across the top.

Commissioner Cordill asked if the same fencing would be necessary for the proposed SUP.

Director Severy responded the fencing around the bridge on Marsh Road was to address safety concerns by individuals throwing objects onto the railroad tracks. He did not believe the bridge on Okemos Road would need coverage on the top or sides.

Commissioner Cordill inquired as to the height of the bridge.

Director Severy responded it may be as tall as the bridge on Marsh Road; however, part of the structure may be below the walkway to the bridge, adding the depth is needed for the strength of the structure due to the length of the bridge.

Commissioner Cordill asked how the walk is separated from the car traffic.

Director Severy indicated part of the existing sidewalk will be removed, and the proposed sidewalk will tie into the remaining portion. He noted there will be a concrete walk from each end of the bridge which ties into the existing walk.

Commissioner Cordill stated the pathway appears to be at least as wide as the sidewalk.

Director Severy responded it would normally be built eight (8) feet wide, but there is a possibility it will need to be ten feet for structural stability due to its length.

Commissioner Hildebrandt concurred with a previous Planning Commissioner comment about the need for aesthetics, due to it being a gateway to the community.

Commissioner Norkin asked if there are any plans built into this project which would discourage either pedestrian or bicyclists on the opposite side of the bridge for safety.

Director Severy responded by pointing to the location of the Camelback Bridge, which currently has a sidewalk located on it separated from traffic by a concrete railing.

Commissioner Norkin inquired if one bridge should be designated for bicyclists and one for pedestrians for separation.

Director Severy stated it is his preference to use this pathway for southbound bicyclists and the other pathway for northbound bicyclists. He believed pedestrians could walk on either side. He voiced a concern that pedestrians would not follow directions even if the Township implemented such a separation. Director Severy acknowledged that while it would be desired to separate pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicular traffic, the existing situation makes it difficult unless the pathway was increased to 16 feet in width.

Commissioner Deits added that while the complete streets concept speaks to multi-modal transportation, it doesn't conclude within itself a standard for true separation in all cases. He voiced concern that enforcing east-west cross traffic in order to get to the "appropriate" side of the bridge could create more problems than solved by the separation.

Commissioner Honicky asked how the Township can prevent scooters, three wheelers, etc. from using the bridge.

Director Severy responded it would be difficult to prevent scooters from using the pathway. He noted the interurban pathway is chained so wider vehicles cannot gain access. He suggested the possibility of signs and notification to the police department. Director Severy added a scooter is no wider than a bicycle and presents a real challenge.

Chair Jackson spoke to the costs associated with this project.

Director Severy responded all the money will come from the Pathway Millage Fund.

Commissioner Cordill inquired if the bridge is to receive southbound bicycle and pedestrian traffic since it is located on the southbound bridge on Okemos Road.

Director Severy responded it will receive bicycle and pedestrian traffic from both directions. He added there is a separate sidewalk across the Camelback Bridge approximately five (5) feet in width which can be used.

Chair Jackson closed the public hearing at 8:57 P.M.

- D. Special Use Permit #13121 (Meridian Township), request to construct an approximate 15,000 square foot fire station on the south side of Central Park Drive, east of Okemos Road and west of the Okemos Post Office

Chair Jackson opened the public hearing at 8:57 P.M.

- **Summary of subject matter**  
Principal Planner Oranchak summarized the proposed special use permit as outlined in staff memorandum dated August 22, 2013.
- **Applicant**  
Director Severy offered a rendering of the proposed fire station, noting the building will be moved back to accommodate the 50 foot setback requirement. He pointed to the training tower location, indicating the training tower will be let as an alternate bid in the event funds are not available to construct both the station and tower.
- **Public**  
Dr. David Strobl, 1320 Cove Court, Okemos, expressed concern with the proposed location, citing the financial and noise impact to residents of Autumn Park Condominiums located across the street. He questioned the linking of this location to placement of a new fire station on the ballot and wondered why this type of hearing could not have been held before the ballot question. Dr. Strobl requested the Planning Commission consider the quality of life of residents across the street from the proposed location.

Susan Simkin, 2032 Central Park Drive, Okemos, spoke to noise pollution from the sirens which will be experienced by the Autumn Park Condominium owners (more than 96.5 decibels) as well as residents of Ottawa Hills. She addressed the health consequences of noise. Ms. Simkin spoke to the increased size of the proposed new station. She suggested placement of the fire station behind the post office or moving it in the commercial district.

Vance Kincaid, 4530 Nakoma Drive, Okemos, spoke to the expense and the size of the property proposed for placement of the new central fire station. He expressed concern with the large size of the building and believed it is being placed in the wrong location. Mr. Kincaid showed photos of the flooding of Okemos Road and the alternate route which would have to be taken by emergency vehicles to access areas on the other side of the flooding. Mr. Kincaid suggested a better location to be on Gaylord C. Smith Court, next to Nancy Moore Park. He believed the location on Gaylord C. Smith Court to be more financially sustainable and would have less of a long-term budget impact. Mr. Kincaid spoke to the disparity in the amount of packet information placed on the website vs. what is available at the meeting.

Planning Commission discussion:

Commissioner Salehi expressed concern with the location, as he believed the land was prime and had much better use for potential development. He was disturbed that residents living in the Autumn Park Condominiums across Central Park Drive would have to endure sirens multiple times during the night when emergency vehicles were sent on a run. Commissioner Salehi believed the location on Gaylord C. Smith Court to potentially be a much better place to house the new fire station.

Commissioner Ianni asked if the Gaylord C. Smith Court location was considered.

Director Severy indicated there would be severe problems with the Gaylord C. Smith Court location as it is not on a main road and there are considerable wetlands on the property. He added if there is little traffic in the evening on Central Park Drive, the Fire Department would not have to use sirens. Mr. Severy noted that if the fire station is located as proposed, there are plans to utilize electronic controls for lights at Central Park Drive and Okemos Road. Mr. Severy stated that since the Ingham County Drain Commissioner has removed the log jams from the Red Cedar River, the water on Okemos Road referred to in earlier public comment has dropped significantly.

Commissioner Cordill inquired about placement of the fire station in the southeast portion of the parcel behind the post office.

Director Severy responded there is concern with the shape of the site and that the location would require fill in the floodplain, but acknowledged it would provide more distance from the condominiums. He did not believe it would address the noise issue for residents of the Autumn Park Condominiums as emergency vehicles would still need to use Central Park Drive.

Commissioner Deits inquired as to the discretion of the Planning Commission relative to the location of the proposed fire station, given that the location was contained in the language of the ballot initiative.

Principal Planner Oranchak replied that she was not clear regarding the Planning Commission's connection to the ballot initiative as the only request before the commission is to consider this specific site for the new fire station. She indicated Planning Commission action on this SUP is limited to approval, approval with conditions or denial.

Commissioner Deits asked how the size of the building was determined.

Director Severy answered that initial discussions included the number of bays needed to house equipment. He noted fire staff visited other stations in the greater Lansing area and once a consultant was hired, staff traveled to Indiana where several of the stations designed by the consultant were reviewed. Director Severy stated the former Township Manager and the Fire Chief worked with a local architect and local construction firm to produce a conceptual design to ascertain a preliminary cost figure in order to place this initiative on the ballot for approval.

Commissioner Deits asked what type of activities would take place at the training tower.

Director Severy responded the three (3) story tower would be used for training on hauling hoses up and using the ladder truck for access to upper floors in the event of a fire.

Commissioner Hildebrandt asked what was the benefit of having three (3) fire stations on the same road for a township the size of Meridian.

Director Severy believed it to be primarily for faster response time and Okemos Road is in center of the more heavily populated area in the township.

Commissioner Hildebrandt asked if the fire station was to be moved behind the post office, would access be possible from the rear of the strip mall (which currently houses Best Buy and Office Max) to Okemos Road.

Director Severy stated the only way to do that without going across a large wetland would be to use the road which runs along the western edge of the mall and then in front of Best Buy.

Commissioner Hildebrandt inquired as to other sites which were considered.

Director Severy answered that he was not involved in the site selection process, so he does not have an answer to that question.

Commissioner Hildebrandt requested staff obtain that information when this issues comes back to the Planning Commission.

Principal Planner Oranchak added that reuse of the existing site on Okemos Road, a location on Grand River Avenue east of Marsh Road and the proposed site were all considered. She believed the determination was made based on distance and response time.

Commissioner Hildebrandt asked if the average of four (4) trips per day mentioned earlier was accurate.

Director Severy offered information from the Fire Chief that in the last week, 100 calls (most of which were ambulance) were split between the three (3) stations, of which approximately 40 were responded to by the central station.

Commissioner Salehi asked who conducted the site analysis and looked at the options.

Principal Planner Oranchak indicated the Fire Chief provided information for Township Board review early in the process.

Commissioner Salehi asked if the Board debated the options and selected this as the preferred site.

Principal Planner Oranchak responded that she believed that was the case.

Commissioner Salehi noted mention was made of moving the Farmers Market and inquired if the current location and land west of it was ever considered as an option for location of the new central fire station.

Principal Planner Oranchak stated land west of the current Farmers Market is wetland and floodplain.

Commissioner Deits offered a brief history of the Planning Commission's previous purview relative to the Capital Improvement Plan.

Commissioner Hildebrandt reminded fellow Commissioners that while the commission may not have fiduciary responsibility, it does have the responsibility to do what is "right" for a majority of residents in the Township in the best manner it can. She stated the Planning Commission does have the right and/or responsibility to say no if this isn't what is best for the Township.

Commissioner Scott-Craig stated there is need for a redress mechanism for residents of the Autumn Park Condominiums across the street if the proposed location moves forward.

Commissioner Deits asked if an intermittent red light east of the fire station could be installed to coordinate with the light at Central Park Drive and Okemos Road, effectively stopping traffic from entering that segment of Central Park Drive thereby negating the state requirement to engage the siren leaving the station.

Director Severy responded it has been accomplished at other locations, but for different reasons.

Commissioner Deits asked that his suggestion be taken into consideration.

Commissioner Norkin asked if a floating cement bridge was considered to address the seasonal flooding on Okemos Road.

Director Severy responded Ingham County looked at trying to obtain grant money a few years ago to raise Okemos Road. He noted that in the event of a 100 year flood, the next section to flood would be the intersection of Okemos Road and Grand River Avenue, as water backs up through the storm drain which drains that intersection. He added that a fire truck can traverse water which a car cannot and, even if the county closed the road due to 6" of flooding, a fire truck could travel through it.

Commissioner Norkin asked if the distribution of the three (3) fire stations was expressly due to the railroad tracks.

Director Severy believed that certainly was part of the study conducted and would make that study available to the Planning Commission.

Chair Jackson inquired if the station was placed on the corner of Okemos Road and Central Park Drive facing Okemos Road, would it lessen the noise issue for residents living in the condominiums on Central Park Drive.

Director Severy responded it would probably “somewhat” reduce noise to the condos, but would complicate traffic flow from cars on Okemos Road and increase noise to the residents of Ottawa Hills.

Chair Jackson asked for an explanation on how the call load would be handled in the event of flooding on Okemos Road if the fire station is located as proposed.

Director Severy stated that if the north station was unable to respond, the shortest route would be to travel to Marsh Road, turning west onto Haslett Road. He was unsure of the length of time involved to travel that alternate route.

Commissioner Salehi inquired as to why the current Clinton Street location was not being renovated.

Director Severy answered that the consultant determined the location was not feasible for renovation, and would need to be torn down and rebuilt.

Commissioner Salehi asked why consideration was not given to tearing down the current central fire station and then rebuilding it on the same site.

Principal Planner Oranchak indicated the parcel is too small, partially in the floodplain and located in downtown Okemos where the Okemos Road traffic is “horrendous” for getting fire vehicles out of the site. She noted the current location could not accommodate the size of the proposed facility.

Commissioner Salehi inquired as to the size of the Clinton Street site.

Principal Planner Oranchak did not know the exact size, but indicated she would be surprised if it was one (1) acre. She added that a fire station is not the best land use for property in downtown Okemos.

Commissioner Salehi expressed concern that the existing fire station would sit “derelict” in downtown Okemos.

Principal Planner Oranchak indicated the property could be sold for potential commercial development which would increase the viability of downtown Okemos.

Commissioner Deits, as liaison to the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), believed the DDA views the land currently housing the central fire station as a resource for future development. He believed the proposed Douglas J project will stimulate interest in that property.

Commissioner Ianni also requested the Planning Commission be provided with EMS and fire response times used as rationale for the proposed location.

Chair Jackson closed the public hearing at 10:05 P.M.

**Commissioner Cordill moved to suspend Rule 5.14 to allow introduction of an agenda item after 10:00 P.M. Seconded by Commissioner Norkin.**

Planning Commission and staff discussion:

- September 9<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission agenda would contain four (4) items for decision making as well as some outstanding zoning amendments

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 8-1 (Honicky).

## **7. Unfinished Business**

**Commissioner Deits moved to suspend Bylaw #6.4A to proceed with making a decision on Special Use Permit #13061 (Caring Hand) the same night as the public hearing. Seconded by Commissioner Scott-Craig.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 8-1 (Honicky).

A. \*Special Use Permit #13061 (Caring Hand), request to establish an adult day care center in the International New Life Church addressed as 2630 Bennett Road

**Commissioner Ianni moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby approves Special Use Permit #13061 subject to the following conditions:**

- 1. Approval is based on the application and materials submitted with it dated November 13, 2012, subject to revisions as required.**
- 2. No more than 25 senior adults, 65 years or older, shall be enrolled in the Caring Hand Adult Day Care Center.**
- 3. Hours of operation for Caring Hand Adult Day Care shall not exceed 16 hours per day.**
- 4. The applicant shall obtain all applicable permits, licenses, and approvals from the Township prior to any work taking place on the site to accommodate the adult day care use. Copies of all permits, licenses, and approvals shall be submitted to the Department of Community Planning and Development.**
- 5. Prior to occupancy by Caring Hand, the building shall be inspected for compliance with ADA requirements and safety by Meridian Township's Chief Building and Fire Marshall.**
- 6. The final site plan and landscape plan are subject to the approval of the Director of Community Planning and Development.**
- 7. Any future modification to the site to modify the use will require an amendment of the special use permit.**

**Seconded by Commissioner Scott-Craig.**

**The seconder offered the following friendly amendment:**

- **Delete condition #2**

**The amendment was accepted by the maker of the motion.**

Planning Commission discussion:

- Good use in an area with other churches
- Use will not adversely affect traffic in the area
- Concern about the type of clients will be addressed in the definition which will be discussed at the Planning Commission's next meeting
- Belief there should be a ceiling on the number of individuals served
- Adoption of a future definition would require the existing use to be grandfathered
- Preference to have a definition of an adult day care facility in the zoning ordinance prior to approving any adult day care centers
- Need to prescribe the number of clients served since no working definition exists
- Concern with developing a standard for the number of clients served and then changing that number
- Applicant can petition the Planning Commission to amend the resolution to increase the number of clients
- Possible inclusion of restrictive sentences previously discussed
- Drug rehabilitation, half-way houses for ex-felons, etc. are regulated separately by the state
- Belief this facility, without restriction, could serve a large clientele that could include drug users, and ex-felons

**Commissioner Deits offered the following amendment as condition #2:**

- **2. No more than 40 adult clients shall be present at any one time in the Caring Hand Adult Day Care Center.**

**Seconded by Commissioner Norkin.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 8-1 (Honicky).

Continued Planning Commission discussion:

- Applicant has been unduly delayed
- Risk of treating drug users and ex-felons is very minimal
- Public comment regarding breaking into the facility to steal stored drugs is not a credible statement
- No evidence presented that this activity is a risk to the neighborhood or children attending the nearby school
- Concern that 16 hours of operation is too long
- State law allows 16 hours for child care facilities
- Concern with restoration of the original condition #2 is silent on the issue of how many individuals under the age of 65 may be in attendance at the facility
- Ratio of staff to clients

**Commissioner Honicky moved to amend condition #2 to read:**

- **"2. No clients shall be under 65 years of age."**

**The motion died for lack of a second.**



**Commissioner Hildebrandt called the question.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners Deits, Ianni, Hildebrandt, Norkin, Salehi,  
Scott-Craig, Chair Jackson

NAYS: Commissioners Cordill, Honicky

Motion carried 7-2.

- B. \*Special Use Permit #13111 (Meridian Township), request to construct a pedestrian-bicycle pathway across the Red Cedar River on the west side of Okemos Road

**Commissioner Scott-Craig moved to suspend Bylaw #6.4A to consider Special Use Permit #13111 the same night as the public hearing. Seconded by Commissioner Deits.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 8-1 (Hildebrandt).

**Commissioner Scott-Craig moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby approves Special Use Permit #13111 subject to the following conditions:**

- 1. Approval is subject to the revised pathway bridge plan prepared by the Meridian Township Department of Public Works & Engineering, dated August 23, 2013, and the related materials submitted as part of Special Use Permit #13111, subject to revisions as required.**
- 2. The applicant shall obtain any applicable permits, licenses, and approvals from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality prior to any work taking place on the site. Copies of all permits, licenses, and approvals shall be submitted to the Department of Community Planning & Development.**
- 3. In no case shall the impoundment capacity of the floodplain be reduced.**
- 4. Fill placed in the floodplain as part of the project shall be protected against erosion.**
- 5. The applicant shall properly dispose of all excess materials from the compensating cut areas to an off-site location subject to the approval of the Director of Community Planning & Development.**
- 6. The disposed materials at the off-site location shall be protected from erosion and re-seeded subject to the approval of the Director of Community Planning & Development.**

**Seconded by Commissioner Norkin.**

Planning Commission discussion:

- Resolution language which addresses reseeding and checking over a period of time typically speaks to wetlands not floodplain areas

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners Cordill, Deits, Ianni, Hildebrandt, Honicky,  
Norkin, Salehi, Scott-Craig, Chair Jackson  
NAYS: None  
Motion carried unanimously.

**8. Other Business** (None)

**9. Township Board, Planning Commission officer, committee chair, and staff comment or reports**

**10. New applications** (None)

**11. Site plans received** (None)

**12. Site plans approved** (None)

**13. Public remarks**

Chair Jackson opened public remarks.

Vance Kincaid, 4530 Nakoma Drive, Okemos, asked how much is enough and where is the right location relative to the issue of the central fire station. He believed the existing location could be utilized if the end of Ardmore Street was closed.

David Strobl, 1320 Cove Court, Okemos, spoke to the impact of the noise level for the new location of the central fire station on nearby residents. He believed the burden of proof has not been met by the Township.

Susan Simkin, 2032 Central Park, Okemos, believed relocation of the proposed new central fire station behind the post office would reduce noise level for residents of the condominiums by 11 decibels.

Chair Jackson closed public remarks.

**14. Adjournment**

Chair Jackson adjourned the regular meeting at 11:02 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra K. Otto  
Recording Secretary