

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
REGULAR MEETING PLANNING COMMISSION
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198
517.853.4000, Township Hall Room
Monday, September 23, 2024, 6:30 pm

PRESENT: Vice Chair Snyder, Commissioners Brooks, McConnell, Romback, and Scales

ABSENT: Chair Shrewsbury, Commissioner Blumer

STAFF: Principal Planner Brian Shorkey

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Vice Chair Snyder called the September 23, 2024, regular meeting for the Meridian Township Planning Commission to order at 6:30 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Vice Chair Snyder called the roll of the Board. All board members were present except Chair Shrewsbury and Commissioner Blumer.

3. PUBLIC REMARKS

Vice Chair Snyder opened public remarks at 6:31 pm

Vice Chair Snyder closed public remarks at 6:31 pm

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vice Chair Snyder asked to add an agenda item to Other Business to review the agenda for the Michigan Planning Conference and make suggestions to Principal Planner Shorkey for sessions they would like him to attend.

Commissioner McConnell moved to approve the September 23, 2024, regular Planning Commission meeting agenda as amended. Seconded by Commissioner Scales. Motion passed unanimously.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Scales asked that 7A be amended to add the time the hearing closed.

Commissioner Romback moved to approve the Minutes of the September 9, 2024, Planning Commission Regular Meeting as amended. Seconded by Commissioner Brooks. Motion passed unanimously.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Okemos Local Investments - Email

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

NONE

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. SUP #24023 – Okemos Gateway

Principal Planner Shorkey gave an overview of the application and the work that has taken place to date. He noted that there is a resolution of approval but if the Commission has more questions for the applicant, they must postpone and ask the applicant to attend a future meeting.

Commissioner McConnell moved to adopt the resolution to recommend approval of SUP #24023 to construct and adult use marijuana retailer at 1614 West Grand River, Okemos MI 48864.

Commissioner Scales moved that the motion be amended to include the additional bullet points stated in the memo. Supported by Commissioner McConnell. Motion passed unanimously.

The motion as amended seconded by Commissioner Romback to include the statements for the following reasons:

- **The proposed project conforms with the Township Master Plan and the Future Land Use map,**
- **The proposed project conforms with the Adult Use Marijuana regulations that have been adopted by the Township,**
- **The proposed project that would result fits the character of the area.**

Motion passed unanimously.

B. Planning Commission Bylaw Update

Principal Planner Shorkey gave an overview of the process as has occurred to date. He outlined the changes made to meet the Commission’s requests.

Commissioner Romback asked for clarification regarding the differences between the votes which require a portion of the quorum versus those that require a portion of the membership. Principal Planner Shorkey clarified that only Master Plan amendments require two-thirds of the members, other decisions require simple majority of the quorum.

Vice Chair Snyder asked that the wording of 5.4 be changed to use the word “members” only once.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Planning Commission Meeting Resolution

Vice Chair Snyder and Principal Planner Shorkey summarized the discussion that has occurred to date.

Commissioner McConnell moved to adopt the resolution approving the updated 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Schedule. Supported by Commissioner Scales. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Planning Commission Discussion

i. Single-Family Residential Density

Principal Planner Shorkey outlined the changes he made to the maps as requested by the Commission.

Commissioner McConnell asked how the property outside of the Urban Service Boundary might be affected by development. Principal Planner Shorkey indicated that it would be limited by current zoning ordinances.

Commissioner Brooks asked about some of the spaces marked as over ten acres that surround individual parcels. Principal Planner Shorkey stated that they are preserved open space that cannot be subdivided nor built on and are part of Planned Unit Developments. Principal Planner Shorkey noted that, through the process of creating the maps, he has discovered that those parcels may need to be classified differently as Dedicated Open Space.

Commissioner Brooks asked if there is a way to know the history of how lots in the Township have been built out, particularly if the lots have gotten smaller over time. Principal Planner Shorkey stated that there is not a way to break the data out in that manner and said that lots are trending larger. Commissioner Scales commented that the property south of Tihart Road on Powell Road appears to be larger lots.

Commissioner McConnell suggested that the preserved open space areas and other parcels with use restriction be excluded on the next map to allow better ability to focus on the areas that have been or could be developed as Single-Family Residential. Principal Planner Shorkey stated that he could work on it and mentioned that one of the objectives of the Master Plan update is to include a more specific, parcel-by-parcel buildout analysis and this discussion helps achieve that objective.

Vice Chair Snyder asked if there were a way to show how wetlands overlay with this. Principal Planner Shorkey showed an overlay of where delineated wetlands lie on the Township Parcel Viewer.

Commissioner Brooks asked the Commission to help clarify the goal of this exercise, how to define what they need to make better decisions. Commissioner McConnell stated that he wants to know what the land use looks like now and try to project where it may go in the future; how much more can the Township grow and under what conditions. Commissioner Scales stated that it validates some of his assumptions and informs the Commission that they are on track with the Master Plan. Commissioners concurred that the Township is approaching a point where there will be no more buildable land. Commissioner Brooks stated that he would like to know more about density, particularly if a

goal will be to increase density in certain places. Commissioner Brooks stated that this map does help to understand density if an assumption is made about average family size, but that it might be possible to overlay census data. Vice Chair Snyder concurred.

Commissioner Romback asked for clarification about long, narrow lots that cannot be subdivided, what could change to allow those areas to be subdivided. Principal Planner Shorkey stated that it would require an ordinance change to allow private access easements instead of a publicly maintained road.

C. Michigan Planning Conference Courses Discussion

Vice Chair Snyder stated that Principal Planner Shorkey will be attending the Michigan Planning Conference and asked the Commission to offer suggestions for the courses they would like him to take.

Principal Planner Shorkey clarified the courses he will be required to take for certification purposes and asked that they Commissioners suggest courses within those limitations.

The Planning Commission discussed the upcoming course with Principal Planner Shorkey and made several suggestions, which were noted by Principal Planner Shorkey.

Commissioner Scales thanked Principal Planner Shorkey for sharing the agenda with the Commission.

Commissioner Brooks welcomed Principal Planner Shorkey to share pertinent information with the Commission, to which the other Commissioners concurred.

10. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Township Board Update

Principal Planner Shorkey reported that the 2025 budget was approved, also disbandment of the Transportation Commission was discussed, and it will move forward to the next meeting for action. Commissioners McConnell and Scales commented with some history of the Transportation Commission's function.

B. Liaison Reports

Commissioner McConnell reported that a draft report of the 2024 Greenspace Master Plan has been recently submitted to the Environmental Commission and more members may be sought.

Commissioner Brooks outlined the ZBA's discussion regarding the signage at the Playmaker's property and the discussion regarding the variance request for Accessory Dwelling Units

Commissioner Scales reported that the Brownfield Redevelopment Committee authorized the second part of reimbursement request by American House and the Brownfield TIF for the Village of Okemos properties will be revoked because the properties no longer qualify

11. PROJECT UPDATES

A. Project Report

Principal Planner Shorkey stated that there are no changes from the last update, but there may be applications for zoning and SUP for a drive through restaurant on the next agenda.

12. PUBLIC REMARKS

Vice Chair Snyder opened public remarks at 7:44

Vice Chair Snyder closed public remarks at 7:44

13. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Scales complemented Vice Chair Snyder for leading the meeting well. Vice Chair Snyder thanked him.

Vice Chair Snyder asked if Principal Planner Shorkey would consider sharing the Single-Family Residential Density maps with the Board. He stated that he would talk with Interim Manager Schmitt about sharing the maps. Commissioner McConnell suggested waiting until the Commission has done some more review and discussion.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Snyder called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 pm

Commissioner Scales moved to adjourn the September 23, 2024 regular meeting of the Planning Commission. Seconded by Commissioner McConnell. Motion passed unanimously.