

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS
Minutes of the March 25, 2008 Meeting**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, March 25, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Present were Chair Susan Molhoek, Vice-chair Stephen C. Fry, Commissioners David VanDyke, Edward J. Robinette, Michael J Fuller, and Beverly Wall. Absent was Secretary Wayne Harrall. Also present were Township Planning Director Richard Sprague Jr and Planning/Zoning Clerical Assistant Robin Rothley.

1. Approve minutes of the regular meeting of February 26, 2008.

Susan Molhoek listed the following corrections to the February 26, 2008 minutes:

- Page 1, Number 1, remove “tabled” from minutes approval.
- Page 3, Sheet #4, second item; clarify the definition for “GLA” – Gross Leaseable Area.
- Page 3, item under Sheet #10; “Planning staff” should be changed to “The Township”
- Page 6, first paragraph; “then” should be changed to “would”.

Michael Fuller, seconded by **Beverly Wall**, moved to approve the minutes with the above mentioned changes. **Motion passed unanimously.**

2. Approve minutes of the Special meeting of March 14, 2008.

Michael Fuller said he was absent for the meeting so his name should be moved to “absent”.

Edward Robinette, seconded by **Steve Fry**, moved to approve the minutes with the above mentioned changes. **Motion passed unanimously.**

3. Public Hearing: “Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park” is requesting an amendment to their Special Land Use.

Chair Susan Molhoek opened the discussion by saying she was disappointed that a Ground Breaking ceremony took place and an article was published in the Grand Rapids Press announcing the additions prior to receiving approval for the amendment from the Planning Commission.

David Hooker, President and CEO of Meijer Gardens, apologized to the Planning Commission.

David Hooker said that the Gardens have been blessed with growth in attendance and volunteers. They have grown over the past four years from 250,000 guests per year to over 500,000 last year. There is a need for expansion to accommodate the growing numbers of guests.

An overview of the additions was given.

- The South East corner;
 - Will have an addition to the café for additional seating. The expansion will go along with the leaf motif which is through out the gardens.
 - The existing covered entry area will be enclosed to provide protection from the weather for guests being dropped off. This will not be heated or air conditioned.
- The North East corner;
 - Will include much needed office space and a volunteer area.
 - They plan to have a basement but have no plans at this time to utilize this area. It would be more cost effective to construct the area at this time.
- The Horticultural addition;
 - Will have offices for the Horticultural staff which is now housed in a portable rented trailer.
 - Additional public restrooms will be accessible from the entry area which will be beneficial during the summer concerts.
 - Will have “Green room” for the artists during the concerts.
 - There will also be a basement with this addition for future needs.
- The existing tram stop was meant to be temporary so they will be replacing it with a permanent structure.

Susan Molhoek asked if the “Rams Garden” will remain. David Hooker said it will but most likely will have a temporary interruption during construction.

Steve Fry asked what the finish of the exterior would be. He was told it would be brick like the existing building.

Rick Sprague, Township Planner, gave an overview of his staff report. The points he wanted to make were:

- A revised site plan showing all recent additions must be submitted to the Township office.
- Recommend a parking agreement be reached with neighboring properties during busy times.
- The hours of operation for the café will remain the same.
- The Township Engineer has no concerns.
- Provided the use will be the same for the basements when they wish to finish them they may not be required to come before the Planning Commission.

Steve Fry, seconded by Edward Robinette, moved to open the public hearing at 7:25 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Morton Hoffman, 42 Robinhood Dr SE, said he has visited the Gardens on several occasions and he believes parking is being overlooked. He suggested an underground parking facility closer to the main entrance.

As there was no one else in the audience wishing to comment Michael Fuller, seconded by Edward Robinette, moved to close the public hearing at 7:27 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Steve Fry, seconded by **Edward Robinette**, moved to approve the site plan dated 1/31/2008 and the Resolution for an amendment to the Special Land Use with the following changes:

- The address should be changed to 1000 East Beltline Ave NE in two locations on page 1 and one on page 2.
- On page 1 remove “recent site plan” and replace with “site plan dated 1/31/2008”.
- On Page 3 remove 2 (d) completely.

Motion passed unanimously.

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS

COUNTY OF KENT, MICHIGAN

At a regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the Charter Township of Grand Rapids, held at the Grand Rapids Charter Township Hall, 1836 E. Beltline Avenue, N.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan, on the 25 day of March, 2008, at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Susan Molhoek, Stephen Fry, David VanDyke, Edward Robinette,
Michael Fuller, and Beverly Wall

ABSENT: Wayne Harrall

The following preamble and resolution were offered by **Stephen Fry** and seconded by **Edward Robinette**.

**RESOLUTION APPROVING SPECIAL LAND USE FOR
FREDERIK MEIJER GARDENS & SCULPTURE PARK
FOR ADDITIONS TO THE CAFÉ BUILDING, THE FACILITY RENTAL
BUSINESS CENTER AND THE WEST SERVICE AREA AT 1000 EAST
BELTLINE AVENUE**

WHEREAS, Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park has applied for a special land use to permit various expansions of the existing structures located at 1000 East Beltline Avenue;

WHEREAS, the applicant's botanic garden and associated facilities are located in the R-1 district and are currently authorized as a special land use under Sections 7.3.21 and 24.13.B.7 of the Township Zoning Ordinance;

WHEREAS, the proposed additions and expansions would amend the special land use as currently authorized for the Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park so as to permit the facilities as proposed by applicant's plan dated 1/31/2008; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has held a public hearing on the application for the special land use after the giving of required public notice.

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED:

1. **Special Land Use.** Upon the terms and subject to the conditions of this resolution, the Planning Commission hereby grants and approves an amended special land use for the construction and expansion of the areas specified below, located at 1000 East Beltline Avenue, within the lands comprising the Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, and hereby authorizing the continued special land use of the botanic gardens and facilities, as amended by this special land use, on lands legally described as follows:

THAT PART OF NW 1/4 OF SEC 23 T7N R11W EX THAT PART LYING W OF ELY LINE OF EAST BELTLINE AVE & EX COM 124.36 FT S 88D 21M 26S E ALONG E&W 1/4 LINE FROM W 1/4 COR TH S 88D 21M 26S E ALONG E&W 1/4 LINE 240.91 FT TH N 2D 40M 36S E 513.47 FT TH N 87D 11M 42S W 250.18 FT TO E LINE

OF EAST BELTLINE AVE TH SLY ALONG E LINE OF SD AVE TO BEG & EX COM 400.0 FT S 87D 44M 14S E ALONG N SEC LINE & 250.0 FT S 2D 42M 24S W FROM NW COR OF SEC TH N 2D 42M 24S E TO S LINE OF N 50.0 FT OF NW 1/4 TH S 87D 44M 14S E ALONG SD S LINE TO E LINE OF W 480.0 FT OF NW 1/4 TH N 2D 42M 24S E ALONG SD E LINE TO N SEC LINE TH S 87D 44M 14S E ALONG N SEC LINE TO A PT 1130.34 FT S 87D 42M 24S E FROM NW COR OF SEC TH S 2D 40M 22S W 250.0 FT TH S 17D 10M 22S E 265.10 FT TH S 2D 40M 22S W 400.0 FT TH N 87D 44M 14S W 940.87 FT TH N 2D 42M 24S E 400.0 FT TH N 28D 15M 48S E 278.15 FT TO BEG & EX COM AT NW COR OF NE 1/4 NW 1/4 TH E ALONG N SEC LINE 200.0 FT TH S PERP TO N SEC LINE 436.0 FT TH W PAR WITH N SEC LINE TO W LINE OF E 1/2 NW 1/4 TH N ALONG SD W LINE TO BEG

2. **Terms and Conditions of the Special Land Use.** The special land use for the construction and expansion of the proposed uses, including the café building, the facility rental business center, and the west service area portion of the horticultural building, shall be subject to all of the following terms and conditions:

The proposed additions and expansions shall be located, constructed and used as shown on the site plan submitted by the applicant with the application, and filed under date of January 31, 2008. The additions and expansions shall be constructed according to the dimensions shown and shall be used only as described in the materials submitted with the applicant's application.

The proposed building additions will have the exterior appearance shown in the drawings submitted with the application, which exterior appearance will blend into the existing buildings. The additions shall have the same basic building style, roofline and exterior finish as the existing buildings.

Additional storm water run off resulting from the construction and use of the building additions shall be managed, controlled and disbursed in compliance with the Township Storm Water Ordinance. A storm water permit shall be required. Proposed

storm water management facilities shall be subject to the approval of the Township Engineer, consistent with the terms of the Township's Storm Water Ordinance.

3. **Findings Under Section 24.13.B.7.e of the Zoning Ordinance.** If the special land use is established and operated in accordance with the terms of this resolution, the Planning Commission determines that the particular special land use standards pertaining to the botanic garden special land use would be satisfied with respect to the proposed additions and expansions, as follows:

The proposed setback of the additions and expansions from other lands would adequately protect such lands from adverse impacts.

Necessary public utility services for the proposed additions and expansions are available and adequate.

There would be adequate access to the additions and expansions by vehicle routes within the botanic gardens.

Existing natural features would be adequately preserved.

The existing driveways will provide adequate public street access to the proposed additions and expansions.

The existing off-street parking areas and the existing loading, refuse and other service areas on the site are adequate for the proposed expansions.

Adequate safety and security measures would be utilized in connection with the construction and use of the additions and expansions.

4. **Findings Under Section 24.11 of the Zoning Ordinance.** If a special land use is established and operated in accordance with the terms of this resolution, the

Planning Commission determines that the special land use standards of Section 24.11 of the Zoning Ordinance would be satisfied as follows:

The special land use will be compatible and harmonious with the surrounding uses and the orderly development of the surrounding neighborhood and vicinity.

The special land use will not make vehicular and pedestrian traffic more hazardous than is generally experienced for the vicinity involved.

The special land use will not cause unreasonable impacts upon existing uses or surrounding property by reason of noise, dust, fumes, smoke, air, water, odor, light and/or vibration, and will not cause unreasonable impacts upon persons.

The special land use will not interfere with or discourage the appropriate development and use of adjacent lands and buildings.

The special land use is consistent with the recommendations of the Township's comprehensive future land use plan.

The special land use will not unreasonably burden the capacity of public services and/or facilities.

The special land use will be designed, located and operated so as to adequately protect the public health, safety and welfare.

AYES: Susan Molhoek, Stephen Fry, David VanDyke, Edward Robinette, Michael Fuller, and Beverly Wall

NAYS: None.

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

Secretary

4. Discussion: GDK Construction is presenting information related to their Comprehensive Land Use Amendment request.

Larry Nix, representing GDK Construction, explained their desire to amend the Comprehensive Land Use Plan for 4550 and 4590 Cascade Road SE from and Office designation to Neighborhood Commercial PUD designation.

They would like to construct a Walgreen's store where two small partially vacant office buildings are currently located.

Larry Nix gave arguments supporting the Neighborhood Commercial PUD designation:

- The office market has an increase in competition; mainly in the Downtown Grand Rapids area. He mentioned several buildings in the Township that have vacancy issues.
- The three other corners have commercial uses.
- Medical Park Dr would be a good boundary between commercial and office uses.
- Would provide an opportunity to work with Kent County Road Commission to improve traffic flow with Macatawa Bank.

Steve asked if Macatawa would remain as is and Mr. Nix said it would. They have approached the bank to include them in the project but they were not interested. The bank has done extensive remodeling so they are not financially in a position to be included in this plan.

The commissioners discussed the intent of the 'Downtown' within the Forest Hills PUD. Steve Fry said development on this corner could be a chance to jumpstart the Forest Hills PUD and including the bank would be very beneficial. It could solve grading issues and get parking off of the sidewalk.

The commissioners discussed traffic concerns and connections between Macatawa Bank, this project, and Medical Park Dr. Larry Nix suggested that the safest way to exit the site would be onto Forest Hill Ave.

Susan Molhoek thanked Mr. Nix for his presentation.

5. Discussion: Comprehensive Land Use Amendment on Dunnigan Ave.

Rick Sprague explained that the proposed amendments have been distributed to neighboring communities for the forty day review process. After the forty days have

passed the next step would be to have the public review the plans and hold a Public Hearing and then forward on to the Township Board.

Rick Sprague explained that because the two parcels are no longer included in the Lifestyle Center project the Comprehensive Plan should be amended to avoid future confusion.

6. Public Comment.

Ted Sierveld, 2714 McIntosh NE, believes the township is putting a lot of stock in the “Downtown” concept. He’s not convinced people will be willing to walk from place to place.

7. Update from Township Planning Director.

There are currently two applications for the April Planning Commission meeting. If the Township Attorney is available there may be some Ordinance updates on the agenda as well.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Wayne A. Harrall – Secretary