

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
June 25, 2012**

APPROVED

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

PRESENT: Commissioners Cordill, Deits, Honicky, Jackson, Scales (7:03 P.M.), Scott-Craig
ABSENT: Commissioner Goodale, Hildebrandt, Norkin
STAFF: Principal Planner Gail Oranchak

1. Call meeting to order

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

2. Approval of agenda

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

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 5-0.

3. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Cordill moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of June 11, 2012. Seconded by Commissioner Jackson.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 5-0.

4. Public Remarks

Chair Deits opened the floor for public remarks

Gene Turnwald, 5586 White Ash, Haslett, spoke in support of the project, but expressed concern with the location of the second building. As the owner of the Hamilton Building at 2160 Hamilton Road, he believed the second building will block view of the Hamilton building from Okemos Road and expressed concern patrons will have a tendency to park in the right-of-way or on his property. Mr. Turnwald believed if the second building was placed farther from the sidewalk, it would allow for additional commercial parking in front and give a more open-air courtyard effect.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, spoke to the ability of the developer to construct exclusively residential in certain phases of MUPUD #12014 (Capstone). He believed the Township Board never passed language to allow that when it adopted conditional zoning. Mr. Bowlby spoke to provisions in the MUPUD ordinance regarding phasing and suggested the Planning Commission consider initiating a zoning ordinance change in this regard.

Michael Powell, Powell Engineering & Associates, 4700 Cornerstone Drive, White Lake, introduced Scott Halinger, representative for the owner; Randy Thomas, Trilogy site manager, and property owner Roger Drobney. He outlined Trilogy's revisions to SUP #12021 since the last meeting.

Chair Deits closed public remarks.

5. Communications

- A. Robert J. Phipps, 3200 West Road, Haslett; RE: SUP #12021 (Trilogy)
- B. Darrell Vaughn, 1614 W. Grand River, Okemos; RE: SUP #12021 (Trilogy)
- C. Jason and Stephanie Sheffer, 2090 Ashland Avenue, Okemos; RE: SUP #12021 (Trilogy)
- D. Gene F. Turnwald, 2160 Hamilton Road, Okemos; RE: Douglas J. Concept Plan

- E. Karen Izzo, President, Meridian Travel, 2160 Hamilton Road, Okemos; RE: Douglas J. Concept Plan

6. Public hearings (None)

7. Unfinished Business

- A. Special Use Permit #12021 (Trilogy Health Services), request to construct a 91-bed assisted living/skilled nursing care center on approximately nine acres zoned RA and RD east of Central Park Drive

Planning Commission and the applicant's representatives discussion:

- No good alternative sites for this development on the property
- Moving the project to the south would limit the ability of a second access as required by the Fire Department
- Closest sewer connection is north of the subject property
- Applicant is working with the Ingham County Department of Transportation and Roads
- Current plan is a better one than moving the project to the south
- Low profile entry sign at the northeast corner of the intersection
- On site signs to assist visitors and deliveries
- Fresh clearing in the form of trimming to open up the sight line does not require a wetland use permit
- Drive is within the 40 foot natural features setback and will require a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals
- Certificate of Need was issued on November 8, 2011 for 74 skilled beds; the remaining 17 beds are for assisted living residents
- Applicant decision to use only 55 of those beds and give the remainder back to the state as this new prototype encompasses shorter hallways

Commissioner Scales 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 #12021 (Trilogy Health Services) with the following conditions:

- 1. Approval is granted based on the site plans dated June 21, 2012 prepared by Powell Engineering Associates, LLC, subject to revisions as required.**
- 2. Approval is subject to the applicant receiving Township Board approval to construct a building greater than 25,000 square feet in gross floor area.**
- 3. The applicant shall submit an application for a land division subject to review and approval by the Director of Community Planning and Development.**
- 4. Prior to grading or construction taking place on the site, the applicant shall obtain a land clearing permit subject to review and approval by the Director of Community Planning and Development.**
- 5. A minimum 60 percent of all sides of the building façade shall be masonry materials, either brick or stone. Building materials and colors shall be subject to the review and approval of the Director of Community Planning and Development.**
- 6. The final site plan and landscape plan shall be subject to the approval of the Director of Community Planning and Development.**

7. All future site plans must depict the corrected wetland boundary as verified by the Township's Environmental Consultant and all activities must take place outside the wetland unless the Township and the Department of Environmental Quality grant wetland use permits.
8. A seven-foot sidewalk shall be installed along the south side of the access drive.
9. Street trees shall be installed along Central Park Drive. Species and location of the trees shall be subject to the approval of the Director of Community Planning and Development and the Ingham County Department of Transportation and Roads.
10. A plan shall be submitted clearly indicating all trees to be preserved on the subject site. If deemed necessary by the Director of Community Planning and Development, the trees shall be properly protected prior to the commencement of grading or construction activities related to the proposed mixed use project. Tree protection shall be provided as outlined in Section 22-179 of the Code of Ordinances.
11. Prior to issuance of any permit for construction activity including grading permits, any wellhead(s) located on the site shall be properly closed and abandoned pursuant to the requirements of the Ingham County Health Department and the Township.
12. Clearances under the canopies shall be no less than 13'6".
13. Trash and recycling dumpsters shall be enclosed on four sides; the enclosure(s) shall be constructed of brick or stone materials to match the building. Solid walls or fencing shall be no more than six feet in height unless the Zoning Board of Appeals grants the necessary height variance.
14. The generator and transformer shall be properly screened either with a wall or fencing and landscaping. Solid walls or fencing may be no taller than six feet in height unless the Zoning Board of Appeals grants the necessary height variance.
15. Site and building lighting shall comply with Article VII in Chapter 38 of the Code of Ordinances and shall be subject to the approval of the Director of Community Planning and Development. Streetlights shall not exceed 15 feet in height. LED lighting shall be used where feasible.
16. Debris found on the subject site, and debris resulting from clearing, grading, or construction activities related to the proposed project shall be removed from the site and shall be properly disposed.
17. The landscape plan shall be in compliance with all applicable sections of the Code of Ordinances pertaining to landscaping and is subject to the approval of the Director of Community Planning and Development.
18. Final utility, grading, and storm drainage plans for the site shall be subject to the approval of the Director of Public Works and Engineering and shall be completed in accordance with the Township Engineering Design and Construction Standards.
19. A storm water system maintenance plan shall be subject to the approval of the Director of Public Works and Engineering.

20. **The applicant shall obtain all necessary permits, licenses, and approvals from the Ingham County Department of Transportation and Roads, Ingham County Drain Commissioner, and the Township. Copies of all permits, licenses, and approval letters shall be submitted to the Department of Community Planning and Development.**
21. **The applicant shall obtain all necessary approvals, licenses or permits to operate an assisted living/skilled care facility from the State of Michigan and the Ingham County Health Department. A copy of each approval shall be submitted to the Department of Community Planning and Development.**
22. **A copy of the information that exists on computer for the project and construction plans shall be provided to the Township Engineering staff in an Auto Cad compatible format.**

Seconded by Commissioner Cordill.

The seconder offered the following friendly amendment:

- **Amend the second whereas clause, by deleting “May 21” and inserting “June 11”**

The amendment was accepted by the maker.

Commissioner Scott-Craig offered the following friendly amendment:

- **Amend condition #10 by deleting “mixed use” after “proposed”**
- **Amend condition #19 by inserting “and” after “Works”**

The amendments were accepted by the maker.

Planning Commission discussion:

- **Appreciation that Trilogy returned to Meridian Township with a better location for this project**
- **Good example of infill development in an effort to prevent urban sprawl**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners Cordill, Honicky, Scales, Scott-Craig, Vice Chair Jackson, Chair Deits

NAYS: None

Motion carried 6-0.

Commissioner Scott-Craig moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby recommends approval of Special Use Permit #12021 (Trilogy Health Services) for a building greater than 25,000 square feet in gross floor area. Seconded by Commissioner Scales.

Commissioner Cordill offered the following friendly amendment:

- **Amend the second whereas clause, by deleting “May 21” and inserting “June 11”**

The amendment was accepted by the maker.

Planning Commission discussion:

- **Continued concern about the location in the curve of Central Park Drive**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners Cordill, Honicky, Scales, Scott-Craig, Vice Chair Jackson, Chair Deits

NAYS: None

Motion carried 6-0.

8. Other Business

A. Mixed Use Planned Unit Development Concept Plan Review: Douglas J Mixed Use Planned Unit Development

Principal Planner Oranchak gave a brief overview of the concept plan for Douglas J. as outlined in staff memorandum dated June 21, 2012.

Ryan Henry, Kincaid Henry Building Group, 934 Clark Street, Lansing, introduced Scott and Douglas Weaver, Jack DeBruin with Design Plus and Jamerson Ries with Kebs, Inc.

Scott Weaver, Douglas J Group, 4663 Ardmore, Okemos, expressed the desire for Douglas J to remain in the downtown Okemos area while expanding to allow more amenities for their clientele. He gave a brief history of events which lead to the decision to move forward with this mixed use planned unit development (MUPUD).

Jack DeBruin, Design Plus, 230 East Fulton Street, Grand Rapids, architect for the applicant, gave an overview of the project's design, one three story building with a 10,000 square foot footprint and a second building comprised of retail and residential apartments. He noted their intent to have only one curb cut to service parking behind both buildings. Mr. DeBruin indicated the first floor of the corner building will house the salon, the second floor will offer spa services and the third will be smaller than the lower two floors and will be used for in-house guest services with an outdoor deck and possible green roof with potted trees. He indicated the additional parking spaces are needed for their Holiday Open House, adding their current location will be turned into corporate offices.

Jamerson Ries, Kebs, Inc., 2115 Haslett Road, Haslett, noted work is in progress to figure out door locations. He added valet parking services will be available.

Planning Commission and the applicant's representatives discussed the following:

- Appreciation for the project as it beautifies the downtown Okemos area
- No specifics in the ordinance on parking requirements for a day spa
- Desire for the applicant to work with business neighbors to resolve concerns
- Appreciation that the traffic is directed into the back of the buildings
- Final floor plan has not yet been formulated
- Goal of the day spa is to provide more amenities to allow clients a different experience
- Four (4) proposed parallel parking spaces in front of the second building
- On-street parking as public parking if placed in the right-of-way
- 33 parking spaces needed for the corporate offices
- Location is positive for multi-modal transportation and speaks to not requiring the applicant to incorporate the 18 additional parking spaces
- Township has worked to reduce the amount of parking within a MUPUD
- Suggestion that parking spaces in the northeast corner could be deferred and used as greenspace
- Third floor of the corner building is an excellent opportunity to employ a green roof
- Possible opportunity to count a green roof as permeable surface
- Applicant plans to use permeable concrete for infiltration and employ rainwater harvesting
- Height requirement maximum for buildings is 45 feet
- Commissioner preference for the buildings to meet the property line
- Suggestion to diminish the impact of parking spaces on Okemos Road to the north
- Roundabout at the intersection of Okemos and Hamilton Roads is no longer under consideration by the county
- Goal of a MUPUD is to promote walkability and the sidewalk on the east side is too narrow

- Preference for the east side of the corner building to have greenspace as a buffer for pedestrians
- Eight foot sidewalk with three to four feet of greenspace is proposed along the building façade on Okemos Road
- Suggestion for angle parking on the east side of the corner building to allow for a wider buffer for pedestrians
- Angle parking takes up the same depth as parallel parking
- Dimensional parking requirements are not waivable under the MUPUD, but could be acquired through variances
- Concern with the no left turn at the intersection for traffic coming from the south creating more traffic on Methodist Street
- Applicant belief there will be no additional traffic
- The same traffic issue has existed since the left turn onto Hamilton was removed several years ago
- As a former gas station site, the property was “cleaned up” before it was sold
- One mixed use project with two (2) phases
- Second staging phase (residential/retail) would be 6,000 square feet per floor
- Residential would be four (4) one bedroom units and two (2) two bedroom units per floor and targeted for occupancy by young professionals
- Explanation of Society of Environmentally Responsible Facilities (SERF) certification standards
- SERF standards are similar to LEED standards
- Location of water features along the west side of the building
- Request for feedback on plantings and the type of urban aesthetic landscape for this site
- Possibility of working with the DDA to site an art item on the property
- Applicant currently participates with the DDA for art placement on the Ardmore property
- Current parking agreement and arrangements with Crites, Tidey & Associates as well as Independent Bank were not included (27 and 19 spaces respectively)
- Suggestion for possible seating along the Hamilton Road streetscape
- Suggestion to include covered bicycle parking

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

Commissioner Scott-Craig reported his attendance at a health impact assessment for the Burcham Hagadorn Corridor sponsored by a variety of state and local agencies.

Chair Deits noted the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) will hold an input meeting on sustainability in communities in Bath Township on June 28, 2012, indicating additional information can be obtained at TCRPC’s website.

10. New applications (None)

11. Site plans received (None)

12. Site plans approved (None)

13. Public remarks

Chair Deits opened public remarks.

Will White, 2142-½ Hamilton Road, expressed appreciation that Douglas J wishes to invest in the downtown area but was concerned the current design of the Douglas J MUPUD is more suited to a suburb and does not fit into the DDA’s desire for a viable walkable community. He noted possible obstacles to this proposed development include shared parking agreements, heritage trees and the historic Smiley House.

Chair Deits closed public remarks.

14. Adjournment

Chair Deits adjourned the regular meeting at 9:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra K. Otto
Recording Secretary