

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS
Minutes March 24, 2015**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, March 24, 2015.

Present were Chair Wayne Harrall, Vice Chair Bev Wall, Commissioners; Doug Kochneff, Bill Culhane, Mark Prein and Scott Conners. Also present were Township Attorney Jim Brown and Planning Assistant Kara Hammond. Secretary Dave Van Dyke was absent.

1. Approve minutes of January 27, 2015 regular meeting.

Bev Wall, seconded by **Scott Conners**, moved to approve the minutes as written, with no changes.

Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

2. Informal Presentation - Universal Forest Products - Rezoning request, O-PUD, for (current and) a 3.75 acre parcel adjacent to the west of 2801 East Beltline Ave NE.

Scott Weir, Corporate Construction Manager, with Universal Forest Products gave a brief overview of the request;

- ♦ rezoning of property adjacent to current campus
- ♦ would like to rezone the entire complex, current and new lands, to O-PUD
- ♦ proposing a 30,000 sq. ft. building, but explained it may end up being smaller

Bill Culhane asked about the number of curb cuts proposed on 3 Mile Rd and stated he would prefer to see more internal circulation versus adding more curb cuts. Scott Weir explained the site needs one curb cut that will allow traffic along the rear of the proposed building as they would like to keep truck traffic away from the other drives and circulation on the front of the site, but said they are open to suggestions. Scott stated it is more important to them to have the new curb cut that they are proposing than keeping the existing.

Scott Conners asked if the applicant had looked at the possible connection to the maintenance area. Scott Weir said they are specifically not showing a roadway there because they do not want to promote truck traffic to travel outside of the dedicated area for trucks on the site.

Wayne Harrall asked if there is any flexibility in moving the proposed drive more to the east, further away from Bird Ave. Scott Weir replied yes that is a possibility to slide it to the east, and if the building does end up being smaller the propensity of the drive moving to the east is feasible.

Wayne Harrall noted the Kent County Road Commission did look at the existing site plan and would like to see the drive moved more to the east as well and one of the proposed drives needs to be eliminated. Wayne asked if the applicant anticipates the trucks coming from the East Beltline. Scott Weir stated the majority of the trucks come from the East Beltline. Scott Weir said the parking will be very minimal and does not anticipate it to be a high volume parking area.

Wayne Harrall noted Universal Forest Products did hold an open house for the neighbors and stated they have done their part of notifying the public/neighbors.

Scott Conners asked about the parking requirements. Attorney Jim Brown gave clarification of the requirements.

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal report.

Doug Kochneff stated he noticed that on the few days that he has driven by he noticed there are numerous empty parking spaces.

Bill Culhane asked for clarification if there will be any industrial testing or production occurring in the proposed building. Scott Weir said it will contain product development and product testing, both which are currently done on site today. Scott explained they are in need of the larger building to enhance the current development and testing. Bill Culhane asked if they would be testing any chemicals or anything that could leak out in to the basin. Scott Weir stated they do not do chemical testing on their own, all that comes from a manufacturer off-site.

Scott Weir explained the proposed building will mainly be used as a work shop, either small scale or true to size scale of a rendering; they just do not have an area large enough to do what is desired on site.

Mark Prein asked if the Planning Commissioners are setting a precedence of allowing the request, because the Planning Commission stated in the Master Plan that the more commercial growth would be along the East Beltline and this project is being proposed further west than previously discussed in the Master Plan discussions. Wayne Harrall said he does not see a problem with the proposed request, or moving the complex to the west. Mark Prein stated the proposed building will sit approximately 8 ft. higher than the adjacent property, and it is proposed to be a two story building. Scott Conners said he is comfortable with the proposed building if the neighbors are, and is anticipating hearing from them at the Public Hearing.

Wayne Harrall said he would like to see the trees to the west stay and have the applicant work around the mature trees already there. The applicant stated there will be screening along the property line and their goal is to make it better than the ordinance, doing everything they can to make it as compliant or better.

Wayne Harrall asked if there were any potential options of Universal Forest Products moving to the north. Scott Weir said they have talked to the neighbor to the north for decades and frankly they have lost interest. Scott continued; Universal Forest Products does not intend to expand their Corporate Headquarters, their growth is focusing on expanding the footprint of their business.

Doug Kochneff stated he personally thinks the site plan flows better to the west. Bill Culhane added as long as the neighbors are ok with it, he does not see a problem with the expansion to the west either. Mark Prein stated he too agrees the expansion to the west is the correct way to go, but wanted to make sure the Planning Commission was following the intention of the Master Plan.

Wayne Harrall suggested the applicant do their due diligence on the westerly property line to keep as many trees as possible. Scott Conners added it seems to make sense to have a sidewalk, or at least to connect to the intersection to give them access to the bike trail/pathway.

Scott Conners, seconded by **Bev Wall**, move to schedule the Public Hearing for the rezoning request for the aforementioned properties to be held on April 28, 2015.

Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

3. General Public Comment.

No one was present for public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.



David A. Van Dyke, Secretary