

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

**February 10, 2020**

**5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198**

**517-853-4560, Town Hall Room, 7:00 P.M.**

**PRESENT: Commissioners Lane, Hendrickson, Trezise, Premoe, Cordill, and McConnell**

**ABSENT: Commissioner Richards, Shrewsbury, and Clark**

**STAFF: Director of Community Planning & Development Mark Kieselbach and  
Principal Planner Peter Menser**

**1. Call meeting to order**

Chair Lane called the regular meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

**2. Public Remarks**

1. Darcie Whiddon, 4090 Wabaningo Road, purchased property at 5937 Potter Street and asked if the Planning Commission would consider rezoning the property from C-1 to RN district like the other residential properties near her property. The property is a 3-bedroom, 1-bath residential home and has always been used for residential purposes.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

Chair Lane requested to add a discussion about the potential rezoning of 5937 Potter Street as item 8D under Other Business on the agenda.

Commissioner Hendrickson moved to approve the amended agenda.

Seconded by Commissioner Cordill.

VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

- A. January 27, 2020 Regular Meeting

Commissioner Trezise moved to approve the minutes as written.

Seconded by Commissioner McConnell.

VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

**5. Communications**

Chair Lane noted the communication listed in the meeting packet.

**6. Public Hearings**

- A. Special Use Permit #19141 (The Cured Leaf TC, Inc.), establish commercial medical marijuana provisioning center at 3520 Okemos Road.

Chair Lane opened the public hearing at 7:05 p.m.

Principal Planner Menser provided a brief summary of the request and said he would be available to answer questions.

The applicant's representative, Alan Shamoun, 108 S. Main, Suite A, Royal Oak, Michigan, 48067, legal counsel for the applicant, said the applicant currently operates a similar business in Traverse City and is also in the process of opening businesses in Detroit and Ypsilanti.

Mr. Shamoun noted Baryames Cleaners was included in the lot split along with Sprint and Asian Express but the proposed Special Use Permit is only for the space where Sprint and Asian Express are located. He also said he would be available to answer any questions.

Public Comment - None

Planning Commission Discussion:

- A question was asked about the Jolly Oak Center and why it was split into two parcels. Principal Planner Menser explained the Cedar Classical Elementary School proposal was submitted during the same time as this request and the land was split to meet the eligibility and spacing requirements for the Special Use Permit.
- A question was asked about the Traffic Assessment and why the Jolly Road access to the Jolly Oak Center, through the Seven Eleven Store parking lot, was not taken into consideration in the report. Principal Planner Menser stated more detailed studies would have been initiated if the trip generation for the proposed use was higher.
- Concern about a tenant in the Jolly Oak Center called Mathnasium that tutors school aged children.
- Concern was expressed about the impact the proposed new business might have on the other stores in the shopping center.
- A question was asked about what the store front would look like for the proposed provisioning center and the applicant's representative stated the windows will be tinted and you will not be able to see anything inside. The exterior door to the business would be open and the reception area would look like a doctor's office with seating, reception area, and restrooms. The reception staff would greet guests and review the necessary credentials before a person would be escorted to the secured sales floor beyond the reception area. There will also be many security cameras which are available to the police department at any time.
- All products are prepackaged when they arrive to the provisioning center so there will be no odors that will affect the other stores in the shopping center.
- The applicant's representative noted the provisioning centers that reside in strip mall shopping center environments historically create increased traffic, better security, and no negative property values.

A straw poll indicated the Planning Commission would be in support of recommending approval of the proposed Special Use Permit #19141 at the next meeting on February 24, 2020.

Chair Lane closed the public hearing at 7:30 p.m.

- B. Special Use Permit #19131 (The W. Investment Holdings), establish commercial medical marihuana provisioning center at 1614 Grand River Avenue.

Chair Lane opened the public hearing at 7:31 p.m.

Principal Planner Menser provided a brief summary of the request and said he would be available to answer questions.

The applicant, Ammar Alkhafji, 29580 N. Western Hwy, Suite 1000, Southfield, Michigan is the landlord and developer of the property.

The business owner and tenant, Marvin Karana, stated he also operates a provisioning center in Lapeer, Michigan, across the street from a police station. Mr. Karana noted he would be available to answer any questions.

Public Comment – None

Planning Commission Discussion:

- A question was asked about what the street view of the business might look like as someone drives on Grand River Avenue and the applicant stated the elevation of the area creates some issues but they will maintain as much vegetation as possible.

A straw poll indicated the Planning Commission would be in support of recommending approval of the proposed Special Use Permit #19131 at the next meeting on February 24, 2020.

Chair Lane closed the public hearing at 7:49 p.m.

- C. Zoning Amendment #20020 (Township Board), amend Section 86-376 of the Code of Ordinances to allow a mix of single family and multiple family dwelling units in the RD, RC, and RCC (Multiple Family) zoning districts.

Chair Lane opened the public hearing at 7:50 p.m.

Principal Planner Menser provided an overview of the request and said he would be available to answer questions.

Public Comment – None

Planning Commission Discussion:

- A good proposal that allows flexibility for development with different dwelling units.
- Request for a map of where the RD, RC, and RCC zoning districts for reference.
- Concerns with potential of single family housing being built in existing multiple family developments.

A straw poll indicated the Planning Commission would be in support of recommending approval of the revised version of the proposed Zoning Amendment #20020 at the next meeting on February 24, 2020.

Chair Lane closed the public hearing at 8:16 p.m.

**7. Unfinished Business - None**

**8. Other Business**

**A. Brownfield Redevelopment Authority recommendation**

Principal Planner Menser asked the Planning Commission if a member would be willing to fill the position of representative on the Meridian Township Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (MTBRA) for the remainder of the term which expires December 31, 2020. Former Planning Commission chair John Scott-Craig served in the position since 2017 and with his resignation in November a new Commissioner is needed to fill the vacancy.

Commissioner Premoe accepted the opportunity to serve and fulfill the remainder of the term, if appointed, as the representative on the Meridian Township Brownfield Redevelopment Authority as long as Commissioner McConnell could take over the role as Planning Commission liaison with the Environmental Commission.

Commissioner Trezise made a motion to recommend Commissioner Premoe as the representative on the Meridian Township Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and for Commissioner McConnell to assume the position of Planning Commission representative for the Environmental Commission. Seconded by Commissioner Cordill.

VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

Commissioner Cordill asked if item 8.D could be moved up so the property owners would not have to wait longer and everyone agreed to address that item next.

**D. 5937 Potter Street**

Principal Planner Menser provided an overview of the proposal to rezone the property at 5937 Potter Street from C-1 (Commercial) to RN (Village of Nemoka Mixed Residential District).

Commissioner Premoe made a motion to initiate a rezoning of the property from C-1 to RN. Seconded by Commissioner Cordill.

VOICE VOTE: Motion approved unanimously.

**B. 2020 Planning Commission goals**

Principal Planner Menser provided copies of the 2019 Planning Commission goals, 2020 Meridian Township Board Goal Action Plan for 2020, and the 2020 Work Plan for the Community Planning and Development Department for review in an effort to assist the Planning Commission's discussion to set goals for 2020.

Planning Commission Discussion:

- Set timelines on goals to stay on track. For example by the end of April complete the work on Form Based Code and then present to the Township Board for review.
- Move forward with implementing the Grand River Corridor initiative.

- Review the Mixed Use Planned Unit Development (MUPUD) process and work on a 2 step proposal: Identify the areas by the end of June, and work on proposals to change by the end of September.
- Review the sign ordinance by the end of September, and propose new changes by the end of the year.
- Consider climate sustainability features in permit proposals for MUPUD's.
- Consider Commissioners to champion on various reports and announcements.
- Principal Planner Menser will draft a letter to the Township Board requesting a Liaison to the Planning Commission or a possible rotation among Township Board members before finalizing goals.

In addition, the Township Board invited the Planning Commission to draft a list of a few big picture long-term goals to provide for review during their annual goal setting retreat on February 22, 2020.

Planning Commission Big Goals Discussion:

- Advantages of moving from a Township to City and how the tax burdens would be affected.
- Amend the Planning Commission/Township Board review process so that a proposal being presented to the Board for the first time does not undergo changes after the Planning Commission has voted on it and/or allow for an expedited process if a matter gets referred back to the Planning commission so that it only takes one meeting for the Planning Commission to review and approve/deny the amended proposals.
- Explore sustainable transportation options for residents of the Township.
- Creation of TIF's for both the Grand River Corridor and the Haslett PICA areas.
- Improve the information flow among the various boards and commissions and the Planning Commission, specifically on projects of great interest to the community.
- Set a goal to have all Meridian Township facilities powered by renewal energy to we can be a role model for residents and offer more education on the topic.

C. Form based code meeting – February 18, 2020

Principal Planner Menser met with the Township Manager and a couple other Township officials to discuss how to proceed with the initiative. A presentation is scheduled for the February 18, 2020 Township Board Meeting with discussion to follow.

Principal Planner Menser asked the Planning Commission how they would like to proceed and the Commission decided to have Chair Lane present the form based code presentation. Chair Lane will explain what has been done to date on the form based code initiative, the general scope of process changes, and other important points to share.

**9. Reports and Announcements**

A. Township Board updates.

Principal Planner Menser provided a summary of the February 4, 2020 Township Board meeting and provided a preview of what is on the agenda for the February 18, 2020 Township Board meeting.

Commissioner Trezise provided an update from attending the Downtown Development Authority meeting on February 3, 2020.

Commissioner Hendrickson noted there was no Corridor Improvement Authority Meeting and noted Economic Development Director Chris Buck would be leaving on February 12, 2020. He wanted to recognize Director Buck for the work he did, his impact in the community and his positive energy.

Chair Lane provided an update from attending the Economic Development Corporation meeting on February 6, 2020.

Commissioner McConnell provided an update from attending the Environmental Commission meeting on February 5, 2020.

## 10. Project Updates

- A. New Applications
  - 1. Site Plan Review #20-01 (Okemos Pointe, LLC), redevelop 15,523 square foot commercial building at 2360 Jolly Road.
  - 2. Site Plan Review #20-16-05 (GBC Design, Inc.), revisions to existing drive-through lane for Chick-fil-A restaurant at 2075 Grand River
- B. Site Plans Received – None
- C. Site Plans Approved - None

## 11. Public Remarks - None

## 12. Adjournment

Commissioner Hendrickson moved to adjourn the meeting.  
Supported by Commissioner Cordill.  
VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Lane adjourned the regular meeting at 9:23 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Debbie Budzynski, Recording Secretary