

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS
Minutes June 28, 2016**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, June 28, 2016.

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

1. Approve minutes of May 26, 2016 meeting.

Scott Conners, seconded by Doug **Kochneff**, moved to approve the minutes with the following changes;

- p.1, item number 3, change the second “to” to ‘the’
- p.2, add sentence prior to applicant presentation stating an amended plan was submitted

Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.

2. Public Hearing - Porter Hills - Request to amend the current PUD to allow for a 24 square foot ground/monument sign to be placed at 1015 East Paris Ave SE, Cook Valley Estates Green House.

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal report.

Dave VanDyke, seconded by **Scott Conners**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 7:03 pm.
Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.

No persons spoke at the public hearing.

Dave VanDyke, seconded by Bill **Culhane**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 7:04 pm.
Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.

Scott Conners, seconded by Doug **Kochneff**, moved to approve the revised drawing and recommend the request to allow for a 24 square foot monument sign at 1015 East Paris Ave SE be sent to the Township Board for final approval.

Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.

3. Public Hearing - 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, Dave VanDyke excused himself from participating in this item.

Bob Banister, owner of Lawns of Distinction, gave a brief overview of the request;

- ♦ moved the drive due to MDOT requirements
- ♦ screening along the north side backing the bins
- ♦ no fertilizer, no contaminants
- ♦ enclosed with two sets of evergreens on both sides

- ♦ existing mature screening will remain
- ♦ the bins are not a permanent structure, just makes it easier to organize supplies
- ♦ intent is to keep the majority of the equipment in the buildings, inside
- ♦ area in the middle is really just access to and from buildings
- ♦ using a crushed concrete and stone for their drive; porous, does not expect much dust
- ♦ retention will be to the far east of the property using it to naturally water the existing trees
- ♦ by moving the drive to the north they will be able to attach the drive to new drive, eliminating two existing driveways along the East Beltline

Bill Culhane asked the applicant about a retention pond. The applicant said they have not done the calculations, stating they have not gotten that far in the process. Scott Conners agreed with Culhane's request adding he would like to see the actual numbers on a sealed plan. Culhane noted the applicant is moving water to the east and west of the proposed buildings and explained he is concerned about the area between the existing home and the building to the east; becoming a larger water holding area than the applicant may have anticipated.

Scott Conners asked about outside storage; does not want to see this area turn into a free for all of outside storage of equipment, etc... Bob Banister said he intends to keep the majority of his equipment inside, only trailers would be parked outside overnight. Banister stated he is a small business, no problems with the current location, and explained he intends to continue to be a good neighbor. Conners brought up his concern about the neighboring property to the south and the lack of any screening to the existing home.

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal report.

Scott Conners, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 7:27 pm.
Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.

Clarence Gobrogge, owner of property at 2975 East Beltline Ave NE;

- ♦ owns property to the immediate north of the parcel in question
- ♦ believes this request is going too far and is not compliant or harmonious with the surrounding area
- ♦ feels the use is more intense than merely a landscaping company, more industrial use, especially with the heavy duty equipment
- ♦ dust is a problem, more important it's an environmental problem
- ♦ not consistent with office or residential use; the visual of the two maintenance buildings
- ♦ feels the 50 ft. setback needs to be maintained, no exceptions
- ♦ this is not an office use or residential use, it is an industrial use and should not be allowed in a residential area

Jennifer Tichelaar, with Universal Forest Products;

- ♦ generally opposed to the use of the land
- ♦ noise concerns
- ♦ air quality
- ♦ truck and excavator fumes
- ♦ traffic is already heavy and congested, safety issues and concerns
- ♦ larger picture here; concerns about the future intent and use with the properties to the south of the property in question
- ♦ would like more questions answered

Scott Conners, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 7:36 pm.
Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.

Bill Culhane stated his concerns to the applicant; follow the items brought up in the memo, the impervious area on the size of the property, the size of the property does not facilitate the proposed use. Scott Conners does not like the lack of detail and agrees that the site is too small for the proposed use. Doug Kochneff said he can understand the concerns brought up but not in complete agreement with Bill Culhane about the impervious area; stating it is crushed concrete, not a solid surface, but does agree with Scott Conners and does not feel there is enough detail provided.

Wayne Harrall said he would like to see a larger area for the proposal, but stated the applicant has done a great job of showing he is a good neighbor and did his due diligence in getting an engineer and meeting with MDOT. Harrall explained he would feel more comfortable with the Township Engineer looking at the plan and hearing what he has to say.

Bob Banister said he is willing to do whatever screening the Planning Commission requires him to do; fencing is not as appealing as trees, but he will do whatever plantings or screening the Planning Commission requires. Banister reiterated that he is low key, quiet, and functions and operates his business as he has done in a residential area for the past 17 years. Wayne Harrall would like to see some berming/landscaping along the south property line, keeping it very natural. Bill Culhane stated his concern about the proximity of the building only being 5 feet from the property line.

Discussion about the future and potential uses if the applicant acquires the properties to the south, the applicant stated his use is merely temporary. Scott Conners said he would like to see the proposed bins along the north side of the property line be moved, even 5 ft. would be beneficial to the neighbor.

Bill Culhane said his calculations show about a half-acre of impervious and another 19,000 sq. ft. of crushed concrete.

Scott Conners said there are just too many details that need to be ironed out and addressed; landscaping, grading, elevations, drainage... before this request can move forward. Wayne Harrall said the applicant needs to have the drainage issue/questions addressed because the commissioners will take the existing pond in account as part of the use; if the applicant is planning on using the existing low area as a detention pond, it needs to be addressed.

Bill Culhane, seconded by **Doug Kochneff**, moved to table the request and encourage the applicant to return with the following items addressed;

- site plan illustrating the extent of the stone aggregate
- storm water management plan
- grading plan with spot elevations of proposed concrete slabs
- elevations of buildings
- increase the set back to the north and south beyond 5 ft.
- infill screening to south and west property lines
- notes illustrating the location of the tarped storage bins
- additional information on the proposed sign

- landscape plan
- the applicant's engineer should be in touch with the Township Engineer to make sure all necessary items are addressed

Motion approved unanimously, 4-0, adding the condition that in order for the applicant to be on the July agenda, all required items must be submitted to the Township no later than July 11, 2016.

4. General Public Comment.

No residents spoke during the public comment.

5. Updates/Adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.



David A. Van Dyke, Secretary