

PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS
Minutes of the January 28, 2003 Meeting

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, January 28, 2003, at 7:30 p.m.

Present were Commissioners Michael J. Fuller, David A. VanDyke, Rusty Merchant, Susan B. Lovell, Susan Molhoek, Stephen Fry and Wayne Harrall. Also present was Township Planner Susan Thomas.

1. Approve minutes of regular meeting of November 26, 2002.

Susan Molhoek, seconded by Wayne Harrall, moved to approve the regular minutes of November 26, 2002. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Approve minutes of the special work session meeting of January 13, 2003.

Wayne Harrall, seconded by Stephen Fry, moved to approve the special work session minutes of January 13, 2003. Motion passes unanimously.

3. Public Hearing on text amendments to Sections 12.2(2) and 13.2(1) Permitted Office Uses in the PUD-2 and PUD-3 zoning districts within the Zoning Ordinances.

Sue Thomas summarized her staff report dated January 15, 2003.

Rusty Merchant, seconded by Susan Molhoek, moved to open the public hearing. Motion passed unanimously. Being there were no comments, Rusty Merchant, seconded by Susan Lovell, moved to close the public hearing. Motion passed unanimously.

After discussion, David VanDyke, seconded by Susan Lovell, moved to approve adding government offices and similar uses as permitted uses in the PUD-2 and PUD-3 zoning districts. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Consideration of Gene Szpeinski's request for several changes to Phase 2 of the Copperwood Site Condominium. Some of the proposed changes are considered by the Zoning Ordinance to be major changes to an approved site condominium.

Gene Szpeinski, representative of Copperwood Site Condominiums, summarized his request for re-approval for Copperwood Phase 2 Site Development Plan. The differences from the original approved site plan for Phase 2 and the site plan submitted December 17, 2002 are: Consumers Power easement has been vacated; lot lines in units 25 through 30 have been adjusted; the cul-de-sac serving units 27 through 30 has been revised; water, sanitary, and storm mains have been extended beyond the Phase II boundary; and storm sewer easement across units 40 and 41 has been added.

Questions from the Commissioners were regarding sidewalks; whether or not the island in the proposed cul-de-sac “knuckle” to serve units 27-30 would be irrigated; grades of the driveways for units 27-30; the cul-de-sac “knuckle” and unit 33 tree preserve line.

Mr. Szepeinski stated that the island would not be irrigated, traffic is proposed to be one way north to south, and the driveways as proposed have a 10% grade.

Wayne Harrall – stated that in regards to the proposed “knuckle”, the island could be removed along with the “knuckle” and the road easement stay the same as before for the purpose of maintaining what was originally approved.

Mike Fuller – suggested combining 2 driveways into 2 pairs (units 27 & 28 share and units 29 & 30 share) so there is only 2 road cuts.

Dave VenDyke – offered the suggestion of creating a hammerhead in the road instead or a smaller cul-de-sac if all right with the Fire Department and Township Engineer as outlined in the Zoning Ordinance. He felt this would be a better solution than paired driveways.

Sue Thomas summarized her staff report dated January 16, 2003 and Bob Bruggink’s letter dated January 20, 2003.

After discussion, Stephen Fry, seconded by Susan Molhoek, moved to approve the changes with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall submit to the Township Planner a revised site plan illustrating either paired driveways or another method common approach to the street that is acceptable to the Township Planner, Engineer, and Fire Department.
2. The site plan shall be revised to include the entire northeast tree preserve area within Phase 2, as previously required.
3. The requirements outlined in the Summary section of the Township Planner’s report dated January 16, 2003 shall be complied with (delete Consumers Power easement notation from site plan, extend storm sewer into northern cul-de-sac on site plan, add street cross section with sidewalks on site plan, add appropriate language in the Master Deed for Phase 2 regarding the future of the northerly cul-de-sac, and storm water issues need to be reviewed and approved by the Township Engineer)
4. The legal description for Phase 2 shall include the temporary northerly cul-de-sac area.
5. Items #2, 3 and 5 in the Township Engineer’s letter dated January 20, 2003 shall be complied with.
6. The site plan shall be revised to note that the water and sewer mains are public not private.

Motion passed unanimously.

5. Consideration of Brad Pinter's request for a shared parking arrangement between 3505 and 3519 Plainfield Ave NE to allow for a Laundromat at 3505 Plainfield Ave NE.

Brad Pinter is requesting a reduction in the total amount of parking required with a shared parking arrangement between the properties addressed 3505 and 3619 Plainfield Ave NE.

Sue Thomas summarized her staff report dated January 23, 2003.

Commissioners asked questions regarding dumpster location, property lines, and an access agreement.

Rusty Merchant, seconded by Susan Molhoek, moved to approve the request with the following condition: The applicant shall supply evidence of a signed shared parking agreement to Township staff prior to site plan approval by the Site Plan Review Committee. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Discussion on Dr. Martin's request for a PUD-3 rezoning to allow for a 16,000 square foot medical office at 431 and 493 East Beltline Ave. SE.

Stephen Fry did not participate in the discussion of the matter because of a conflict of interest, and left the meeting room.

Craig Datema, Triangle Associates, spoke regarding the request to rezone 431 and 493 East Beltline Ave. SE from R-1, Single Family Residential to PUD-3, Low Density Office PUD to allow for the construction of a 16,000 square foot medical office building. Mr. Datema stated reasons why he believes the zoning should change and presented the Commissioners with a site plan. He feels this project is consistent with the rest of the Beltline; will have no adverse effect to adjacent land; will preserve green space to the north on the property; and eliminate a curb cut by combining the two lots into one.

Dr. Richard Martin spoke regarding the benefits of rezoning the property for his office would be.

Sue Thomas summarized her staff report dated January 21, 2003 and the Township Engineer's letter dated January 20, 2003.

Commissioner Comments:

Susan Molhoek – states that she is struggling with the Land Use Plan and why this use is appropriate.

Susan Lovell – feels this use would be inappropriate and states that it fails criteria #1, 3, and 4 of the 5 standards of approval for PUDs in Section 9.13 of the Zoning Ordinance. She stated that when the property was purchased, the current owner knew what the property was zoned and planned for. She mentioned that there are other areas in the Township that are appropriate for this office.

David VanDyke – would like to re-look at the Comprehensive Land Use Plan for this area before deciding.

Michael Fuller – states that this area of the East Beltline is not very developed, but what is there is residential. He is concerned about what will happen to the eastern side of the East Beltline if this project takes place.

Susan Lovell, seconded by Susan Molhoek, moved to table this project until the Commission has a chance to further look at the Comprehensive Land Plan Use for this area of the Township. Motion passed unanimously.

After discussion, Stephen Fry returned to the table.

7. Discussion of Bank One's request for a PUD-3 rezoning to allow for a 4,000 square foot bank branch at 3228 Knapp Street NE

Michael Fuller read to the Commissioners a letter, dated January 28, 2003, from Commissioner Stephen Fry. The letter states that Mr. Fry would like to abstain from voting on the Bank One request but be allowed to participate in the discussion to answer any questions to ensure that the Township's interests are met. The consensus of the Commission is to let Mr. Fry to stay for the discussion.

Alan Okon, of Nudell Architects, spoke on behalf of Bank One regarding the request to rezone 3228 Knapp Street NE from TC-PUD, Town Center PUD to PUD-3, Low Density Office PUD to allow for the construction of a 4,000 square foot bank building.

Sue Thomas summarized her staff report dated January 20, 2003.

Susan Lovell – asked whether or not the applicant was flexible with their architecture.

Mr. Okon stated that Bank One would like to work with the Township to match the bank's architectural style with the proposed Township Center developments. He also would like direction from the Township on how to proceed architecturally.

The Commissioners discussed that they were not opposed to reviewing the Bank's site plan within the TC-PUD zoning district instead of the PUD-3 district.

After discussion on the rezoning, Rusty Merchant, seconded by David VanDyke, moved to set a public hearing for February's meeting to amend the site plan for the TC-PUD for this property. Motion passed unanimously. Steve Fry abstained.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 p.m.

Susan Lovell, Secretary