

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES APPROVED  
5151 MARSH ROAD, OKEMOS, MI 48864-1198  
(517) 853-4000  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2022  
REGULAR TELEVISED MEETING**

PRESENT: Chair Mansour, Members Deschaine, Hendrickson, Koenig

ABSENT: Vice-Chair Field Foster

STAFF: Director of Community and Planning Timothy Schmitt, Assistant Planner Keith Chapman

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair Mansour called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Member Deschaine moved to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Member Hendrickson.**

ROLE CALL TO VOTE:

YEAS: Members Koenig, Deschaine, Hendrickson, Chair Mansour

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 4-0

**3. CORRECTIONS, APPROVAL & RATIFICATION OF MINUTES**

A. February 16, 2022 Meeting Minutes

**Chair Mansour noted that in item 6.D, criteria four was stated to be approved twice in the minutes of February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The line has been changed to, "Chair Mansour stated criteria ~~four~~ five had been met."**

**Chair Mansour moved to approve the minutes from Wednesday, February 16, 2022 as amended. Seconded by Member Deschaine.**

ROLE CALL TO VOTE:

YEAS: Members Koenig, Deschaine, Hendrickson, Chair Mansour

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 4-0

**4. COMMUNICATIONS - NONE**

**5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - NONE**

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. ZBA CASE NO. 22-03-16-1 (2446 Jolly Road), E.W. Sparrow Hospital Association, 1215 East Michigan Avenue, Lansing, MI 48909**

DESCRIPTION: 2446 Jolly Road  
TAX PARCEL: 33-353-022  
ZONING DISTRICT: PO (Professional Office)

The variances being requested are to add additional wall signs that exceed the allowed number of signs and total square footage at 2446 Jolly Road.

Assistant Planner Chapman outlined the case for discussion.

Applicant's Representative, Staci Bakkegard, further outlined the case for discussion.

Member Deschaine stated he would like to see the applicant better advertise they are an emergency room on their sign.

Ms. Bakkegard asked which sign Member Deschaine is referring too.

Member Deschaine stated he was referring to the monument sign that is pictured in the packet.

Chair-Mansour also stated she would like to the signs better reflect the building is an emergency room.

Member Hendrickson asked why there is a need for the small signs on the canopy on the front, the sparrow sign over the door on the east side of the building and the directional sign on the south elevation as a minimal action.

Ms. Bakkegard replied the canopy sign on the south is of patient directional wayfinding intent. The canopy sign on the north is directional for EMS drivers. The sign relevant to the entry on the east is the arrival point for primary care and imaging patients, and that sign is more for branding.

Karrie Blundell, Senior Project manager at Sparrow, stated the risk with not having the east elevation sign is the door could appear as a staff entry and may cause patients to mistakenly enter through the emergency department.

Member Hendrickson asked if there is a way in township Ordinance that the applicant could place a freestanding sign to demark the entrance.

Assistant Planner Chapman stated they are allowed one freestanding sign, and one wall sign. The monument sign is already freestanding so they are allowed no more under Ordinance.

Director Schmitt gave an overview of allowed signage pertaining to the applicant.

Chair Mansour asked the applicant how they will distinguish between entrances.

Ms. Bakkegard replied the canopy sign will direct patients to the emergency department. She further stated the content on the east side sign is the smallest content they would use as alternatives would be much longer and require a larger sign.

Member Hendrickson stated that once patients park in the east and north lots the way they approach the building will not allow them to see the emergency room sign on the canopy.

Ms. Bakkegard stated the parking on the south is for the emergency department, the east parking is intended for primary care and imaging, and the north parking is for staff.

Member Hendrickson asked how much of the building is for emergency services and how much will be used for primary care.

Ms. Bakkegard replied it's about a 50-50 split.

Ms. Bakkegard stated in relation to the west elevation sign that people are travelling at about 45 mph and will need to make a left turn. If they are arriving to use the emergency department they may not be in a normal state of mind, so having the sign be visible on the front face of the building is key.

Member Hendrickson stated the problem is the requested variances will stick to the parcel in perpetuity so that if another business buys the parcel they will then be able to make full use of variances they would never have under normal circumstances.

Member Hendrickson stated he sees issue with the awning signs as they are redundant and not a minimal action.

Director Schmitt stated approval would be reliant on the uniqueness of the building and its use. He stated the board could create a condition that any change to the signs would require coming back to the Zoning Board of Appeals for review. The board could also interpret the canopy signs as directional signage under Ordinance and the variance could be granting the size of directional signs as opposed to wall signs that would carry over to new tenants.

Member Hendrickson asked if there is a precedent for having a "sunset" on a granted variance.

Director Schmitt stated he is not aware of any.

Member Koenig stated he also is concerned with the number of the signs, and asked if staff could amend a variance.

Assistant Planner Chapman was not able to answer at this time.

Member Koenig asked when the site-plan was approved and if there was a sign plan at that time.

Ms. Bakkegard replied she believed the site-plan review was in September, 2021 but this is the first time signage has been shown on the building.

Member Koenig gave an overview of his thoughts on each of the signs in question.

Chair Mansour asked for the purpose of the emergency sign on the west side of the south canopy.

Ms. Bakkegard replied at one time there was plans for a curb cut on Kansas Rd. which has since been removed from plans and the sign is possibly left over from those plans.

Member Koenig asked if staff is aware of any alternative interpretations of “one wall sign” in the Ordinance.

Assistant Planner Chapman replied he is not.

Member Hendrickson asked if the board approved the variance with less signs then what the applicant asked for could the applicant come back and request another variance for more signs.

Director Schmitt stated they could not come back for the same request; any future request would have to be different in some way.

Member Hendrickson stated he finds the southwest and the southeast canopy signs redundant. He further he stated the two signs on the south elevation could be reduced to one.

Ms. Bakkegard asked if they could strike parts from the current application or if they would have to come back with a new application.

Chair Mansour stated the item could be tabled until the applicant comes back with alterations.

**Member Hendrickson moved to table ZBA CASE NO. 22-03-16-1 (2446 Jolly Road), E.W. Sparrow Hospital Association, 1215 East Michigan Avenue, Lansing, MI 48909 until the next Zoning Board of Appeals meeting. Seconded by Member Koenig.**

ROLE CALL TO VOTE:

YEAS: Members Koenig, Deschaine, Hendrickson, Chair Mansour

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 4-0

## **7. OTHER BUSINESS - NONE**

## **8. PUBLIC REMARKS**

Chair Mansour opened the floor for public remarks at 7:24 pm

NONE

Chair Mansour closed public remarks at 7:24 pm

## **9. MEMBER COMMENTS**

Member Hendrickson

- Announced this is his last meeting with the Zoning Board of Appeals as he has been selected to be a member of the Township Board

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Mansour Adjourned the meeting at 8:19 pm.