

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS
Minutes April 28, 2015**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, April 28, 2015.

Present were Chair Wayne Harrall, Vice Chair Bev Wall, Secretary Dave Van Dyke, Commissioners; Scott Conners, Mark Prein and Doug Kochneff. Also present were Township Attorney Jim Brown and Planning Assistant Kara Hammond. Commissioner Bill Culhane was absent.

1. Approve minutes of March 24, 2015 regular meeting.

Bev Wall, seconded by **Mark Prein**, move to approve with the following revisions;

- ♦ p.1, last paragraph, first sentence - change the word "proposed" to 'existing'
- ♦ p.2, 4th paragraph from bottom, end of 2nd sentence - change "east" to 'west'

Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

2. Informal Presentation - Twisted Rooster - Request to amend the current PUD to allow for Al Fresco Dining to be permitted at 1618 East Beltline Ave NE.

Mark McDowell, Vice President of Innovative Design, representing Twisted Rooster gave a brief overview of the request;

- ♦ 10 tables with umbrellas
- ♦ concrete slab containing the tables will be buffered by landscape and some vegetation
- ♦ constructing a door from inside to outside, for access
- ♦ maintaining existing lighting, not adding any
- ♦ speakers are currently existing, just moving one closer to the proposed patio
- ♦ hours of operation will be consistent with current hours and patio will be open during the warm months

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal report.

Scott Conners asked Jim Brown if he had any thoughts on the parking. Jim Brown stated the Commissioners may want to inquire further about that issue from the applicant.

Mark Prein said a concern he has and should be fixed is that it appears there is a gap between the sidewalk and proposed slab. Wayne Harrall added Bill Culhane noted the same item as well, in his comments that he submitted prior to the meeting. Mark McDowell said it will be flush and noted they added more to the landscape buffer, it is now 2 feet. Mark stated the railing will be a steel railing.

Wayne Harrall said it appears crowded, the space looks a little tight with all the tables proposed. Mark McDowell stated the company tends to have fewer patrons in the summer months so they did not feel the need to increase parking. Mark added there will not be any supplemental heating outside, so patio/outdoor seating will occur for four months maximum.

Jim Brown asked if Mark McDowell could give an approximate estimate of the parking numbers. Mark McDowell stated he would have to run the numbers. Wayne Harrall suggested the applicant have solid parking numbers for the Planning Commission at the next meeting.

Dave Van Dyke stated he does not foresee the parking being a problem. Dave noted when it is nice outside, people prefer to sit outside verses inside, and does not think it will require additional parking.

Wayne Harrall noted the letter of support that was submitted from Counterpointe Investments.

Some drainage concerns from the Planning Commission members were discussed and the applicant said he would look into the storm water runoff, etc...

Mark Prein, seconded by **Bev Wall**, moved to schedule the Public Hearing for the PUD amendment request to be held at the May 26, 2015 Planning Commission Meeting.

Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

3. Public Hearing - Universal Forest Products - Rezoning request, O-PUD, for (current and) a 3.75 acre parcel adjacent to the west of 2801 East Beltline Ave NE.

Scott Weir, Corporate Construction Manager, with Universal Forrest Products;

- ♦ Gave a quick recap of the proposal
- ♦ Did remove existing drive, shown on the second site plan submitted
- ♦ Noted the drive shown/proposed to the north side of the proposed building would be for trucks as to keep the truck traffic away from the main complex

Wayne Harrall said it looks like a lot of pavement for just truck traffic, asked if it would be possible to have just a security gate instead of all the pavement. Scott Weir stated they do not have a loading dock onsite and have no way of safely unloading at this time so trying to enclose that to a safe area, not in employee parking areas. Scott noted there are geographic and topographic challenges that do not allow for the trucks to maneuver through the complex. Scott explained it just makes sense to have a drive for the sole purpose of truck traffic – for safety measures alone.

Robb Lamer said there are too many obstacles to overcome to have the cross site access and feels the proposed site plan is the safest for the entire complex. Robb added the proposed building is approximately 95 feet from the property line, stating that is a significant buffer from the existing residence.

Wayne Harrall gave his suggestion on the sidewalk; noted there is a ramp that goes into the lot, suggested the applicant dub that down and connect. Wayne stated it is not ideal but it is something. Robb Lamer stated if the Planning Commission requires them to put a sidewalk in they will do it, it will not be a deal breaker. Scott Connors said Wayne Harrall's suggestion is a great one and stated the applicant should go with that.

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal report.

Scott Connors asked Jim Brown to clarify; if they looked favorably on the rezoning that it would include the proposed site plan. Jim stated yes the plan and the ordinance would be approved simultaneously.

Scott Weir added there will be zero lighting on the west side and only required lighting on the front of the building and one light to the north.

Mark Prein, seconded by **Bev Wall**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 7:53 pm.

Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

Britney Sinclair, 3035 3 Mile Rd NE

- Opposed to this plan, from a mother's point of view
- Concerned about the size, would not be able to blend in to the existing area
- Concerned about traffic and what the congestion will bring
- UFP said they are expecting 6 employees, but when she called the office she was told by a different UFP person 30 additional employees
- Currently it looks like a neighborhood, it is buffered so well, concerned what the proposed addition will do to the existing homes
- Her home is the only home that will literally be next door to the proposed building
- Questions and concerns to the type of building and what will be occurring there, any chemicals or hazardous materials
- Does not fit, no businesses that far into residential homes
- Concerned about her son, with special needs, afraid of the disruption it will bring with the truck traffic and noise and the effect it will have on him and their entire family

Brian Vilmont, 3060 3 Mile Rd NE

- UFP is a good asset to the Township
- Great aesthetics on the site
- Really good neighbor
- Not opposed to their expansion, more concerned about the rate at which it will be expanding
- Currently they access the back of that property where the maintenance building already exists, does not feel it is acceptable to put the proposed building and drive adjacent to the residential home(s)
- Would like to see them utilize the existing drive, if only 3-4 trucks, no need for the drive and building
- Concerned with the large overhead door, not acceptable with residential component right next door, as well as the potential of head lights being directed at residential homes
- Proposed rendering of building (regarding the large metal building) does not fit with the character or existing architecture of the existing campus
- Big concern with traffic on that road as well; talking about a traffic study being done and noted a steady increase of traffic on that road...3 lane section makes sense...

Saleh Kais, 3015 3 Mile Rd NE

- Concerned with traffic
- Questioned what the proposed building will do to the surrounding property values

Britney Sinclair, 3035 3 Mile Rd NE

- Also concerned what affects the proposed building will do to property values
- Does not understand how their house, their investment, is less important than what UFP is proposing to spend on a driveway and building

Scott Conners, seconded by **Bev Wall**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 8:13 pm.

Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

Scott Weir addressed the concerns presented from the residents;

- ♦ The rear of the building is shown at 24 ft.
- ♦ The flat roof architecture of the current buildings is what they are trying to stay with

- ♦ Treated wood producer in the US
- ♦ That operation (referencing chemicals/hazardous materials) does not exist in Michigan, done in specialized buildings under the regulations of the federal government
- ♦ No manufacturing
- ♦ The door on the west side of the building; no stated purpose
- ♦ Brian made some great comments, but UFP has no control over the traffic on 3 Mile Rd

Scott Weir acknowledged that maybe they do not need the west driveway at all and continue having the 3-4 trucks go through the existing complex.

Suggestions of alternative site plans were being proposed from Planning Commission members, Robb Lamer and Scott Weir; talked about different ways to eliminate the west drive and keep the trucks using the existing drives, may have to relocate parking spaces, but could make it work with an existing drive (off 3 Mile Rd). Scott Weir stated he agrees with all the suggestions and would like to go back and study the potential of using the existing drive therefore eliminating the currently proposed westerly drive. Scott then talked about the materials/outlook of the proposed buildings and explained the aesthetics.

Wayne Harrall touched on the traffic issues that came up during the public hearing and explained the criteria that must exist in order to have a three lane roadway, the required shoulder width, etc...

Doug Kochneff questioned if the applicant would leave the proposed building where it is shown now, if they eliminate the proposed westerly drive. Scott Weir stated he believed so.

Scott Conners made mention the integrity of the business, owner and engineer, the fact they listened to the public comment and are actually taking what was said into consideration.

Scott Conners stated the applicant has his 'straw vote' if they; eliminate the proposed westerly drive, use the existing driveway making better cross access within the complex and keep the building where it is currently proposed.

The Commissioners took a straw poll vote;

- Wayne Harrall - yes
- Bev Wall - yes
- Scott Conners - yes
- Mark Prein - yes
- Dave Van Dyke - yes
- Doug Kochneff - yes

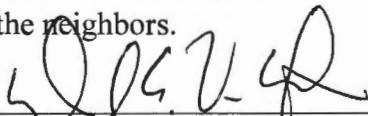
Dave Van Dyke, seconded by **Bev Wall**, moved to table the rezoning request until the May 26, 2015 Planning Commission Meeting.

Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

4. General Public Comment.

Brian Vilmont, 3060 3 Mile Rd NE, said he appreciates UFP and the fact they are taking what the public has said into consideration and touched base on the architectural material on the west side of the proposed building, so it would not look so stark to the neighbors.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:39 pm.



David A. Van Dyke, Secretary