

**GRAND RAPIDS CHARTER TOWNSHIP
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**
August 11, 2015

A regular meeting of the Grand Rapids Charter Township Zoning Board of Appeals was called to order at 7:00 pm with the following present; Chair George Orphan, Vice Chair Bev Wall, Secretary Jim Kubicek, Lee VanPopering, Greg Timmer, Lindsey Koorndyk-Theil and Jon Rupert. Also present were Township Attorney Jim Scales and Planning/Zoning Assistant Kara Hammond.

1. Approval of the March 17, 2015 minutes.

Lee VanPopering, seconded by **Bev Wall**, moved to approve the minutes with no changes.
Motion approved unanimously.

2. #2015-02 – Eastmont Properties LLC – 4727 & 4737 Cascade Rd SE.

Jim Morgan, RJM Design, representing the applicant, Bill Darooge;

- Been working on this site for a very long time
- High hopes at one time of working with Chase Bank, actually did for a while and after 6 months of work Chase decided not to continue
- 3rd or 4th site plan that they have submitted after working very closely with the Site Plan Review Committee
- Referencing Exhibit 4; proposed footprint is smaller than any other commercial building on Cascade Rd

Lee VanPopering asked if the building will be used for personal reasons or rental. Bill Darooge said it will be personal; stating he plans on using it for his office space and his daughter-in-law will be using the front for retail.

Jim Morgan said the proposed building will be a story and a half, and added it will not be nearly as tall as Kennedy's. Morgan stated the zoning actually does allow two story but they are asking for only a story and a half. Bill Darooge explained going up is the only option they really have.

Lee VanPopering said they are asking for 6 variances, stating that is a lot. Jim Morgan said they are all setback variances as this is a very challenging site. Morgan noted there is a significant built-in-buffer (referring to Chase Bank drive) to the north and also added that the Grand Rapids Township Master Plan suggests that area be commercial, versus residential.

Bill Darooge stated they do not envision the space to be used as high density. Darooge noted they are not asking for any parking variances as they resolved most of the issues, apart from the actual building itself. Morgan added the proposed building and use is in line with the businesses along Cascade Rd.

George Orphan asked about the jog in the building at the north end. Bill Darooge stated it was to give them more flexibility within the design. Darooge stated the parking requirement supports the 3,000 sq. ft. retail spacing and the jog also allows an access for employees to enter/exit the building.

Lee VanPopering stated it appears to be one office and one decorating place and asked the applicant to explain. Bill Darooge explained he will be using the littlest part for his office and the larger area for his daughter-in-law's interior design business. VanPopering asked why the applicant does not just dig a basement for storage, stating he would rather see the basement dug instead of the two story building.

Daroge explained he does not want to build a box, and can envision a nice small change in elevation with a small half story. VanPopering said 32 ft. in height would be the max he would want to see there.

Lee VanPopering, seconded by **Bev Wall**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 7:20 pm.
Motion approved unanimously.

No public was present to speak at the Public Hearing.

Lee VanPopering, seconded by **Bev Wall**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 7:20 pm.
Motion approved unanimously.

Bev Wall stated the criteria and justified the reasons for each. Jim Kubicek stated the proposed footprint is smaller than any other building around them, adding no comments were received from neighbors, therefore no detriment to others. George Orphan stated in the past the Zoning Board of Appeals has lined all the buildings along Cascade Rd frontage and this building is closer to the roadway than the others and impeding on the line of sight of Chase Bank.

Lee VanPopering said this is a hard location with many difficulties and added the applicant is asking for numerous variances. George Orphan reminded the Zoning Board of Appeals members that any variances allowed will stay with the property, not the owner/business. VanPopering stated with the request, and the number of variances, he recommended denying the request. No support was given.

Jim Kubicek stated with the size and the use the proposed building it is a reasonable request for that property. Bev Wall said the request in front of them appears to meet the necessary criteria. Jim Scales explained if the use of the building were to ever change, the business would have to come back and ask for a change in zoning. Lee VanPopering said he does not care if the applicant put the north end of the building on the property line because the way he sees it; that part of the lot is useless and unbuildable.

Jim Morgan asked to clarify a few things to the board members;

- 15 cars does indeed satisfy the code for 300, explaining the Site Plan Review Committee asked they use the commercial formula for parking
- the five foot path was required by the Site Plan Review Committee for emergency access

Bev Wall said she is in favor of letting the plan stand as is and go back to the Site Plan Review Committee for any (possible additional) alterations. Greg Timmer added; with the limitation of height.

Bev Wall, seconded by **Jim Kubicek**, moved the request be approved with the condition the height of the building shall not exceed 30 feet in height.

Motion approved 4-1, George Orphan opposed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jim Kubicek