

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS
Minutes of the January 26, 2010 Meeting**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, January 26, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

Present were Chair Susan Molhoek, Secretary Wayne Harrall, Commissioners Edward J. Robinette, Mark Prein, David VanDyke and Beverly Wall. Also present were Township Planning Director Richard Sprague Jr. and Treasurer Clerical Assistant Kara Ronda. Commissioner Stephen Fry was not in attendance.

1. Approve minutes of the regular meeting of November 24, 2009.

Wayne Harrall, seconded by **Ed Robinette**, moved to approve the minutes with the following changes;

- 1st page, 1st paragraph under the item #2, change Mark to Brad and capitalize the v in View
- 2nd page, 2nd paragraph from the bottom, remove the d on the end of Moore
- 3rd page, 1st bullet under item #3, insert KISD in front of the work parking and add “on Leffingwell” to the end of the sentence

Motion passed unanimously.

2. Approve minutes of combined meeting of January 7, 2010.

Ed Robinette, seconded by **Wayne Harrall**, moved to approve the minutes with the following changes;

- change the e in Harrell to an a, making it the correct spelling, Harrall
- change the spelling of Steven to Stephen

Motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Hearing – Special Land Use Amendment – 2770 Knapp Street.

Mark Wrona, URS, Catholic Secondary Schools, is requesting a major change in the project. (Note: both the principal, Steve, and the athletic director, Todd, were present)

- Mark gave some history of the project and it’s progression
- included in the packet are letters of confirmation from numerous venders including New Life church and Knapp Charter Academy
- talked about numbers of attendance and the big game which would bring in 4,000 spectators which happens once, every other year

- Mark also noted there is an average of 4.2 spectators to every car, verified in the letter from the Whitecaps

Mark proceeded to state what the new plan entails:

- took the cars off the baseball and softball fields and those will be used as a “plan b” option
- 160 parking spots at New Life, 110 parking spots at Knapp Charter, and 690 parking spots on-site
- the average game is approximately 2,400 spectators, the new plan can actually hold 2,880 spectators
- areas 2 and 3 will have enough spaces per GRT code
- volunteer location posts provided
- there are 4 or 5 home games per year, every other year, when they host a big game, would then use KISD lots
- requesting approval for parking in order to move forward with this plan, also noted KISD is working with them

Mark Prein asked about the difference in the seating capacity and parking capacity. Asked where the extra people would go. Mark Wrona stated they are going to make wider pathways for standing room, going for a stadium effect. Mark Prein then asked if there was going to be enough room for the extra 750 people. Mark Wrona replied there will be more than enough standing room.

Mark Prein asked if the staff, band members and cheerleaders had been accounted for. Mark Wrona stated they are included in the total number. The athletic director, Todd, verified the band members and cheerleaders are included in the total number.

Bev Wall asked where they intend to put the buses. Mark Wrona stated there are pull-off spots for the buses, a pull-off lane in the North lot. Bev also made reference to item numbers 2 and 3 located in the letter from Moore and Bruggink, Inc regarding approval from MDOT and MDEQ. Mark Wrona stated approval was obtained from both.

Dave VanDyke inquired about the walk from Knapp Charter to the field, if there was an internal walk or bike path. Mark Wrona stated there was not but there is a purposed concrete sidewalk.

Sue Molhoek asked how they intend to do that, how people will know where to park, walk, etc... Mark Wrona replied they will send out flyers and have attendees to show people where to park. Todd, the athletic director, stated they would dictate to the community by sending out maps for visitor parking, etc... Sue asked if (students) parking permits will be enforced. Todd replied there is a pass that is given to each car to put in their window.

Mark Prein asked how many of the homes on the East side of Leffingwell have fences. Mark Wrona stated about half. Mark Prein questioned if a volunteer is going to stop

people from cutting through yards. Mark Wrona thinks that can be accomplished with the volunteers. Sue Molhoek stated that is a lot of people for the volunteers to police.

Dave VanDyke asked if there was a connector from KISD parking lot 106 to 246. Mark Wrona replied they should be able to hire rent-a-cops and have volunteers to direct the spectators. Dave asked if KISD would allow a sidewalk there if needed. The athletic director, Todd, said they intend to use volunteers, and staff people along the way to guide spectators to and from the game. Mark Wrona stated signs will be posted and the school is going to have to “police” the area as well as the volunteers. Todd also stated they will be adding no parking signs, cones and caution tape.

Wayne Harrall suggested they consider using signs, cones and caution tape for people parking at KISD for the big games. Steve, the principal, said absolutely, every effort will be made to work with the neighbors.

Rick Sprague noted some of the key items and concerns from the Staff Report:

- 160 spaces from New Life, which helps
- more traffic on KISD
- concerned people will find other routes, it must thoroughly be controlled and posted
- need plan “b”, have to have a back up for what “could” happen
- dealing with a lot of uncertainty, short term and long term
- encouraged moving tennis courts, applicant did not want to do that
- a lot of homes on Leffingwell do not have fences, some neighbors concerned with trespassing
- fencing encouraged if acceptable by neighbors

Ed Robinette, seconded by **Wayne Harrall**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 7:49 p.m.

Motion approved unanimously.

Ann Zoellner, 852 Pinnacle Run

- thinks the stadium is a great idea and believes it is up to the school administrators to make sure what they say will happen, happens

Betsy Coutchie, 1991 Leffingwell

- asked about the spectators crossing on Knapp St from New Life
Mark Wrona said there will be a rent-a-cop with a flashlight and cruiser to monitor every game. Wayne Harrall asked if that will be the same on Leffingwell. Mark Wrona said yes. Bev Wall asked if the rent-a-cop will be on at the driveway or light on Knapp St. Mark Wrona replied the driveway.
- also asked if people will be crossing in their front lawn
Mark Wrona replied, no.

Lonnie Shields, 2777 Knapp St (Pastor of New Life)

- apologized for not selling the property but stated they are still “in”

Nancy Kennedy, 4610 Bradford

- respects the seriousness of the safety issues
- hoping to see more partnering done with the numerous large parking lots already present in the Township for possible further expansions

Ed Robinette, seconded by **Mark Prein** moved to close the Public Hearing at 7:58 p.m.
Motion approved unanimously.

Wayne Harrall stated from a traffic stand point; it is a better solution, with parking at KISD.

Ed Robinette said it was reassuring hearing the commitment from the school and that is going to have to happen. Ed also commented on the fencing, using possibly snow fencing along the pathways. He also questioned what would be done with a parking disaster or the years to come, if it does not work, then what will they do.

Dave VanDyke said after looking over the purposed plan he feels the school has shown him enough parking, as long as the school can use all the indicated areas (i.e.; the church and Knapp Charter). Dave stated he has less fear now with using the off site lots, if approval for those lots is lost, the school is going to have to replace those spaces on their property and that will be their problem to solve. He also believes there needs to be some sort of fencing behind the 8 parcels East of Leffingwell as well as posting temporary signs along Leffingwell on game nights. Dave also mentioned possibly patrolling the areas with a golf cart.

Mark Prein stated he is not worried about parking lot 246 on the KISD property; it is parking lots 72 and 106 that he sees a potential problem with. Mark noted there is not a defined walking area. Wayne Harrall added there needs to be something semi-permanent for the events. Mark suggested a possible sidewalk or paved path. Wayne questioned even if there was a sidewalk what guarantees the spectators will use it. Wayne stated KISD appears to be working well with the school; he is more concerned with protecting the neighbor's homes and yards.

Dave VanDyke, seconded by **Ed Robinette**, moved to approve the major change in the project for Catholic Secondary Schools at 2770 Knapp St as presented December 15, 2009 with the following requirements;

- some type of temporary or permanent fence must be installed to control access along the backside of the properties East of Leffingwell
- signs must be posted on Leffingwell
- if the school should lose any stipulated lots (New Life-160, Knapp Charter-110, KISD-246 & 106), those spaces should somehow be added onto the school's property and it must be brought back to the Planning Commission for further review
- adequate traffic control is mandatory for events

Motion approved unanimously.

4. Discussion – Signs.

The Township Planning Commission was given a letter from the Township attorney and was provided the opportunity to add changes if they so chose to. No changes were found to be made.

5. Public Comment.

No Township residents were present for public comment.

6. Electing Officers

David VanDyke, seconded by **Ed Robinette**, moved to reappoint the standing officers as they are to another term: Susan Molhoek as Chair, Stephen Fry as Vice-Chair and Wayne Harrall as Secretary.

Motion approved unanimously.

7. Update from the Township Planner.

Planning Director Rick Sprague noted there are two items on the agenda for February; Global Forex and 618 Kenmoor regarding a larger sign.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Wayne A. Harrall – Secretary