

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS
Minutes May 22, 2018**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, May 22, 2018.

Present were Chair Wayne Harrall, Secretary Dave Van Dyke, Commissioners; Mark Prein, Bill Culhane and Doug Kochneff. Also present were Township Attorney James R. Brown and Planning Assistant Kara Hammond. Vice Chair Scott Connors and Commissioner Dan Ophoff were absent.

1. Approve minutes of April 24, 2018 regular meeting.

Dave Van Dyke, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to approve the minutes with the following changes;

- p.1, sentence before opening of public hearing to read; *“Dan Ophoff asked about the report from the Township Engineer, one presently is not available.”*
- p.3, 1st sentence, change the word “staking” to ‘*stacking*’
- p.3, 4th paragraph to read; *“The Commissioners talked about setbacks, the flexibility with a PUD, and added that the applicant addressed the landscaping plan accordingly. They are all comfortable with the proposed setbacks and landscaping.”*
- p.3, 5th paragraph, end of 1st sentence, delete the word “invasive”
- p.3, 6th paragraph to read; *“Parking was discussed; Scott Connors stated he is ok being a little light on the (proposed parking for the) westerly building. With the site being part of a PUD, it is more flexible...”*

Motion approved, 5-0.

2. Public Hearing - Mayflower Congregational Church - Request to amend the current Special Land Use to allow for the addition of a new entrance canopy, construction of a new dumpster enclosure, and the reconfiguration of the existing parking and playground areas at 2345 Robinson Rd SE.

Due to a conflict of interest, Commissioner Mark Prein recused himself.

John Casserly, with Nederveld, gave a brief overview of the proposed requests;

- ▯ add a canopy
- ▯ relocate playground
- ▯ improvements to the parking lot
- ▯ dumpster enclosure to be built in the northwest area of the parking lot

Wayne Harrall asked about the intent of the proposed outside area, above the canopy. Mark Elliot, a Pastor at Mayflower, stated it will be a place of prayer and reflection, adding there will be no more than 20 people using that space at the same time.

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal review.

Wayne Harrall asked the applicant's engineer to address the proposed parking space width. John Casserly stated the 8 ft. width is the approved ADA width for a parking space, explaining they followed the typical ADA parking space layout. Casserly added they can adjust the width if the Planning Commission deems it necessary.

Wayne Harrall asked about the recent relocation with the proposed dumpster enclosure. John Casserly said it would be easier for the trash provider and more out of the way; both aesthetically and physically.

Bill Culhane asked about the playground structures: if new equipment will be brought in and if there will be a need for foundations for any new equipment. John Casserly said he believes the playground equipment will be the same equipment, it will merely be relocated.

Greg Metz, the architect for the project, explained the fence on the north end of the playground is opaque and will mimic the fence that surrounds the dumpster enclosure. Metz said the proposed chain link fence will be on the opposite side, the composite fence will be the fence that will be visible.

Bill Culhane, seconded by **Dave Van Dyke**, moved to open the public hearing at 7:14 pm.
Motion approved, 4-0.

Jennifer Bruce, 155 Maryland Ave SE;

- lives adjacent to where the playground will be located, making sure there won't be any additional lighting as the building light pollution is already an issue
- sewer line runs north along the property line and concerned about the amount of traffic and construction trucks and use of those two access points

Bill Culhane, seconded by **Dave Van Dyke**, moved to close the public hearing at 7:20 pm.
Motion approved, 4-0.

Wayne Harrall asked the applicant's engineer if he had a chance to rebuttal the Township Engineer's review. John Casserly said he has orally confirmed with Tim Hoffert their intent to comply with the recommendations and will do so once the amendment to the special land use request is approved.

Dave Van Dyke, seconded by **Doug Kochneff**, moved to approve the proposed amendment to the existing special land use for the Mayflower Congregational Church, located at 2345 Robinson Rd SE, in addition to the site plans with the recent revised portions dated May 18, 2018, as well as the previous unchanged portions dated May 4, 2018, with the following changes to the draft resolution (provided by the Township Attorney);

- 8 ft. width of the handicap access parking spaces located along the southeasterly line of the new parking area is approved
- the revised outdoor dumpster location (at the northwest corner of the north parking area) is approved with a 15 ft. setback from the west property line
- at least one canopy tree is to be planted in the corner island located at the southeast corner (of the new parking spaces)

Motion approved, 4-0.

3. Initial Review - Katerberg VerHage - Request for a Special Land Use to allow for Commercial Landscaping Services to continue operating on their current site comprised of 10 individual parcels, totaling 87.86 acres along Michigan St.

Due to a conflict of interest, Secretary Dave Van Dyke recused himself.

Commissioner Mark Prein rejoined the meeting.

Tom VerHage, owner of Katerberg VerHage, gave an overview of the request;

- been at current location for over 60 years
- submitted a site plan, at the request of the Township

Todd Stuive, Exxel Engineering, continued the overview of the request;

- 10 individual parcels make up the site
- total site is 87.86 acres, approximately 21 acres of the site is open water
- site is zoned SR, as well as the surrounding properties
- a descriptive page of operations was submitted
- approximately 19 buildings on site, displayed and numbered on the plan that was submitted
- 6 residential homes; 4 along Michigan on the easterly side, 1 internal next to KVH office, 1 located off Bradford
- explained the locations of the drives and entrances to the sites
- detailed areas on the site plan have been identified; offices, equipment storage areas, crushing area, soil storage area, residential areas, organic soils storage, composting area
- evergreen screening along the east side, property line
- touched on the drainage area; sensitive area from the flooding standpoint, good amount of storage for stormwater on site
- fertilizer storage on site; which can be identified
- no underground tanks on the property

Bill Culhane asked about the snow removal business, questioning if the drivers are dispatched from the business site (on Michigan) or from their own home. Tom VerHage said half are dispatched from the business on Michigan and half from their homes.

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal review.

Wayne Harrall asked about the aggregate materials and how they are used in the landscape process. Tom VerHage said the concrete is used in their retaining walls and the asphalt millings are used for pathways. Harrall asked if there have been any thoughts on modifications to the east property line, now that there is a proposed residential development to be constructed. Tom VerHage stated they really have not given it much thought, but added they would plant additional buffering if need be and would be willing to berm that specific area.

Wayne Harrall said one of the key items that would allow the Planning Commission to approve the special land use (as proposed) will be whether or not the crushing and processing of the non-

natural materials is indeed a necessity, or will be allowed, under the final approved special land use.

Mark Prein clarified the trees are actually located on the adjoining property, to the east, so the applicant would have no control over whether those would stay or go. Prein said there was some concern about the expansion of the storage/stock piles, the processing of recycled aggregate, dust mitigation on the site and a few other items that have been discussed at the previous work sessions.

Bill Culhane said although it is not common to process recycled aggregate in a landscaping business, he does not see the problem with the applicant using it for their own company. Doug Kochneff disagreed stating he feels the crushing and processing or recycling of non-natural materials as an industrial use and does not feel it is a landscape process (reiterating it seems to be more of an industrial use). Attorney Jim Brown referred to chapter 24 in the zoning ordinance stating he does not find any reference to the allowance of non-natural material mentioned as an allowable use. Kochneff asked if the applicant's site in Walker does the recycling process as well. Tom VerHage stated it does not.

Wayne Harrall brought up the retail aspect. Tom VerHage said the majority of the retail sales are done at the Walker location, only 25% retail sales happen out of the Green Leaf location on Michigan St.

Mark Prein stated the issue he struggles with is that this business has been operating for decades and wrestles with the "after the fact" ordinance change. Jim Brown clarified that the processing/recycling/milling has never been allowed in that use, and said at the time the applicant says they started the processing/recycling/milling that particular use was not allowed.

Wayne Harrall said in regards to the trucking issue/concern, with the City posting the 'no trucks' sign, the only option is to truck out to Crahen, adding as long as they are hauling legal loads, they can utilize the road, stating he feels it is difficult to police trucking (especially if they are abiding by the load regulations). Harrall said he appreciates the fact they are recycling the materials, but questions if the location is appropriate.

The commissioners suggested the applicant address the following concerns to include with revised plans and narrative;

- more screening/berming on the east property line (and whole property)
- pond (inner connections); the best they can show on a plan
- address use and processing of non-natural material
- fuel containment and fertilizer area to be noted (above ground liquids need to be shown/where located on property)

Mark Prein, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to set the Public Hearing for the June 26, 2018, meeting (subject to revised plans, narrative, etc. being submitted to the Township by May 30).

Motion approved, 4-0.

Secretary Dave VanDyke rejoined the meeting.

4. General Public Comment.

Celia Bissett, 285 Saddleback Dr NE – spoke regarding item #3;

- wants to address the speed and huge trucks that barrel down the road, concerned about the future amount of traffic and wondered about lowering the speed
- added the incline on Michigan is extremely dangerous and extremely concerned with visibility

Simon Dimenstein, 4575 Michigan St NE – spoke regarding item #3;

- Katerberg VerHage is a pillar of this community and observed how they have been not only a business but a good neighbor, stating that they have been here for decades, local businesses keep money local, should encourage more small business in the Township, not discourage them with implementing rules after the fact
- the water trucks are too heavy for Michigan St, the vibrations are tearing up the road, does not feel it is a suitable place for the water trucks to fill up their tanks

John Amash, 359 Saddleback Dr NE – spoke regarding item #3;

- unfortunately there is a fundamental issue and danger with the trucks
- lots of pedestrians utilize that street and feels that it is a bad situation just waiting to happen
- talked about the zoning ordinance and that it states, “compatibility of use with the surrounding area and neighbor or vicinity, use will make no more hazardous to the surrounding areas”, then said it does not sound like the uses Katerberg VerHage are performing are compatible with what the zoning ordinance states

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 pm.



David A. Van Dyke, Secretary