

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS  
Minutes September 27, 2016**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, September 27, 2016.

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

Chair Wayne Harrall requested the agenda be amended to add the election of officers as item number two, and all existing items be moved back one spot.

**Mark Prein**, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to add the item.

**Motion approved unanimously.**

**1. Approve minutes of June 28, 2016 meeting.**

**Scott Conners**, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to approve the minutes as written.

**Motion approved unanimously.**

**2. Election of Officers.**

**Scott Conners**, seconded by **Mark Prein**, moved to keep Wayne Harrall as Chair.

**Dave Van Dyke**, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to nominate Scott Conners as Vice Chair.

**Mark Prein**, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to keep Dave Van Dyke as Secretary.

**Motions approved unanimously.**

**3. Public Hearing - NorthStar Commercial - Request a Special Land Use for Patio/Al Fresco Dining at the restaurant located at 4609 Cascade Rd SE.**

Mike Corby, with Integrated Architecture, gave brief overview;

- ♦ trying to bring new life to the restaurant
- ♦ outdoor seating, extend patio (variance setback request was approved by ZBA)
- ♦ requesting Special Land Use to allow for Al Fresco Dining
- ♦ looking for some insight on the parking issue

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal report.

Wayne Harrall asked Jim Brown for clarification on the parking issue and what specifically the Planning Commission is permitted to allow. Brown explained the variance request in regards to the parking will have to be approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals, but the Planning Commission can approve the Special Land Use request for Al Fresco dining and recommend to the Zoning Board of Appeals their feelings on the parking.

**Mark Prein**, seconded by **Scott Conners**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 7:13 pm.

**Motion approved unanimously.**

No persons spoke at the public hearing.

**Dave Van Dyke**, seconded by **Doug Kochneff**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 7:14 pm.

**Motion approved unanimously.**

Scott Conners explained that he has thought about this a lot since they first saw it at the Site Plan Review Committee, adding he agrees with Jim Brown in the fact that this location is a rather prominent location and the more he has thought about it, the more comfortable he is with the request.

Wayne Harrall added Forest Hills Inn is like an icon at that location and it is exciting to have new life come back to that building. Harrall continued stating this specific area continues to grow and become viable, and this proposed request will make a great addition.

Dave Van Dyke agreed stating the building is tired and dated and anyone willing to put money in to update it is a benefit to all. Van Dyke added, in regards to the parking issue in question, this is a completely different use (as opposed to a doctor's office where parking is essential for patrons to make their appointments), adding he supports the request and use.

Doug Kochneff added that the applicant indicated they have an agreement with Kennedy's Floral for 40 additional spaces between certain hours. Jim Brown gave a brief description of what the applicant submitted.

Scott Conners brought up the review submitted by the Township Engineer and feels that the Commissioners should work out details of what they feel the applicant needs to do, to give the Township Engineer some groundwork. Wayne Harrall added he agrees with Conners, stating the impervious increase of the building is small, so he feels comfortable leaving it up to Township Engineer Bob Bruggink regarding leaching, drain basins, etc... Conners brought up suggesting to Bruggink that the applicant be required to use trees and mitigation for storm water control.

Wayne Harrall asked about the hours of operation specifically for the Al Fresco dining. The applicant stated the hours for the outside will be the same as the inside hours of operation.

**Dave Van Dyke**, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to approve the Special Land Use request at 4609 Cascade Rd SE, with the draft Resolution as written by the Township Attorney, with the following changes/conditions;

- the parking agreement with Kennedy's become part of the zoning file
- stormwater upgrades subject to Township Engineer approval, encouraging new trees/landscaping as mitigation for stormwater control
- sound; no adverse effect

**Motion approved unanimously.**

**4. *Tabled Request - Lawns of Distinction - Continuation of the; 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.***

Dave Van Dyke excused himself from participating in this item, due to conflict of interest.

**Dan Ophoff**, seconded by **Scott Conners**, moved to remove the request from the table.  
**Motion approved unanimously.**

Dan Ophoff stated although he was not present for the last meeting he has read the minutes, looked over the plans and feels comfortable voting on the request.

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



- ♦ complied with the previous recommendations by the Planning Commission
- ♦ provided more screening all around

Scott Conners asked about the grading plan, in regards to proximity of the neighbor to the north. The applicant said they can adjust and work with the Township Engineer to comply with what the Township Engineer and Planning Commission recommends for stormwater control along the north property line.

Scott Conners asked about a bathroom facility. The applicant stated he will run water from the house and a Porta-John will be brought in for bathroom use. Conners said he would like to see where, stating the location of a Porta-John on the property is important.

Bill Culhane asked that the trees shown on the plan be placed in appropriate places in order to help buffer the area. The applicant stated he will be conscious of tree placement. Culhane touched base on the review from the Township Engineer, Wayne Harrall stated he talked to the Township Engineer and feels confident that if the applicant meets with the Engineer and meets all the requirements, it will be ok.

Mark Prein asked if the proposed bins on the north side could be moved to the south. The applicant said if in the future they expand to the south, he would have to relocate them and if the bins were relocated to the south it would be in his way of entering/exiting the proposed building to the east.

Scott Conners told the applicant that if the majority of the surface is covered in a dustless crushed concrete, the storm water issues could potentially go away, and he would like to see that be a strong recommendation to the applicant.

Wayne Harrall suggested putting some type of covering/buffering in front of the bins. Bob Banister stated his concern with that is roots growing under the concrete slabs. Harrall said he would like to see the bins painted to blend in and would like to see some bushes or covering around the bins.

Bill Culhane asked about the movement on the house to the south. Bob Banister said he has closed on the property two down, the one to the south is still moving slowly but in the right direction. Culhane was curious if the applicant would want to move anything to the other parcels. Banister said he does not want to, or plan on, moving anything.

Wayne Harrall asked if the applicant does retail at his current location. Bob Banister replied no.

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal review.

Bill Culhane said he is thankful for the changes and all the updating the applicant has done, but he is having a hard time approving a light industrial use next to a residential home and would like to make sure the Planning Commission do all they can to make sure the applicants request is very conscious of the residential home.

Wayne Harrall said he would like to see four trees, versus the three proposed trees, to the south and be staggered to ensure a decent buffer.

Mark Prein asked about the future of the home on the property. Bob Banister said he does not intend to do anything with it for a number of years as the people renting have expressed interest in staying until their kids graduate.

Scott Conners and Mark Prein talked about making sure the applicant has enough room with requiring a potential easement for the frontage along the East Beltline, so there is enough room for future expansion of the East Beltline, non-motorized trail, etc... Wayne Harrall suggested it be consistent with the same size easement as they required to the south, 16 feet (10 ft. pathway with 3 ft. on each side).

Attorney Jim Brown went over items with the Commissioners in the proposed Resolution asking for any changes, clarifications and additions.

**Scott Conners**, seconded by **Dan Ophoff**, moved to approve the Special Land Use request at 2945 East Beltline Ave NE, with the draft Resolution as written by the Attorney, with the following conditions;

- Porta-John or restroom must be on site
- leaching basin/infiltration strip north of driveway (final approval from Township Engineer)
- crushed and open material for storage yard
- 4 trees, staggered at southeast corner subject to final approval from Township Staff
- additional 16 ft. easement for sidewalk or bike path along easterly road frontage
- front end loader to be stored indoors
- no loading before 8 am; hours of operation will be 7am-7pm
- screening along north of driveway to be reviewed on site by Township Staff to ensure adequate screening
- additional fill and landscaping along north side of bins to cover wall height
- 6 employee parking spaces to be located 10 ft. off the north property line
- enclose "lean to" area at northeast corner of east building
- maximum of 10 employees
- complete compliance with Township Engineer's requirements as stated in the review/letter submitted by the Township Engineer
- signage not to exceed the ordinance requirements
- list of storage vehicles from the list provided at the initial site plan review meeting be submitted

**Motion approved unanimously.**

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

No residents spoke during the public comment.

#### **6. Updates/Adjourn.**

Wayne Harrall shared his experience of attending the opening football game at the CAT. Jim Brown added there will be meetings in October and November.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:57 pm.



David A. Van Dyke, Secretary