

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
July 11, 2016**

APPROVED

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

PRESENT: Commissioners Cordill (7:09 P.M.), DeGroff, Ianni, Jackson, Opsommer, Scott-Craig,
Van Coevering
ABSENT: Commissioners Honicky, Tenaglia
STAFF: Principal Planner Oranchak

1. Call meeting to order

Chair Scott-Craig called the regular meeting to order at 7:05 P.M.

2. Approval of agenda

Commissioner Jackson moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner DeGroff.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

3. Approval of Minutes

**Commissioner Opsommer moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of June 13, 2016.
Seconded by Commissioner Jackson.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

4. Public Remarks

Chair Scott-Craig opened the floor for public remarks.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, inquired about the posting of Planning Commission work session minutes on the Township website, as he believed they fall under the realm of the Open Meetings Act. He addressed a comment from one Planning Commissioner at the last work session with the consultant hired for the Master Plan about combining the zero to .5 and the .5 to 1.25 du/acre designations for agriculturally zoned land into one identified as zero to 1.25 du/acre. Mr. Bowlby noted that after researching the issue, there is a significant amount of land which would fall under this newly formed category, which comprises approximately 17.8% of the Township. According to his calculations, he stated that increasing the density would allow approximately 4,500 dwelling units on this expanded land designation category. Mr. Bowlby suggested the Planning Commission keep the agriculturally zoned land in the zero to .5 du/acre category. He questioned how the 1.25 du/acre came about, as an acre is 43,560 square feet while rural residential zoning requires a minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet. Mr. Bowlby suggested categories be more consistent with what is contained within that category.

Chair Scott-Craig closed public remarks.

5. Communications (None)

6. Public hearings

- A. Special Use Permit #16071 (Chris Humphrey), a request to establish a Huntington National Bank drive-up ATM in the Meijer parking lot at 2055 Grand River Avenue

Chair Scott-Craig opened the public hearing at 7:14 P.M.

- Introduction by the Chair (announcement of procedures, time limits and protocols for public participation and applicants)
- Summary of subject matter
Principal Planner Oranchak summarized the special use permit request as outlined in staff memorandum dated July 7, 2016.
- Applicant
Chris Humphrey, 4495 Millwater Drive, Powell, Ohio, representative for Huntington Bank, displayed a similar ATM machine located in Bowling Green, Ohio, highlighting the small differences between the one displayed and the proposed project.
- Planning Commission discussion:
Commissioner Ianni inquired as to how many square feet of greenspace will be added through the proposed project.

Mr. Humphrey approximated between 800-900 square feet.

Commissioner Opsommer noted the potential intensity change area (PICA) analysis for the site shows the property directly west along the service drive closest to the front of the Meijer store would still be greenspace adjacent to the current structure. He expressed concern the Township is attempting to create walkability and get people out of their cars, and this project would be added “in the middle” of the parking lot in the area designated for a sidewalk, storefronts, dining and curb side parking.

Commissioner Cordill stated the Master Plan has not yet been adopted.

Commissioner Opsommer indicated the Township is adopting by citation the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission Master Plan which promotes, as a general principle, limiting auto traffic as you enter the mixed core area.

Commissioner Jackson cautioned fellow Planning Commissioners that when they are assessing a project before them, they must do so on the basis of the applicable ordinances and the types of uses allowed under those ordinances.

Commissioner Ianni pointed out the applicant is proposing to reduce impervious surface area while increasing greenspace.

Commissioner Jackson inquired of the applicant as to the amount of traffic expected to be generated per day by this drive-up ATM.

Mr. Humphrey responded that although drive-up usage significantly varies depending upon location, his company is using 137 cars over a 12 hour period. He believed the number of vehicles for this specific ATM location would be approximately the same as the number of vehicles which use the area as parking.

Commissioner Jackson addressed the issue of walk-up usage of this ATM. She inquired if there was a specific design which would encourage walk-up use.

Mr. Humphrey stated walk-up use of a drive-up ATM is discouraged due to the danger posed. He noted the ATM is designed for a handicapped person in a vehicle, but not a handicapped individual who is not in a vehicle.

Commissioner Cordill inquired as to where the closest Huntington National Bank branch is located.

Principal Planner Oranchak responded inside of the Okemos Meijer.

Commissioner Cordill inquired as to the hours of the Okemos Meijer branch.

Mr. Humphrey responded that in most circumstances, large stores like Meijer encourage longer bank hours, including weekends.

Chair Scott-Craig inquired if there was an ATM machine at the branch inside of the Okemos Meijer.

Mr. Humphrey replied he did not know the answer to that question.

Commissioner Opsommer replied there is an ATM near the entrance to the branch in the front of the store.

Commissioner Opsommer noted since there is more than adequate space for this project which requires so little space, he was interested in knowing the impetus for selecting these particular 17 parking spaces.

Mr. Humphrey responded the location was picked through discussions between the two parties, acknowledging Meijer preferred to have the location along the periphery of its parking lot while Huntington Bank preferred to have it located in both a visible and accessible place. He indicated the decision has the drive-up ATM nested between two existing landscaped islands.

Commissioner Opsommer asked where the Meijer property line is located.

Principal Planner Oranchak replied Meijer has 100 feet of lot width at the entry location on Okemos Road nearest to the proposed area, which is the minimum required for lot width on a public street. She added the proposed location before the Planning Commission was not the first place which staff was shown for the ATM. Principal Planner Oranchak added the earlier version was positioned in an area which staff did not believe to be in the best area and one to which they did not think Meijer would agree.

Commissioner DeGroff inquired as to why Huntington Bank chose to include greenspace as shown on the overhead, instead of the less expensive version shown earlier in Bowling Green, Ohio.

Mr. Humphrey responded he worked with staff to provide the type of ATM which would best fit the community.

Chair Scott-Craig inquired about the issue of the pass-through.

Principal Planner Oranchak replied while it is not a specific requirement, staff has required a by-pass where there are many potential cars in line. She added for this project, there is a minimum three (3) car stacking spaces, while the applicant has depicted five (5) cars. Principal Planner Oranchak believed that as bank patrons approached the ATM, the visual picture would show drivers if there were long lines.

Chair Scott-Craig asked the applicant's representative what thought has gone into the possibility of the ATM being so popular that there is excessive usage.

Mr. Humphrey replied his educated guess would be that Huntington Bank would locate another ATM "somewhere" in the neighborhood. He stated the issue has not historically been a problem for the bank. Mr. Humphrey expressed confidence that the amount of stacking will be sufficient, as he has constructed many ATM locations with three (3) car stacking.

Chair Scott-Craig closed the public hearing at 7:40 P.M.

7. Unfinished Business (None)

8. Other Business

A. Master Plan Update – Urban Service Boundary

Chair Scott-Craig stated the Planning Commission discussed taking a straw poll in the earlier work session to obtain a sense of where members stand on the Urban Service Boundary (USB). He summarized the various positions verbalized during the work session. Chair Scott-Craig explained one position is to accept the "red line" proposed by the Township Board, with six designated areas. He noted the two areas of greatest concern were areas #3 and #6. He identified Option 1 as the Board approved boundary and Option 2 as agreement with Board areas #1, #2, #4 and #5, and Planning Commission line for areas #3 and #6.

It was the consensus of the Planning Commission to move forward with Option 2.

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

Commissioner DeGroff reported his attendance at this morning's DDA Meeting where a review of the Celebrate Meridian event was discussed. He indicated the DDA made money on the event and voted to allocate funds to host another event in 2017. Commissioner DeGroff stated a second topic of discussion was what type of infrastructure development can spur growth in the downtown Okemos area, with all in agreement that some type of parking solution is needed for the DDA area.

Commissioner Van Coevering voiced appreciation for the Township staff's communication to the public regarding the recent rain storm and subsequent power outage.

Commissioner Jackson announced that in December, HOMTV will begin promoting Meridian Township's 175th anniversary.

Chair Scott-Craig reported his attendance at the monthly Economic Development Corporation (EDC) meeting where two potential projects were discussed which would be located within a industrial district zoning area. He noted these two uses are not currently permitted in the Township's industrial zoning ordinance. At that meeting, Chair Scott-Craig requested the EDC help facilitate input from developers to obtain feedback on the future land use map (FLUM). He indicated his plan is to hold a special work session with the developer beginning at 4:00 P.M. on July 25, 2016.

Commissioner Van Coevering asked if the Planning Commission formally requests input from the school districts on the Master Plan as a matter of course.

Chair Scott-Craig explained the Master Plan is sent to all stakeholders in the area, both public and private entities. He noted those recipients have 63 days in which to provide comment back to the Township.

A. New Applications

- i. Rezoning #16030 (Maniaci), a request to rezone 3690 Hulett Road, Okemos from RR (Rural Residential) to RAA (Single Family-Low Density)
- ii. Special Use Permit #16081 (Mid-Michigan Ponds), a request to work in the 100-year floodplain to improve a pond at 575 Piper Road, Haslett

B. Update of Ongoing Projects

- i. Site Plans Received - NONE
- ii. Site Plans Approved - NONE

10. Public remarks

Chair Scott-Craig opened and closed public remarks.

11. Adjournment

Chair Scott-Craig adjourned the regular meeting at 8:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra K. Otto
Recording Secretary