

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS  
Minutes May 24, 2016**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, May 24, 2016.

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

**1. Approve minutes of April 26, 2016 meeting.**

**Scott Conners**, seconded by **Mark Prein**, moved to approve the minutes with the following changes;

- p.1,4<sup>th</sup> paragraph from the bottom,2<sup>nd</sup> sentence; change the word 'east' to 'west'
- p.2,5<sup>th</sup> paragraph from top; omit first sentence, add 'Steve' to beginning of next sentence

**Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.**

**2. Public Hearing - GRT Zoning Ordinance Amendments - (R-PUD; SR, R-1, C-2, C-1 & C Districts; Accessory Buildings & Uses, Nonconforming Structures & Uses, Definitions) Chapter 15, 6, 7, 10, 11 & 12, Section 4.16, Chapter 32, Chapter 2.**

Chair Wayne Harrall, gave a brief recap; explained the formats have been cleaned up and simplified.

Attorney Jim Brown gave a brief overview and recap.

**Dave Van Dyke**, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 7:03pm.  
**Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.**

No residents spoke during the Public Hearing.

**Dave Van Dyke**, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 7:04 pm.  
**Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.**

**Scott Conners**, seconded by **Doug Kochneff**, moved to recommend the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendments to the Township Board for final approval.  
**Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.**

**3. Informal Presentation - Porter Hills - Request to amend the current PUD to allow for a 24 square foot ground/monument sign to be placed approximately 5 feet from the curb at 1015 East Paris Ave SE.**

Due to a conflict of interest, Commissioner Mark Prein, will not be participating in the conversation.

The applicant submitted an amended plan, moving the proposed sign out of the right-of-way.

Scott Smith, Attorney with Dickinson Wright representing Porter Hills, gave brief presentation;

- sign is needed to identify the building location
- this sign will not adversely impact neighboring property
- tasteful and low key sign; low to the ground and colors are harmonious with other signs in the vicinity
- sign is compatible with those in the area; provides only what is needed, not promotional or marketing material
- away from drive so should not provide any sight line issues
- proposed sign is within the character of the surroundings and neighboring areas

Scott Connors suggested moving the sidewalk in the right-of-way for a short distance therefore the placement of the sign would then be more visible and closer to the driveway and better all around. Wayne Harrall asked the applicant if the sign is intended for internal use or for visitors. The applicant stated the building is not known or recognizable to any persons passing by so an identifying sign is a necessity.

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal report.

Scott Connors asked Jim Brown to clarify the actual parts of the signs that were incorporated in the total square footage. Dave Van Dyke and Doug Kochneff both stated it look as if the frame portion appears to be recessed and part of the framework. Wayne Harrall said the proposed sign is cohesive and similar to the rest of the Porter Hills signs.

The applicant stated they intend to relocate a tree, that way it will not impede on line of sight. Wayne Harrall stated he does not have an issue with the sign as it is presented or located.

**Dave Van Dyke**, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to schedule the Public Hearing for the June 28, 2016 meeting.

**Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.**

**4. Informal Presentation - Lawns of Distinction - Request to allow a Special Land Use (and variance to SLU) to operate a landscape/construction business in the rear of the parcel of land located at 2945 East Beltline Ave NE.**

Due to a conflict of interest, Secretary Dave Van Dyke excused himself from this item.

Bob Banister, owner of Lawns of Distinction, gave the presentation;

- asking for a Special Land Use and Variance to construct a landscape business on the rear portion of 2945 EBL
- Been in business for 30 years; on Dunnigan Ave for 16 years, does not want to move out of the area
- No retail at this time, just need the area to put their buildings and machines

- Would leave the home on 2945 and earth berm and screen as much as possible between the home and proposed buildings

The Commissioners discussed the future land use of that (and the surrounding) area, and talked about the best way to go about this request; a Special Land Use or an accessory building. The Planning Commissioners all agreed that this is the reason Public Hearings are held; stating it is the applicant's responsibility to portray why he is a good fit there and to hear what the public has to say.

Wayne Harrall asked how the size of what he has now compares to the size he is requesting for the possible future site. Mark Prein did the math and noted the applicant will have more space with what he is currently requesting (1,000 sq. ft. more including the lean-to).

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal report.

The Planning Commission encouraged the applicant to come back with a solid site plan; descriptive landscape, gravel, concrete, asphalt, etc... The consensus from the Commissioners is overall; the applicant needs more detail on everything.

Bob Banister said he will be a good neighbor; will not be pulling through buildings, no excessive noise, etc. Scott Conners suggested Mr. Banister come to the next meeting with an outside storage plan (to clearly delineate the site plan).

**Bill Culhane**, seconded by **Mark Prein**, moved to schedule the Public Hearing for the June 28, 2016 meeting.

**Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.**

#### **5. General Public Comment.**

No residents were present for the public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.



David A. Van Dyke, Secretary