

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS
Minutes November 27, 2012**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, November 27, 2012 at 7:00 pm.

Present were Chair Wayne Harrall, Vice Chair Stephen Fry, Secretary David A. VanDyke, Commissioners: Bev Wall, Dave Pierangeli, Mark Prein and Scott Conners. Also present were Township Attorney Jim Scales, Planning Administrator Dave Pasquale and Clerical Assistant Kara Hammond.

Chair Wayne Harrall introduced Scott Conners as a new Planning Commission member.

1. Approve minutes of (special meeting) August 6, 2012.

Steve Fry, seconded by Bev Wall, moved to approve the minutes without any changes.
Motion approved unanimously.

2. Approve minutes of (special TB & PC meeting) October 16, 2012.

Steve Fry, seconded by Bev Wall, moved to approve the minutes without any changes.
Motion approved unanimously.

3. Public Hearing – MRE Cascade LLC (Milestones) – Special Land Use, Daycare center at 4519 Cascade Rd SE.

Rick Polaski, with Nederveld, gave a brief presentation:

- Milestones Daycare is asking for approval for daycare facility, on the north side of Cascade Road, behind Eastpointe Office Park
- Currently zoned C-2
- Currently running a Milestones Daycare at a different location, but that facility would close and merge with new one
- Current daycare is 3,000 sq. feet, proposed is nearly 11,000 sq feet
- New proposed location is a better location, no traffic going by and no pond (like at current location)
- Large play area
- 17,000 sq feet building
- 70 proposed parking spaces
- Approximately 32-42 children will be outside within the fenced area at a time, all others would be inside
- 20 employees at any time, but up to 35
- No designated drop off area – parent will park, walk child in and then return to their vehicle
- Busiest time is approximately 7:30 am
- Operating 6:00 am-6:00 pm, bulk time is approximately 7:30 am

- Very attractive building with attractive building materials
- Access through office park from Cascade Road – existing easement, moved to east side of property, straighter approach versus a long winding entrance
- Storm water management – existing basin to west and designed to handle the volume
- Chain link fence proposed along the wooded area
- Proposing a 70 foot setback

Jim Scales gave legal report and made mention to the Township Engineer's letter and advised the commissioners to take his letter into account.

Dave Pasquale gave staff report

Mark Prien asked Dave Pasquale about the park behind the proposed area, if it is the Township's or the neighborhood associations. Wayne Harrall stated it belongs to the association. Scott Connors clarified it is part of the Forest Hills Neighborhood Association.

Dave VanDyke asked the applicant if they had any idea how many trees in the proposed area would be saved. The applicant stated they did not, but would like to save as many trees as they can.

Wayne Harrall noted the play area will require minimal grading and asked the applicant if they can state they have no intention to take the northern most trees. The applicant stated that is their intention.

Dave VanDyke asked if the fence is on the property line. The applicant explained it is shown on the property line, but it is actually 10 ft. from the line.

Wayne Harrall noted the playground area shows 11,000 sq. ft. Rick Polaki stated it will actually be about 13,000 sq. ft.

Steve Fry asked what is directly to the north of the location. Wayne Harrall stated it is the Forest Hills Neighborhood recreation area (pool, playground, etc...). Steve Fry noted he was just curious about grading issues, but does not foresee any possible issues. Wayne Harrall noticed the parking area to the east is higher and may look down on to the building.

Mark Prein asked if the storm sewer is built right on top of the sanitary sewer on the west side. Rick Polaski stated that Bob Bruggink asked them to slide it over so there is more distance between the two, so they will do that and they are willing to do whatever the GRTFD requires them to do.

Scott Connors believes the city may need to be informed regarding the water and easement. Wayne Harrall noted Bob Bruggink is aware and it should be addressed by him.

Wayne Harrall noted a concern with the drop off procedure. He explained it seems like it could be congested in the morning and asked if the applicant gave any thought to circulating an exit along the back, west edge. The applicant explained the front row, along the front of the building,

is reserved for parents to drop off (or pick up) their children, employees will be parking in a different area.

Dave VanDyke asked if the proposed parking to child is designed to average what is currently in the daycare building, and for a future building. The applicant stated part of the parking (along the eastern edge) is really for the office building and not needed for the daycare, but they thought it would be wise to build that parking now. Dave VanDyke asked if they take the extra parking shown away, will there be enough parking spaces. The applicant stated there will be enough and enough for the future office use as well.

Wayne Harrall asked if there are any concerns from the existing folks within that development regarding traffic issues. The applicant stated they have some car counts and explained the Commissioners will see the busiest time for traffic is mainly between 8:00 am-9:00 am, and picks up again between 4:00 pm-6:00 pm. The applicant also stated they do not feel the traffic from the proposed daycare will affect the existing tenants.

Scott Conners noted the dumpster placement looks a little tight. The applicant explained the garbage trucks are front loaders and they did not have a problem pulling in or pulling out.

Bev Wall, seconded by **Dave Pierangeli**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 7:31 pm.
Motion approved unanimously.

Marc Kidder, 4519 Cascade Rd., owner of a business at Eastpointe:

- Opposed to the Daycare
- Concerns about ingress and egress
- Curb cut when entering Eastpointe, there is one lane in and one lane out
- May have to cross three lanes of traffic to exit, cause a significant back up
- Eastpointe has 3 buildings which houses 22 businesses
- Requesting any resolution be postponed this evening and the Township do their own traffic study

Mary Benedict, 4519 Cascade Rd.:

- Opposed to the Daycare
- Concerned with parking and that there is not enough sufficient parking
- Afraid the overflow of parking from the Daycare, at their busy times, will impose on their businesses
- Turning onto Cascade Rd, with the extra traffic the Daycare will bring, will be extremely difficult, more than it already is

Kelly Russell, owner of Milestones:

- Surrounded by other businesses in their current location, time for a change
- Parents coming in and dropping off their children is important and a safety issue
- Not going to put her center in a location that would endanger anyone, including the neighbors
- Her business will be an asset to all in that area

Glen Tuurik, currently owns the property where the proposed Daycare will be built:

- Believes this use is perfect for this property/site
- Drop off and pick up times are spread out, over a 2 hour period

Jeff Shall, the current president of Eastpointe:

- Opposed to the Daycare
- Not willing, at this point, to do an easement
- No signage would be available on Cascade Rd. for this property

Steve Fry, seconded by **Bev Wall**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 7:44 pm.

Motion approved unanimously.

Steve Fry asked Wayne Harrall how the Road Commission looks at the loading for a single drive and determines what it can handle. Wayne explained the roads can definitely handle the cars, but at busy times they are going to have some traffic backups. Wayne also explained the extra traffic is not going to cause delays on the roadways, but may definitely cause backups to the tenants and the proximity to the light is the biggest issue.

The applicant talked about the car study that they provided, stated they counted cars, met with the road commission and provided an email from Tim Haagsma, Director of Traffic and Safety at the Kent County Road Commission. *(Both items are to be included with the minutes)*

Steve Fry stated he is having a hard time believing someone would put this type of investment into a business and not think it would succeed. Dave VanDyke stated this property/site has been setup this way for years. Dave said he does not buy the argument there is going to be more traffic or additional traffic is going to cause any backup on the public street. Dave stated to try and limit the first guy in the development to all the parking and access, is not how it works.

Wayne Harrall touched base with the applicant on the signage issue. The owner stated she does not mind and explained she does not have road signage now, only signage will be on the building itself.

Steve Fry, seconded by **Bev Wall**, moved to approve the Special Land Use request for a child care center at 4519 Cascade Road, with the following conditions:

- Ordinance drafted by the township attorney
- Approval is only given to the child care center, the future building is for illustration only
- Approval of Township Fire service
- Approval of Township Engineer
- North and east area be shown as a no disturb area, in the rear 70 ft of east property line and along the north property
- Access easements should be provided to the Township
- Final plan be resubmitted to Township Planner with all appropriate changes

Motion approved unanimously.

4. Copperwood II – Preliminary Plan Review – Site Condominium, step 1.

Mick McGraw, president of Eastbrook Homes, explained their request:

- Purchased this land from the previous developer, ready to add in the final phase
- Approval has expired
- Plan is the exact same with one exception – road/cul-de-sac between lot 19 & 20 is no longer shown
- Same number of lots, nothing else has changed

Wayne Harrall clarified that the original approved cul-de-sac is eliminated. Mick McGraw stated that is correct, and noted they modified the lots to make them larger.

Jim Scales gave the legal report

Dave Pasquale gave the staff report

Dave VanDyke stated at the time this was originally approved it was agreed to put the temporary cul-de-sac in but when the next phase was ready to be completed it would become permanent. Mick McGraw explained no school bus goes back there and the only houses that will be affected will be the ones at the very end. Mick thinks it is better for both neighborhoods to be separated, people like small little pieces, it gives a sense of safety and ownership (who is coming and going, etc...). Steve Fry asked the applicant, in regards to safety, how is the fire truck going to get down there.

Wayne Harrall explained when it was approved in 2005 the first phase was built with the intention that the two site condominiums would connect, which he understands is expired, but does not change the original intent. Wayne explained it was approved with the intent the street would connect and there would be another access point on Bird Avenue.

Scott Conners explained neighborhoods that have accessibility are necessary, in need of alternate routes.

Mick McGraw explained he sees it differently than the way it was previously approved. Mick understands what was approved, but explained he asked the neighbors what they want and what they would like and the neighbors came back to them with the presently proposed plan.

Steve Fry asked Mick McGraw if need be, if he would be willing to change lot lines. Mick McGraw stated he does not think that would be a problem

Steve Fry stated by the time the development is half full, the Planning Commission would like to see the sidewalks going in. Dave VanDyke stated he would rather give a time frame, (ex: in a 3 yr period) sidewalks have to be in.

Steve Fry told the applicant the Commission's preference is to connect the two neighborhoods. Wayne Harrall said connecting it is the only way, which was the original intent, and personally likes the connectivity. Scott Conners stated it needs to be connected. Mark Prein said the two

must be connected, plain and simple. Dave Pierangeli and Bev Wall agree with the other Commissioners, it must be connected.

Terry Bates, president of Copperwood Home Association, made a few comments in opposition of connecting the two neighborhoods:

- Biggest concern is increase in traffic and safety
- Fears it will become a cut through if connected
- Adding to their road is going to cause problems – it is a private road, maintained by the residents, the extra residents/cars will take a toll on their road
- Going to have construction traffic, keep it separated
- Keep the connectivity through the sidewalk

Steve Fry, seconded by **Mark Prein**, moved to set a public hearing for January 2013, dependent on the applicant's delivery of the updated plans.

Motion approved unanimously.


5. General Public Comment.

Three residents spoke against connecting the two neighborhoods.

6. Update from Township Planning staff.

Dave Pasquale told the Commissioners about the growth of building permits since last year, explained this is his last meeting and thanked the Planning Commission.

The meeting adjourned at 9:11 pm.



David A. VanDyke – Secretary