



**AGENDA**  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
PLANNING COMMISSION – REGULAR MEETING  
February 22, 2021 7PM

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1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. PUBLIC REMARKS
3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
  - A. February 8, 2021 Regular Meeting
5. COMMUNICATIONS
  - A. Yingxin Zhou RE: recreational marihuana
  - B. Jim Phillipich RE: 1999 E. Saginaw Street
6. PUBLIC HEARINGS
  - A. Zoning Amendment #21010 (Township Board), amend the Code of Ordinances to require Township Board approval of special use permits for motor vehicle sales and service establishments and automobile dealerships in the C-2 and C-3 (Commercial) zoning districts.
7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None
8. OTHER BUSINESS
  - A. 1999 Saginaw Highway.
  - B. Mixed Use Planned Unit Development (MUPUD) ordinance review.
9. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
  - A. Township Board update.
  - B. Liaison reports.
10. PROJECT UPDATES
  - A. New Applications
    1. Rezoning #21020 (Martin Investment Properties, Inc.), rezone approximately six acres (three parcels) located on the north side of Jolly Road, east of Kansas Road from I (Industrial) and RA (Single Family-Medium Density) to PO (Professional and Office).
    2. Special Use Permit #21011 (Lansing Mart Associates, LLC), excavate approximately 2,275 cubic yards of soil from the floodplain to construct a detention pond at 2020 Grand River Avenue that will serve several commercial properties in the surrounding area.
  - B. Site Plans Received - None
  - C. Site Plans Approved - None
11. PUBLIC REMARKS
12. ADJOURNMENT

**Zoom meeting ID: 872 0006 8286**  
**Zoom password: 5151**

**AGENDA page 2**  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
February 22, 2021 7PM

**TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA**  
**March 8, 2021**

1. PUBLIC HEARINGS
  - A. Rezoning #21020 (Martin Investment Properties, Inc.), rezone approximately six acres (three parcels) located on the north side of Jolly Road, east of Kansas Road from I (Industrial) and RA (Single Family-Medium Density) to PO (Professional and Office).
  - B. Special Use Permit #21011 (Lansing Mart Associates, LLC), excavate approximately 2,275 cubic yards of soil from the floodplain to construct a detention pond at 2020 Grand River Avenue that will serve several commercial properties in the surrounding area.
  
2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
  - A. Zoning Amendment #21010 (Township Board), amend the Code of Ordinances to require Township Board approval of special use permits for motor vehicle sales and service establishments and automobile dealerships in the C-2 and C-3 (Commercial) zoning districts.
  
3. OTHER BUSINESS
  - A. Mixed Use Planned Unit Development (MUPUD) ordinance review.

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Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact: Principal Planner Peter Menser, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4576 - Ten Day Notice is Required.  
Meeting Location: Zoom web conferencing application  
Meeting ID: 872 0006 8286 Password: 5151

Providing a safe and welcoming, sustainable, prime community.



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

**February 8, 2021**

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

**7:00 P.M.**

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

**ABSENT: Commissioners Trezise, and Richards**

**STAFF: Director of Community Planning & Development Mark Kieselbach, Principal Planner Peter Menser, Information Technology Director Stephen Gebes, and 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 Premoe moved to approve the agenda.

Seconded by Commissioner Cordill.

VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. January 11, 2020 Regular Meeting

Commissioner Shrewsbury moved to approve the minutes.

Seconded by Commissioner Premoe.

VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

**5. COMMUNICATIONS**

A. Chair Hendrickson noted one communication item was received and included in the packet.

**6. PUBLIC HEARINGS - NONE**

**7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

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

Principal Planner Menser noted staff has included a first draft of the typed and editable format of the proposed revised Mixed Use Planned Unit Development ordinance in the meeting packet. The proposed revisions and changes are based on past meetings with the Planning Commission and the MUPUD sub-committee. Further discussion is needed on the following concepts: Review Process, Commercial/Non-residential space, Mix of Uses, and Amenities.

Principal Planner Menser mentioned the MUPUD sub-committee will meet on February 11, 2021 to follow up on tonight's group discussion.

Planning Commission Discussion:

- The Review Process is long but necessary and public input provides valuable feedback. The Planning Commission agreed to leave the review process as is.
- Define "mix of uses" and "non-residential" more clearly.
- If commercial space is not filled it could be offered for community/public use or for schools to utilize. For example: a local school art studio until the space is leased out.
- Principal Planner Menser noted the Township does not track commercial space.
- Create a list of amenities based on value, perhaps categorize in columns or use a point system.
- The Climate Sustainability Plan, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, My Solar Story Group, and Drain Commissioners Office are good resources for gathering ideas to add to the list of amenities.
- Amenities mentioned during the meeting included: rain gardens, electrical vehicle charging stations, solar panels, water quality conservation efforts, and on-site recycling.
- Research amenities from other communities.
- Principal Planner Menser was asked if he could provide a listing of recent MUPUD projects and if those projects asked for additional waivers (relating to density and land uses) so the Planning Commission could evaluate if the waiver criteria is too broad and easy to obtain or should be adjusted.
- Five units per acre is the minimum for a multi-family district and 34 units per acre is the maximum; however, the RCC District has not been requested since the 1970's. (A couple examples are: Knob Hill and The Towar.)

**8. OTHER BUSINESS - NONE**

**9. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

A. Township Board update.

Principal Planner Menser noted the Planning Commission meeting was cancelled on January 25, 2021 and provided a summary of the Township Board meetings held on January 19, 2021, January 26, 2021, February 2, 2021, and February 16<sup>th</sup>. He also noted the next Township Board meeting will be February 23, 2021.

B. Liaison reports.

- Commissioner Blumer apologized for missing the Downtown Development Authority meeting February 1, 2021 as he thought it was at 7:30 p.m. (and it is 7:30 a.m.)

- Commissioner Cordill provided an update from attending the Corridor Improvement Authority meeting on January 27, 2021.
- Commissioner Snyder provided an update from attending the Transportation Commission meeting on January 21, 2021.
- Chair Hendrickson noted the Zoning Board of Appeals has not met yet in 2021 but a meeting is scheduled for February 24, 2021.
- Commissioner McConnell provided an update from attending the Environmental Commission meeting on February 3, 2021.

**10. PROJECT UPDATES**

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

**11. PUBLIC REMARKS - NONE**

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Blumer noted he was reviewing the Sign Amendments Supreme Court Case and attempted to copy and download the ordinance and received an E Code 360 message. Principal Planner Menser said he didn't know what that was but would help him get the information he needed.

Commissioner McConnell moved to adjourn the meeting.

Supported by Commissioner Shrewsbury.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Hendrickson adjourned the regular meeting at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debbie Budzynski, Recording Secretary

**From:** [Yingxin Zhou](#)  
**To:** [Board](#); [Planning Commision \(DG\)](#); [Frank Walsh](#)  
**Subject:** Opposition to recreational cannabis businesses in Meridian Township  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 7:22:13 AM

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Township Board, Planning Commission, and Township Manager Walsh,

Hope you are all doing well. I'm writing in opposition of opt in to recreational cannabis businesses in Meridian Township. I believe our township should not encourage marijuana which is still illegal under federal law by having full establishments in our community.

Marijuana remains an illegal controlled substance under federal law. Federal prohibition against marijuana might impact you even if you don't violate state law. Marijuana use can result in eviction from public housing and ineligibility for some jobs. And a marijuana conviction makes students ineligible for financial aid. Even if a noncitizen possessed, used, or sold marijuana in accordance with state law, his or her lawful immigration status, or ability to obtain lawful immigration status, could still be in jeopardy according to USCIS regulation.

Recreational cannabis is not a revenue stream for our township. MRTMA authorizes a 10% excise tax on sales of recreational marijuana. Those taxes are distributed with the first funds going to regulation costs and \$20 million for clinical medical trials for veterans. Once those obligations are met, the school aid fund and the transportation fund will be the biggest beneficiaries. Only 15% of the recreational marijuana tax revenue will be distributed to municipalities in which a retail store is located. Therefore the revenue from recreational marijuana may not even be enough to offset the associated costs on public safety, public service and environment etc.

In Ingham county only Lansing and East Lansing allow, or 22 out of 24 or **92%** municipalities prohibit recreational cannabis businesses. In Michigan 1,403 out of 1,773 or **79%** municipalities ban recreational cannabis businesses as of Feb 5, 2021.

I strongly urge you to continue to prohibit recreational marijuana businesses in Meridian Township.

Sincerely,

Yingxin Zhou  
2565 Sophiea Pkwy  
Okemos, MI 48864



The  
**MERIDIAN**  
Company  
PLUMBING • HEATING • COOLING • REMODELING

RECEIVED  
FEB 16 2021

February 10, 2021

Meridian Township Planning Commission  
5151 Marsh Road  
Okemos, Michigan 48864  
Attention: Mr. Scott Hendrickson

Re: 1999 East Saginaw Street, East Lansing

Dear Chairperson Hendrickson:

My name is Jim Phillipich and together with my brother Marty, and son Craig, our family owns the Meridian Company. We are now a 37-year-old PHVAC-E contracting firm located for that entire duration within the confines of Meridian Township.

The purpose of this correspondence is exploratory. Our firm's present facility, constructed and occupied in 1999-2000, has now become insufficiently sized to support the growing scope of company offerings. Originally structured for plumbing and residential remodeling purposes, the Meridian Company now offers complete heating and air conditioning, electrical and sewer/drain cleaning services. Employment levels have nearly doubled over the past 20+ years with revenues increasing proportionately as well. Acknowledging all of the above, our firm now wishes to construct a larger, multi-purpose facility on the 15-acre Saginaw Street tract owned by our family since 1998.

In 2018, in anticipation of Saginaw corridor commercial development spurred by the Costco environment 1.5 miles to the west, we garnered approval from the township for C-2 zoning classification of a 5-acre tract of our parcel. Historically, this portion of Meridian Township's Saginaw Street corridor had been designated industrial. Unfortunately, the realities of the corridor, ie., divided two-lane highway, insufficient density of single/family residential enclaves on either side of Saginaw, coupled with the economic aftershocks of the COVID-19 pandemic have essentially extinguished any such anticipation. By virtually all real estate forecasts, the likelihood of any substantive commercial development along the eastern stretch of the township's portion of the corridor ranges somewhere between slim and dim. And likely, this forecast bodes accurate for the next 3-5-years. The only potential exception to this scenario would be the proposed DTN Management mixed-use initiative located at the southeast corner of Saginaw and Newton Road.

Looking back in time, a total of 5-6 non-residential building permits have been issued since 1999 for the roughly 2 mile stretch of Meridian Township's Saginaw corridor. A quartet were for ground-up, new construction endeavors (a medical arts/professional office facility, Meridian Plumbing, Great Lakes Office Interiors and the New Hope Community Church). Two others involved substantial renovation projects to both the City Limits bowling alley and the Fiesta Charra restaurant. Adding to this development scenario, the abandoned Super Cinemas site (40+- acres) remains overgrown and refuse-cluttered for now easily 15 years. This the result of

the township's unilateral rejection at the time of the Meijer Corporation's overtures to construct a new shopping center on the former cinema site. Said Meijer facility is nearing its 9<sup>th</sup> anniversary of existence in Bath Township, roughly an 1/8 of a mile east of Meridian Township.

So, as our family business remains mindful of the past yet focused on the future, our options in pursuing a newer and larger facility essentially rest along two fault lines:

1. Approval by the planning commission (and subsequently the Board of Trustees) of a zoning ordinance amendment stipulating contractors' establishments, such as ours, to once again be allowed in C-2 designated districts. Such use was allowed in Meridian's CS-Community Service District by special use permit circa 1998-2001 while concurrently being a use by right in Industrial-designated areas.
2. Approval by the planning commission (and again subsequently the Board of Trustees) of essentially a "retro-zoning" of our 5-acre parcel of C-2 designation back to its original Industrial classification. Thus, the nature of our contractor establishment would be a use allowed by right.

This correspondence is premised as requesting a preferred "direction" from the planning commission as to which option would be deemed most plausible to pursue. Said counsel would arguably save time and resources on both our part and that of township staff while minimizing duplicity of effort.

In closing, I very much appreciate the commission's consideration of this request. We look forward to again working with township staff in furtherance of our objectives.

Regards,



James Phillipich  
Owner  
The Meridian Company

Cc: Mr. Ronald Styka, Meridian Township Supervisor  
Mr. Mark Kielselbach Meridian Township Director of Planning and Community  
Development



**To:** Planning Commission

**From:** Peter Menser, Principal Planner  
Keith Chapman, Assistant Planner

**Date:** February 18, 2021

**Re:** **Zoning Amendment #21010 (Township Board), amend Code of Ordinances to require Township Board approval of special use permits for motor vehicle sales and service establishments and automobile dealerships in the C-2 and C-3 (Commercial) zoning districts.**

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The Township Board initiated a zoning amendment regarding car dealerships at its meeting on January 5, 2021. Currently, new car dealerships are allowed by special use permit subject to Planning Commission approval in the C-2 (Commercial) zoning district and new or used car dealerships are allowed by right in the C-3 (Commercial) zoning district. The proposed amendment would continue to allow new car dealerships in C-2 by special use permit but the final decision on the special use permit would be made by the Township Board. In the C-3 zoning district new and used car dealerships would be allowed by special use permit subject to Township Board approval.

The proposed zoning amendment includes changes to Sections 86-2, 86-404, and 86-405 and the addition of a new Section 86-660 that outlines the special use permit process for motor vehicle sales and service, new automobile dealerships, and used automobile dealerships. This section contains the application and process for departmental, Planning Commission, and Township Board Review. In addition to applying to new dealerships, this ordinance will require that any expansion of existing dealerships receive special use permit approval from the Township Board.

After reviewing the current ordinance staff is suggesting the following changes to address the directive from the Board and also to clarify the terms in the ordinance:

- New definitions for New Automobile Dealership, Used Automobile Dealership, and Motor Vehicle.
- Replacement with the term "Car" and replacement with the more generic term "Automobile."
- Addition of standards applying to new and used automobile dealerships in C-3 regarding minimum lot size and body shop/sales.
- Addition of new section that requires special use permit approval for the use of any building, land or portion thereof for motor vehicle sales and service establishments, new automobile dealerships, and used automobile dealerships.

**Planning Commission Options**

The Planning Commission may recommend approval as written, recommend approval of a revised version, or recommend denial of the proposed zoning amendment. A resolution will be provided at a future meeting.

**Attachments**

1. Draft ordinance language dated February 1, 2021.
2. December 8, 2020 Township Board Meeting Minutes.

**Chapter 86 Zoning**  
**Article I In General**  
**Section 86-2 Definitions**

**AUTOMOBILE DEALERSHIP, NEW** – The use of any building, land or portion thereof for the display, sale or lease of new automobiles, trucks or vans.

**AUTOMOBILE DEALERSHIP, USED** – The use of any building, land or portion thereof for the display, sale or lease of new automobiles, trucks or vans.

**MOTOR VEHICLE** – Any self-propelled vehicle designed primarily for transportation of persons or goods along public streets, roads or other public ways.

**Chapter 86 Zoning**  
**Article IV District Regulations**  
**DIVISION 3 Commercial, Retail, and Business Districts C-1, C-2, & C-3**  
**Section 86-404 C-2 Commercial District**

(a) – (d) Remains as written

(e) Uses permitted by special use permit

(1)– (15) Remains as written

(16) New automobile ~~car~~ dealerships, subject to the following:

a. Minimum lot size: four acres.

b. Vehicle service and repair and used car sales shall be permitted ancillary uses to the principal new car sales use.

c. Body shops shall not be a permitted ancillary use.

(17) Remains as written

**Chapter 86 Zoning**  
**Article IV District Regulations**  
**DIVISION 3 Commercial, Retail, and Business Districts C-1, C-2, & C-3**  
**Section 86-405 C-3 Commercial District**

(a) – (b) Remains as written

(c) Uses permitted by right.

(1) - (8) Remains as written

(9) ~~Motor vehicle sales and service establishments, provided the outdoor area is paved and properly drained. Dismantled or inoperative vehicles, if stored on-site, shall be within a wholly enclosed building or outside provided the area is enclosed by a solid fence. In addition to the requirements of Subsection 86-402(1)b, uses in this category shall be set back a minimum of 50 feet along side and rear property lines adjacent to other nonresidential uses.~~

(10) - (13) Remains as written

(d) Remains as written

(e) Uses permitted by special use permit.

(1) - (14) Remains as written

(15) Motor vehicle sales and service establishments, provided the outdoor area is paved and properly drained. Dismantled or inoperative vehicles, if stored on-site, shall be within a wholly enclosed building or outside provided the area is enclosed by a solid fence. In addition to the requirements of Subsection 86-402(1)b, uses in this category shall be set back a minimum of 50 feet along side and rear property lines adjacent to other nonresidential uses.

(16) New automobile dealerships, and used automobile dealerships, subject to the following:

a. Minimum lot size: four acres.

b. Vehicle service and repair and used car sales shall be permitted ancillary uses to the principal new car sales use.

c. Body shops shall not be a permitted ancillary use.

## **Chapter 86 Zoning**

### **Article VI Special Use Requirements and Restrictions**

#### **Section 86-660 Motor vehicle sales and service establishments, new automobile dealerships and used automobile dealerships.**

(a) Purpose. The use of any building, land or portion thereof for motor vehicle sales and service establishments, new automobile dealerships, and used automobile dealerships shall require a special use permit due to impact such development has upon adjacent property owners, neighborhoods and public infrastructure. The requirements of this section apply to any such type of use.

**(b) Application and departmental reviews.**

(1) Application. The application for a special use permit shall be submitted to the Director of Community Planning and Development in accordance with § 86-124.

(2) Departmental reviews. The applicant's plan shall be reviewed by the Township Department of Community Planning and Development, the Township EMS/Fire Department, the Township Police Department, the Township Engineer, the county drain commissioner, and the county road commission or the state department of transportation, whichever road agency has jurisdiction over roads in the immediate vicinity, in order to ensure that public utilities, road, and other infrastructure systems are or will be adequate to support the proposed development.

(c) Review process. Upon determination that the application is complete, the Director of Community Planning and Development shall initiate a review process in accordance with Article II, Division 4 of this chapter, subject to all hearings and other provisions set forth therein, as applicable, except the final decision on the special use permit shall be made by the Township Board.

(1) Planning Commission action. The Planning Commission after holding a public hearing shall make a recommendation to the Township Board. In making a recommendation the Planning Commission shall follow the review criteria in § 86-126 and may recommend conditions in accordance with § 86-127.

(2) Township Board action. Following review of the Planning Commission's recommendation and record, the Township Board may deny, approve, or approve with conditions an application for a special use permit. Prior to making a decision on a special use permit, the Township Board may hold a public hearing on the request. Notice of the public hearing shall be given in the same manner as outlined in § 86-65 of the Code of Ordinances.

(d) Amendments. Any amendments to an approved special use permit shall be in accordance with § 86-129 and subject to the approval of the Township Board.