

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

APPROVED

**September 12, 2016
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
853-4000, Town Hall Room, 7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Commissioners DeGroff (7:04 P.M.), Honicky, Ianni, Jackson, Lane, Opsommer, Scott-Craig, Tenaglia
ABSENT: Commissioner Van Coevering
STAFF: Director of Community Planning and Development Kieselbach, Principal Planner Oranchak

1. Call meeting to order

Chair Scott-Craig called the regular meeting to order at 7:02 P.M.

2. Approval of agenda

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

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0.

3. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Ianni moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of August 8, 2016, Work Session Meeting Minutes of August 8, 2016 and amended Work Session Meeting Minutes of August 22, 2016. Seconded by Commissioner Honicky.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0.

4. Public Remarks

Chair Scott-Craig opened and closed the floor for public remarks.

5. Communications

- A. Ahsan Sumbal, et. al., 900 Gulick Drive, Okemos; RE: Master Plan Update
- B. Judy Kindel, 2915 Margate Lane, East Lansing and member of the Meridian Energy Group; RE: Master Plan Update
- C. Renee Korrey, 4633 Okemos Road, Okemos; RE: Master Plan Update
- D. Environmental Commission; RE: Its resolution recommending changes to the Master Plan Update

6. Public hearings

- A. Special Use Permit #14071 (Fedewa), a request for an extension of SUP #14071 to construct eight townhouses at 1730 Chamberlain

Chair Scott-Craig opened the public hearing at 7:05 P.M.

- Introduction by the Chair (announcement of procedures, time limits and protocols for public participation and applicants)
- Summary of subject matter
Director Kieselbach summarized the special use permit (SUP) extension request as outlined in staff memorandum dated September 9, 2016.
- Applicant
Jerry Fedewa, Jerry Fedewa Builders, 5570 Okemos Road, East Lansing, noted securing the two (2) recorded easements for access to Chamberlain Way (discovered to be a private road) delayed commencement of construction. He added approval wasn't received until late July.
- Public
Doris Schwartz, 2209 Kent Street, Okemos, expressed concern with the placement of garages and parking in the front of the development as that configuration does not promote the Township goal of walkability. She believed Mr. Fedewa's project on Hamilton Road was a lost opportunity for walkability.

Planning Commission discussion:

Commissioner Ianni reminded fellow Commissioners when the SUP was previously before the Planning Commission there was discussion about placing the garages in the rear of the property. His recollection was that doing so would require several variances.

Commissioner Jackson inquired of staff as to the timeline for completion of the project. She asked if the extension allowed for another year to be added to the three year time frame for completion of the project.

Director Kieselbach replied in the affirmative.

Chair Scott-Craig inquired of staff if the issues regarding setbacks in the front of the property will still need compliance.

Director Kieselbach noted the variances needed will be reviewed during site plan review. He stated Mr. Fedewa will be required to go before the Zoning Board of Appeals for three (3) variances unless the plan is modified.

Commissioner DeGroff asked if the project, in its current state, meets all the applicable setbacks and requirements.

Director Kieselbach replied the issue of curb and gutter would require a waiver, the landscape area in front does not currently meet the 20 foot setback requirement and no bicycle parking was shown on the plans.

Commissioner DeGroff asked staff to reiterate the applicant's concern with the garages in front as it was the more walkable "approach."

Principal Planner Oranchak explained that placement of garages in the back would necessitate driveways and access to the rear, both of which require a good deal of space. She noted doing so would also eliminate outdoor use of that land by residents of the housing units.

Commissioner Opsommer inquired of staff as to the front setback for the project.

Director Kieselbach responded the front setback is for a local road which is 25 feet back from the right of way line and the rear setback is 50 feet.

Commissioner Opsommer asked if Hamilton Road is classified as a local road.

Director Kieselbach replied Hamilton Road is a collector road so that setback is 85 feet from the center line of the right of way.

Commissioner Opsommer indicated the zoning ordinance is the driver for mandating the units be placed farther back on the property, making it infeasible for parking in the rear. He believed amending this requirement would allow for homes to be placed close to the street to provide walkability.

Principal Planner Oranchak believed Planning Commissioners also need to consider the location and what is surrounding each location.

Chair Scott-Craig also recalled issues regarding water and lost greenspace, pointing to the need to balance the competing interests.

Commissioner DeGroff asked the applicant why he was requesting the Planning Commission make a decision the same night as the public hearing.

Mr. Fedewa responded he must go before the Zoning Board of Appeals and needs to start construction this fall in order to meet next year's time limitations.

Commissioner DeGroff requested fellow Commissioners consider the impact of the project on the neighborhood when it entertains suspension of the rules.

Chair Scott-Craig closed the public hearing at 7:29 P.M.

Commissioner Ianni moved to suspend Planning Commission Bylaw 6.4a of Meridian Township to make a decision the same night as the public hearing. Seconded by Commissioner Tenaglia.

Planning Commission discussion:

- Project previously had a public hearing and was subsequently approved
- Request was not due to inaction by the applicant
- If construction does not commence this fall, it will further delay the project
- Staff memorandum indicates nothing has changed subsequent to the Planning Commission's prior approval
- Commissioner belief the applicant has not given compelling reasons for a decision at tonight's meeting

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners Honicky, Ianni, Jackson, Lane, Opsommer, Tenaglia,
Chair Scott-Craig
NAYS: Commissioner DeGroff
Motion carried 7-1.

7. Unfinished Business

Special Use Permit #14071 (Fedewa), a request for an extension of SUP #14071 to construct eight townhouses at 1730 Chamberlain

Commissioner Ianni moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby grants the extension of Special Use Permit #14071, for a period of one year, from September 22, 2016 to September 22, 2017, with the following condition:

1. All previous conditions placed on the special use permit approval shall remain in effect.

Seconded by Commissioner Jackson.

Planning Commission discussion:

- Applicant has met the criteria for an extension
- Reminder that the applicant noted earlier he obtained the two (2) recorded easements on July 22, 2016
- Support for this project as it is infill development

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners DeGroff, Honicky, Ianni, Jackson, Lane, Opsommer, Tenaglia, Chair Scott-Craig

NAYS: None

Motion carried 8-0.

8. Other Business

A. Resolution of Appreciation - Holly Cordill

Commissioner Honicky moved [and read into the record] NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN as follows:

The Planning Commission of the Charter Township of Meridian, by means of resolution, extends to Holly Cordill grateful thanks for her voluntary effort on behalf of all residents of the community during this period of dedicated service on the Planning Commission.

Seconded by Commissioner DeGroff.

Planning Commission discussion:

- Appreciation for her level of congeniality and professionalism
- Commissioner Cordill came to Planning Commission meetings well prepared
- Commissioner Cordill brought her experience as a Planning Commissioner from the City of Lansing with her to Meridian Township

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners DeGross, Honicky, Ianni, Jackson, Lane, Opsommer, Tenaglia, Chair Scott-Craig

NAYS: None

Motion carried 8-0.

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

Commissioner Tenaglia reported her attendance at the Meridian Leadership Breakfast where Michigan State University President LuAnna Simon was the guest speaker. She noted President Simon's thoughts regarding our community were eye opening and believed the Planning Commission should work towards suggestions she made.

Commissioner Jackson expressed appreciation to all residents who have made contributions (written or oral) regarding the Master Plan.

Chair Scott-Craig reported his attendance at the September 1st Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Meeting where Director Deborah Guthrie offered a presentation regarding activities planned for Meridian Township's 175th Anniversary Celebration, commencing with fireworks on January 1, 2017. He noted discussion also took place about contacting business owners and others along Grand River Avenue regarding potential service to the Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA). Chair Scott-Craig indicated there was a dialogue about the zoning changes to the industrial district to permit changes by the Ellison Brewery and Meridian Corporation.

Chair Scott-Craig also reported his attendance at the September 7th meeting of the Environmental Commission where an in-depth discussion took place concerning revision to the greenspace plan and suggested revisions to the Master Plan language dealing with the greenspace plan. He added an interesting presentation was given by a member of the Township's wetland consulting firm, Fishbeck, Thompson, Huber, Carr, Inc.

A. New Applications

- i. Special Use Permit 16091 (Stockwell Development Co., LLC), request to construct an approximately 12,000 square foot shopping center with two drive-through windows at 1560 Grand River Avenue.

B. Update of Ongoing Projects

- i. Site Plans Received

Site Plan Review #16-08 (Chris Humphrey), construct a drive-through ATM in the Meijer parking lot at 2055 Grand River Avenue

- 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 7:44 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra K. Otto
Recording Secretary