

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**September 14, 2020**

**Meeting held virtually using the Zoom web conferencing application**

**7:00 P.M.**

**PRESENT: Commissioners Premoe, Richards, McConnell, Hendrickson, Cordill, Shrewsbury, and Blumer.**

**ABSENT: None**

**STAFF: Director of Community Planning & Development Mark Kieselbach, Principal Planner Peter Menser, Information Technology Director Stephen Gebes, Multimedia Producer Samantha Diehl.**

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair Hendrickson called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

**2. PUBLIC REMARKS - None**

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Richards moved to approve the agenda.

Seconded by Commissioner Blumer.

VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A. August 24, 2020 Regular Meeting**

Commissioner Premoe moved to approve the minutes.

Seconded by Commissioner McConnell .

A friendly amendment was made after noting a couple changes.

A motion of privilege was made by Chair Hendrickson when Principal Planner Menser asked if former Commissioner Amber Clark could speak to the Planning Commission before they proceeded with the agenda. Commissioner Clark resigned from her appointment on September 10, 2020 because she has accepted the position as Neighborhood and Economic Development Director with Meridian Township. She thanked the Planning Commission for her time working with them and looks forward to working with the Planning Commission while serving in her new position.

VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

**5. COMMUNICATIONS**

Chair Hendrickson noted the two communications submitted in the September 14, 2020 meeting packet.

## 6. Public Hearing

- A. Special Use Permit #20061 (Elsabeth Engeda), expand an existing adult foster care home at 5340 Park Lake Road to accommodate up to 10 residents.

Chair Hendrickson opened the public hearing at 7:09 p.m.

Principal Planner Menser provided a summary of the request and noted the applicant is available to provide additional information and answer questions.

Comments from the applicant:

Hiruth Scarlett, 5340 Park Lake Road Foster Care Home, Social Worker and Assistant Administrator for owner.

Elsabeth Engeda, 5340 Park Lake Road Foster Care Home, Applicant/Owner and Critical Care Nurse.

- Currently an Adult Foster Care Facility for 6 adults and are waiting on Michigan State approval for 4 additional adult residents.
- The Adult Foster Care has been in business since 2017.
- The single-family home is 2, 558 square feet and was built in 1958.
- The home has 6 bedrooms and 4 full bathrooms (2 handi-capped bathrooms on the first floor and 2 other full bathrooms on the second floor).

Public Comments:

- A. Patrick and Alana Miller, 5336 Park Lake Road, spoke in support of Special Use Permit #20061.  
 B. Brian and Mary-Jean McNitt, 5380 Park Lake Road, spoke in opposition to Special Use Permit #20061.  
 C. Richardo Lorenz, 5332 Park Lake Road, spoke with concern regarding Special Use Permit #20061.

Planning Commission Discussion:

- The applicant was asked if the home could physically accommodate 10 special needs adults and also wanted to know if there were future plans to change the footprint of the house to expand it. Elsabeth Engeda responded stating Michigan, through the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) approved the current space and there are no plans to expand the property. They have two staff currently and additional staff will be hired if needed.
- The applicant was asked how the facility handles family visits currently during COVID-19. Elsabeth Engeda responded stating there are no visitors due to the current state mandate. Family visits are held virtually as well as most medical consultations. When medical visits are necessary, Elsabeth requires a screening form and temperature check before entering the home.
- Concerns were expressed regarding ample parking spaces on the property. Abraham Engeda (Elsabeth's husband) noted there was plenty of space for parking and Elsabeth Engeda noted there are usually only 2 or 3 cars parked in the driveway. (The live-in employee does not have a car and uses public transportation.)

- Principal Planner Menser was asked to provide the Planning Commission with a lot survey, at the next meeting noting the parking spaces for the property, to ensure 5 cars can be on the property and will not impact the site circulation. (The applicant has indicated that 7 parking spaces are provided.)
- When reviewing the 9 general use special use permit criteria for non-residential uses permitted in residential districts, not all the criteria have to be applied.
- There was no prior Special Use Permit required for the Adult Foster Care home because of the number of people residing there, just proper licensing by the state of Michigan.
- The Adult Foster Care home has been a good neighbor and no problems in the past.
- The applicant was asked about trash because of a prior public comment made and Elisabeth stated they purchased some new furniture that resulted in extra trash that was out over the Labor Day Holiday but normally there is not a problem with trash and they take pride in their property and there are no smells.
- Increasing the Adult Foster Care home from 6 to 10 adults seems like a minor expansion with minimal intrusion.
- The community has a need to increase the capacity for this kind of care and this is important to our community.

A straw poll taken indicated the Planning Commission would be in support of recommending approval of the proposed Special Use Permit #20061. A resolution will be provided for the September 28, 2020 Planning Commission meeting.

Chair Hendrickson closed the public hearing at 8:08 p.m.

**7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None**

**8. OTHER BUSINESS**

**A. Mixed Use Planned Unit Development (MUPUD) ordinance review.**

Principal Planner Menser noted he only received a couple responses from the Planning Commission since the previous meeting, a phone call from Commissioner Richards and a email from Commissioner Trezise and since Commissioner Trezise was not able to attend the meeting, Principal Planner Menser noted the comments made;

- Require minimum square footage for public usage.
- Determine how the areas should be designated, public or for residents on site.
- Review different amenities and clarify formal amounts.

Commissioner Richards shared comments from his phone conversation with Principal Planner Menser

- Redo the definition of amenities (features not normally included in the type of development they are proposing).
- The MUPUD should focus on redevelopment on existing properties, not vacant land, make more restrictive.
- Suggest a concept plan should be required and have it go to the Board and Planning Commission so feedback could be provided before plans are fully developed, to streamline the process.

- Requirements and guidelines- how to regulate and the benefits.
- There is a benefit to providing amenities to the resident of a project but public amenities are the incentive for allowing flexibility in density or other things in a proposed MUPUD.

Principal Planner Menser asked the Planning Commission to look at the Amendments Ordinance for the next meeting. He also noted there is important language when projects have changes. Look at the procedures and all references as functions as they could become functions of the Planning Commission.

Four sections of discussion: Process, Amenities, Amendments and Penalties.

A possible work session was suggested before the next meeting to work on amenities because it is the largest section of the ordinance but the group decided to focus on this topic during the next meeting since the tentative agenda for September 28, 2020 looked like they could have extra time to devote to this task.

Chair Hendrickson asked the Commission to submit any suggestions or changes to Principal Planner Menser so he can add them to the packet for the next meeting for further discussion.

## **9. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

A. Township Board update.

Principal Planner Menser provided a summary of the September 1, 2020 Zoom Township Board meeting and noted the next Township Board meeting will be September 15, 2020.

B. Liaison reports.

- Commissioner McConnell provide an update from the September 2, 2020 Environmental Commission meeting.

## **PROJECT UPDATES**

- A. New Applications- None
- B. Site Plans Received - None
- C. Site Plans Approved -None

**11. PUBLIC REMARKS - None**

## **12. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Premoe moved to adjourn the meeting.

Supported by Commissioner McConnell.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Hendrickson adjourned the regular meeting at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Debbie Budzynski, Recording Secretary