

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
REGULAR MEETING PLANNING COMMISSION
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198
517.853.4000, Township Hall Room
Monday, July 8, 2024, 6:30 pm

PRESENT: Chair Shrewsbury, Commissioners Blumer, Brooks, McConnell, Rombach, and Scales

ABSENT: Vice-Chair Snyder,

STAFF: Principal Planner Brian Shorkey

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Shrewsbury called the July 8, 2024, regular meeting for the Meridian Township Planning Commission to order at 6:31 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

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

3. PUBLIC REMARKS

Chair Shrewsbury opened public remarks at 6:32 pm

Greg Fedewa, representative for Fedewa Holdings, spoke in support of REZ #24013.

John Leone, Township resident, spoke in opposition to REZ #24013.

David Fedewa, representative for Fedewa Holdings, spoke in support of REZ #24013.

Wayne Popard, Township resident, spoke in opposition to REZ #24013.

Joel Major, Township resident, spoke in opposition to REZ #24013.

Cecelia Kramer, representative for Faith Lutheran Church, spoke in support of REZ #24013.

Chris Kloc, Township resident, spoke in opposition to REZ #24013.

Debra Major, Township resident, spoke in opposition to REZ #24013.

David Kloc, Township resident, spoke in opposition to REZ #24013.

Peggy Anderson, Township resident, spoke in opposition to REZ #24013.

Jerry Fedewa, representative for Fedewa Holdings, spoke in support of REZ #24013.

Michael McIntosh, Township resident, spoke in opposition to REZ #24013.

Chair Shrewsbury closed public remarks at 7:07

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Scales moved to approve the July 8, 2024, regular Planning Commission meeting agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Blumer. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner McConnell asked that discussion regarding sidewalk master plan and ratio of rental to owner occupied be added to item 8.A. Chair Shrewsbury determined that such discussion can be included with 8.A and does not need to be a separate agenda item

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Scales moved to approve the Minutes of the June 24, 2024, Planning Commission Regular Meeting as amended. Seconded by Commissioner McConnell. Motion passed, Commissioner Blumer abstaining.

Chair Shrewsbury asked that the spelling of a name on the communications section be verified and that the amendment to the minutes be clarified.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. David Kloc re: REZ #24013
- B. Debra Major re: REZ #24013
- C. Ray and Trish Ugorowski re: REZ #24013
- D. Michael McIntosh re: REZ #24013 (email)
- E. Brad Shaw re: REZ #24013 (email)
- F. Cecelia Kramer re: REZ #24013 (handout)
- G. Bob Westrate re: REZ #24013 (email)
- H. Kristina Kloc re: REZ #24013 (email)

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

NONE

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. REZ #24013 – Fedewa Holdings (Dobie Road)

Principal Planner Shorkey reviewed the discussion that has occurred to date regarding this agenda item and highlighted the information included in this packet that the Commissioners requested at the previous meeting. Principal Planner Shorkey pointed out that the Planning Commission’s decision was a recommendation and that the final decision of the application would come from the Board. Principal Planner Shorkey pointed out the options that the Planning Commission had and that there were resolutions to recommend approval and denial in the packet.

Commissioner Romback disclosed a concern about potential conflict of interest and asked the Commission for their opinion. Commissioners thanked Commissioner Romback for his transparency and determined that there is no conflict of interest.

Commissioner Blumer moved to allow Commissioner Romback to participate in the decision of this matter. Seconded by Commissioner Scales. Motion passed 4 to 1, Commissioner Brooks voting against and Commissioner Romback abstaining.

Commissioner Scales asked staff for detail for how this grew from the Master Plan land use discussion. Commissioner Scales asked the applicant what sort of development changes he would suggest given the opposition from the neighborhood and recommended that the applicant meet with the neighborhood. Jerry Fedewa, applicant, approached the podium to answer that he could downsize to 8 units per acre and add fencing and trees to the property line to diffuse noise and lighting. Commissioner Scales stated that based on the 2019 decision by the Board, he would not recommend this decision because density seems to be an issue.

Commissioner Romback asked staff for details about the traffic study and its connection to the current state of the property. Commissioner Romback asked the applicant how he proposed speaking with potential tenants as indicated in the letter the applicant sent to the Commission. Mr. Fedewa acknowledged that it would be difficult to speak with potential tenants because tenants typically need a place to live on a shorter timeline than a proposed rental unit could be built, but that this type of development is sought after and the location offers many attractive amenities.

Commissioner McConnell asked for clarity regarding the ratio of owner occupied to rental homes and asked if this portion of Dobie Road is part of the Pathway Master Plan.

Principal Planner Shorkey explained the 2019 rezoning request, the 2022-2023 update of the Master Plan and a subsequent land division application for the 4.3 acres that met the zoning ordinance. Principal Planner Shorkey stated that the traffic study is based on the allowed density and current zoning, not the current state of the property. Principal Planner Shorkey stated that the ratio of owner occupied to rental homes is taken from the latest US Census data and clarified that the applicant would be required to meet the Pathway requirements if the property does not currently meet them.

Commissioner Blumer moved to adopt the resolution to recommend denial of Rezoning #24013 to rezone approximately 4.28 acres located on Dobie Road from RAA (Single Family-Low Density) to RC (Multiple Family, maximum 14 dwelling units per acre), because the proposed rezoning does not match the character of adjacent residential neighborhoods to the west. Supported by Commissioner Scales. Motion passed 4 to 1, Commissioner McConnell voting against and Commissioner Romback abstained.

At 8:27, Chair Shrewsbury called for a 10-minute recess.

At 8:40, the Commission reconvened.

B. REZ #24015 – Copper Creek Phase 5

Principal Planner Shorkey reviewed the agenda item.

Commissioner McConnell moved to adopt the resolution to recommend approval of Rezoning #24015 to rezone the Subject Property of Haslett Road from RR (Rural Residential) to RA (Single-family residential). Supported by Commissioner Scales. Motion passed unanimously.

C. SUP #24017 – Herbana Adult Use Marijuana

Principal Planner Shorkey reviewed the agenda item.

Commissioner Brooks moved to adopt the resolution to recommend approval of SUP #24017 to construct an adult use marijuana retailer at 2119A Haslett Rd, Haslett, MI 48840. Supported by Commissioner Scales. Motion passed unanimously.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Corridor Approval Authority Appointment

Principal Planner Shorkey informed the Commission that it is not mandated that a Planning Commissioner sit on the Corridor Approval Authority, it is instead at the discretion of the Planning Commission to seat someone on that Board.

Chair Shrewsbury asked that staff include her on the agenda distribution list so that she can arrange to have a Commissioner attend if there is an agenda item that the Commission feels the need to address.

10. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Township Board Update

Principal Planner Shorkey had nothing to report

B. Liaison Reports

Commissioner Scales asked Principal Planner Shorkey to ensure that the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority include him in communications.

Commissioner Brooks reported that the Zoning Board of Appeals approved the items presented to them at the June 26th meeting.

11. PROJECT UPDATES

A. Project Report

Principal Planner Shorkey highlighted the updates to the report.

Commissioner Scales asked for the status of the Village of Okemos development. Principal Planner Shorkey answered that it is still under site plan review.

12. PUBLIC REMARKS

Chair Shrewsbury opened public remarks at 8:53

Debra Major, Township resident, thanked the Commission for their consideration of public comments regarding REZ #24013.

Chair Shrewsbury closed public remarks at 8:54

13. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Blumer and Commissioner McConnell thanked the community for their thoughtful input on the issue of REZ #24013. Commissioner McConnell also stated that character attacks aimed at applicants are inappropriate in discussions; Chair Shrewsbury concurred.

Commissioner Scales announced the Meridian Pride event on August 10th. Commissioner Scales also commented that there is a transparency issue surrounding discussions involving all sides of an issue and that the Commission should make efforts to invite all parties.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Shrewsbury called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 pm

Commissioner McConnell moved to adjourn the July 8, 2024 regular meeting of the Planning Commission. Seconded by Commissioner Brooks. Motion passed unanimously.