

**GRAND RAPIDS CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS  
AUGUST 10, 2010**

A meeting of the Grand Rapids Charter Township Zoning Board of Appeals was called to order at 7:06 pm with the following present; Chair Ron Hall, Lee VanPopering, George Orphan, Jim Kubicek and Greg Timmer. Also present were Township Planning Director Richard Sprague Jr. and Treasurer Clerical Assistant Kara Ronda. Secretary, David VanDyke was not present.

**1. Approval of the June 8, 2010 minutes.**

**Lee VanPopering**, seconded by **George Orphan**, moved to approve the minutes as they were with no changes required.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**2. #2010-04 - Thum Insurance - 3140 3 Mile Rd.**

James Miket, Icon Sign Co LLC, (who is working with Larry Thum), is requesting variances from the Zoning Ordinance to be allowed; a 36 square foot ground sign, and have the sign built with a zero setback.

- reviewed pictures
- looking for 36 sq ft ground sign due to distance from street
- sign would be 3 ft from property line, which is 2 ft closer due to the tree line
- would like to put the sign in without moving any trees (3 ft setback instead of 5ft)
- sign length is approximately same size as tree separation

Lee VanPopering asked Rick Sprague about the pie shaped property that is located in front of the property, closest to the East Beltline. Rick Sprague stated that property belongs to MDOT.

Jim Kubicek asked the applicant if they had tried any other sizes, possibly more rectangular. The applicant, James Miket, stated no, they did not. James explained they did not want to obstruct the corner with a smaller sign.

Jim Kubicek asked if the applicant had prepared anything for a smaller sign to show the board. James Miket said no, the lettering could not be read from the road.

Jim Kubicek asked what the distance of the sign would be from the road. James Miket stated the distance is 108 feet from the road.

Rick Sprague clarified it is 168 feet to the corner of 3 Mile and the East Beltline.

Ron Hall questioned if the base of the sign with the address on is not considered part of the sign. James Miket stated that is correct.

Lee VanPopering expressed by putting an address on the base makes it part of the sign. Rick Sprague clarified the address does not count; it is not considered part of the sign.

Ron Hall asked how big the address on the base of the sign is. James Miket stated it is 8 inches tall, which the fire department requires. Ron asked if the 8 inch address can be read from the road. James stated, yes, it can.

Lee VanPopering asked about the lighting of the sign. James Miket explained the sign will be internally illuminated and only the white letters. Lee clarified the address will not be lit. James stated that is correct.

Lee VanPopering stated the sign is rather large. James Miket compared their potential sign to the Universal Forest Products sign size as a comparison.

Larry Thum explained he would like the public to know about the service provided. Larry stated the business has expanded; he is using the whole building and not subletting any spaces.

George Orphan asked the applicant to verify the letter height for the whole sign. James Miket explained he does not have the exact numbers, but he believes the letters on the top of the sign are 10 inches and the letters on the bottom/base, address, are 6 inches.

Larry Thum added he is leaning away from the blue background on the sign, he feels it takes away from the landscape. Larry said he is looking at a more neutral color.

George Orphan asked if the website on the sign would be back lit. James Miket said yes, everything with white lettering will be illuminated.

Ron Hall opened the Public Hearing at 7:22 pm.

There was a gentleman in the audience that reminded the board about the Kyuper College sign. He reminded the board they said that would not be the 'norm' for the East Beltline.

The Public Hearing was closed at 7:22 pm.

Lee VanPopering feels the sign is still rather large.

Ron Hall questioned if the building sits on 3 Mile, why the applicant would be trying to advertise on the East Beltline. Jim Kubicek explained the building faces both streets equally.

George Orphan explained he is baffled with the website present on the sign. George stated the sign could be the correct size without the website on it. George noted the website makes the sign larger and does not see hardship there with meeting the ordinance. George added the need to fix the letter sizes can be done by eliminating the website.

Jim Kubicek stated he does not see hardship in the applicant asking for additional size.

Lee VanPopering stated the sign would be a long ways from the road, if the applicant removed the website, it would be more visible and fitting.

**George Orphan**, seconded by **Lee VanPopering**, moved to approve the requested variance with the following conditions:

- 3 ft setback (versus the 5 ft setback)
- deny additional size of sign due to existing Zoning Requirements

**Motion approved unanimously.**

### **3. Update from Township Planning Director.**

Planning Director Rick Sprague announced there would be a meeting in September.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
David VanDyke