

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS  
Minutes September 22, 2015**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, September 22, 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 August 25, 2015.**

**Bev Wall**, seconded by **Scott Conners**, moved to approve the minutes with the following changes;

- ▣ p.2,3<sup>rd</sup> bullet should read; “Traffic volume at times is a concern: as traffic flow then becomes a safety issue”
- ▣ p.2,3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph,2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, insert the word “it” between ‘parcel’ and ‘is’

**Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.**

**2. Informal Presentation - Frederik Meijer Gardens - Request to amend current Special Land Use to include maintenance building additions and improvements at 3420 Leonard St NE.**

David Hooker, President of Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, gave a brief presentation;

- ♦ Very excited about a maintenance center
- ♦ Blessed with significant growth over the past few years, time to address the maintenance issue
- ♦ Explained numerous points, one being the vision from the road; beneficial for both public and the gardens; secure area for storing art and a visual buffer

Cheryl Scales, with Progressive ae;

- ♦ Touched base on the items Engineer Bob Bruggink noted in his review letter and stated they will work through all necessary storm water items
- ♦ The city is allowing them to internally connect sewer and water; considered a campus unit
- ♦ Explained the 25 year water storage; opportunity to balance the site better and time to begin balancing the water runoff

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal report.

Wayne Harrall stated the Kent County Road Commission sees the proposed driveway change on Leonard as beneficial and positive; in general, and to the entire area.

The applicant explained the buffer along Leonard will consist of a mix of conifer borders combined with arborvitae, making it more interesting than just a line of plants along the roadway. A possible second row of seasonal plantings may be incorporated as well.

Dave Van Dyke asked why the building with the large doors is facing the roadway, questioned why the applicant chose not to propose something more architecturally attractive. Cheryl Scales explained the way the trams operate; the internal working and operations functions, and stated the proposed lay out is what works best for the applicant. Dave Van Dyke and Mark Prein both feel that it is important to address the issue, as the condos to the north are at a higher elevation and will be looking down at a 'warehouse type building'. Both Van Dyke and Prein suggested a nicer façade be considered.

Scott Connors asked Jim Brown to confirm that it is the Planning Commission's responsibility to give the applicant points of view and suggestion items prior to the Public Hearing. Jim Brown stated that comment was correct. Connors validated the previous comments from the Commissioners stating they are right on track with the suggestions.

**Bev Wall**, seconded by **Mark Prein**, moved to set the Public Hearing for October 27, 2015.  
**Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.**

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

**Scott Connors**, seconded by **Mark Prein**, moved to take the continuation of Universal Forest Products rezoning off the table.

**Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.**

Robb Lamer, with exxel engineering and representing Universal Forest Products, gave a brief overview and presentation;

- ♦ Keeping the houses "as-is", no plans to build, just showing possible future use – more of a master planning type thing – but they know and are aware that they will have to come back to the Planning Commission for any future building requests
- ♦ At this point they are only asking for the addition to the maintenance building; including truck ability to maneuver properly to the addition
- ♦ Footprint is smaller than what was previously proposed – this is just an addition to an existing building, no longer proposing a whole new building
- ♦ 7-10 employees will utilize the building, which are already on the site just in a different building/area
- ♦ Products are big, they need larger spaces in order for the prototypes to fit properly
- ♦ Majority of the employees travel to other UFP sites, not very many are actually on site, parking should not be an issue

Wayne Harrall asked about the detention, or retention, area and if it is the same as what was previously proposed. Lamer clarified it is a retention area, explained it was tested 5 years ago and sized at that time for development, but he will have to go back and double check numbers. Lamer stated he feels strongly it will be satisfactory as they are not adding much impervious area, so it should not be a problem.

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal report.

Scott Connors asked about the Public Hearing component. Jim Brown said if the future building shown on the site plan is not an option for the approval, the new plan is less invasive, and from a

legal standpoint, they are well within their rights to approve the plan as presented. Wayne Harrall said he thinks they owe it to the residents to at least show them the new plan, and if they want to speak they will have a chance at the Public Hearing. Dave Van Dyke agreed, stating it is a change from what they originally proposed and showed the residents, so the new plan needs to be shown to the residents. Harrall stated the new plan proposes a substantial change to the back of the maintenance building, and the residents have the right to know. Robb Lamer replied the reason they changed the original plan was due to the public input and outcry. The Planning Commission agreed, but noted the newest plan is a significant change and the residents, especially to the north, have the right to know.

Scott Conners asked Robb Lamer if the proposed drive to the west (next to the proposed retention pond) could be something other than gravel. Lamer stated he was trying to stay away from impervious surfaces but will do what the Planning Commission requires. Conners asked if they could change it to crushed stone verses gravel, stating crushed stone has less impact on the surrounding land. Lamer agreed and undoubtedly complied.

**Mark Prein**, seconded by **Bev Wall**, moved to schedule the Public Hearing for Universal Forest Product's revised plan for the rezoning request, O-PUD, for all Universal Forest Product lands, including the westerly 3.75 acres, for October 27, 2015.

**Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.**

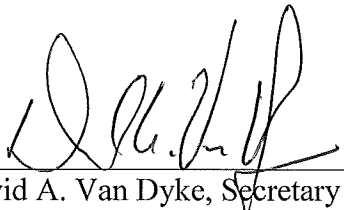
**4. Informal Discussion - GRT Zoning Ordinance Amendments - (SR, R-1, C-2, C-1 & C Districts; Accessory Buildings & Uses, Nonconforming Buildings & Uses) Chapter 6, 7, 10, 11 & 12, Section 4.16 & Chapter 32.**

The Commissioners proposed holding work sessions to address the changes and amendments; dates to be decided at a later date.

**5. General Public Comment.**

No persons were present for the general public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David A. Van Dyke, Secretary