

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS
Minutes November 22, 2016**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, November 22, 2016.

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

1. Approve minutes of October 25, 2016 meeting.

Mark Prein, seconded by **Dan Ophoff**, moved to approve the minutes as they stand, with no changes.

Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.

2. Public Hearing - PVL Investments, LLC - Request for a major amendment to the previously approved Special Land Use, for a home for the elderly or retired, located at 730 Forest Hill Ave SE.

ARCO, representing Dave Baylis of PVL, gave a brief presentation;

- ♦ recap of the previous approval
- ♦ want to reserve the flexibility to build a smaller building initially
- ♦ 80 units but it has not been determined how many will be part of the first phase

Attorney Jim Scales gave the legal report.

Bill Culhane, seconded by **Mark Prein**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 7:06 pm.

Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.

No residents spoke during the Public Hearing.

Dave Van Dyke, seconded by **Dan Ophoff**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 7:06 pm.

Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.

Mark Prein asked about the change in the number of ponds and questioned any other changes they should be aware of. The engineer stated that is a mistake as there are still two ponds on site, which is essentially unchanged from the original approved plan.

Scott Conners asked why the change and cause in scaling back. Arco representative stated that is a valid question and explained that PVL has reexamined their business model and made some changes that make sense to initially start with a smaller building; in order to keep costs down and the care provided to the highest standard.

Mark Prein brought up the water main coming into the facility is an 8 inch main, and explained that is still a major safety concern. The commissioners discussed and stated they are all comfortable with the Township Engineer to address and take care of all those concerns.

Dave Van Dyke, seconded by **Mark Prein**, moved to approve the request for a major amendment to the Special Land Use for the proposed home for the elderly or retired located at 730 Forest Hill Ave SE with the following conditions;

- phase II comes back to full Planning Commission for review
- not to exceed 116 beds
- Township Engineer to address water main and fire flow issue/concern
- site plan date in Resolution be changed to October 18, 2016

Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.

Dan Ophoff, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to change the Forest Hills Preserve Public Hearing to item #3 and Birds Trail to item #4.

Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.

3. Public Hearing - Forest Hills Preserve - Rezoning request, R-PUD, for a 31.11 acre parcel located at 2409 Knapp St NE.

[Chair Wayne Harrall](#) joined the meeting.

Rick Pulaksi, with Nederveld Inc., gave the presentation;

- ♦ northwest corner of Knapp street and I96
- ♦ just over 30 acres
- ♦ 176 multi-family units, 11 buildings, pool and clubhouse, viewing overlook, walking paths
- ♦ no public funds will be used, all private funding
- ♦ talked about how they fit within the GRT Master Plan
- ♦ site is better suited for multi-family; due to difficult location, difficult terrain, natural feature preservation, ensure quality environment and homes
- ♦ spacious living areas; 1250 sq. ft. living area (2 bedrooms, 2 full baths)
 - exceeds Township minimum of 1075 sq. ft.
 - more than 30% larger than the Township's minimum standard
- ♦ ensure the architectural quality
- ♦ 16 unit multi-family building
- ♦ harmonious building design
- ♦ 2 entrances into site
- ♦ open space preservation and will maintain a decent size buffer strip
- ♦ 54% open space
 - 46% as 50'x100' min
 - 8% as no-disturb/buffer
 - exceeds Township minimum by 30%
- ♦ demonstrated how the site could be developed with single family residents, explaining that multi-family is a better fit for that particular site and gave visual demonstration on the different possibilities (visual of an apartment building and two story residential home)
- ♦ 5.7 unit/acre overall density
- ♦ 7.78 unit/acre "net" density (significantly smaller than any surrounding areas)
- ♦ able to provide a lot of amenities, and providing a quality living environment
- ♦ provide a full-time, onsite manager, maintenance staff and leasing agent

- ♦ providing a new choice of housing type while continuing to maintain the Township's traditional suburban residential character

Attorney Jim Scales gave the legal review.

Scott Conners asked if the applicant could talk about the traffic study and any proposed traffic issues that could be brought up with the public. Rick Pulaski stated they had John Strunk with the Kent County Road Commission come out and look at the site and he gave the applicant some items they need to address, including a left turn lane.

Dave Van Dyke, seconded by **Scott Conners**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 7:48 pm.
Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

Rosalyn Bliss, works at St. John's Home and Mayor of the City of Grand Rapids;

- ♦ curious about regulations or rules in developing near wetlands
- ♦ connecting to city water
- ♦ will they be required to provide a sidewalk along Knapp St
- ♦ asked what the setback requirements are along property lines

Wayne Harrall addressed the applicant's questions; wetland regulations are regulated by DEQ, connecting to water and sewer, discussion on sidewalks will be addressed and stated the proposed side yard setbacks are 35 ft.

Terry Hopland, president of Knapp Valley Association;

- ♦ stated the applicant did not talk about the new apartments to be built behind Meijer and the impact of the traffic on Knapp St that there is now and what it potentially will be with the additional traffic

Larry Herraburta, resident of Knapp Valley Condominiums;

- ♦ traffic concerns
- ♦ talked about the Master Plan and multi-family and it does not fit in the single-family residential homes it clearly states
- ♦ does not feel this a step in the right direction for the Twp.

Doug Schible, 2226 Dean Lake Ave;

- ♦ lives to the north
- ♦ very concerned about the wetlands and the effects it has on the lake they live on
- ♦ wants to know what happens to schools, stating the apartment owner will not pay the same as individual owners pay in taxes to the schools

June Schible, 2226 Dean Lake Ave;

- ♦ what's to say what they are proposing will actually be what is built (referencing the change in the Catholic athletic field)

Scott Conners, seconded by **Mark Prein**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 8:01 pm.
Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

Scott Conners said he is concerned about the traffic as well but explained with the potential volume that could go on that site with a residential plat, he does not see much difference in the

numbers. Dave Van Dyke addressed the comment regarding the taxes and the schools, noting he believes there would be more kids with a residential plat versus multi-family.

Steve Nikolas said they are planning on having tenants 35+ years of age, and will be paying the current milage to not only the schools but all entities.

Rick Pulaski addressed the stormwater and drainage, also talked about their wetland survey and demonstrated where they are and are not able to construct any type of structure, including a bridge.

Scott Conners talked about the two entrances and if the applicant has given anymore thought to providing a one in and one out. Rick Pulaski said from an emergency standpoint they would like to keep it open, but noted they are willing to comply with whatever is recommended.

Wayne Harrall said one of his main concerns is making sure the property owners to the north are properly buffered, maintaining ample vegetation along the property line.

Mark Prein asked if single family homes or more dense multi-family homes, in the big picture, which one of them will do more damage, explaining he believes the higher density use of the property is a better use. Scott Conners agreed and said he is more comfortable with the multi-family use and said he is leaning more towards the multi-use just in the fact of preserving the natural areas, versus the numerous possibilities with numerous residential single family homes (ex: grass clippings, watering lawns, etc.).

Dave Van Dyke talked about sidewalks and would like to see the applicant, eventually, feed into the existing sidewalk to the west.

Dan Ophoff asked about the slopping of building 9 and 10 and 11, verifying that the grade will be slopped so that the water will be retained on their property, running back on their site (opposed to the neighbors to the north).

Wayne Harrall asked about building 9, if it is shifted to the south/southeast, it would extend the driveway a bit and pull a little bit further away from the northern property line. Rick Pulaski stated they could pull building 9 another 20 ft. to ensure a decent buffer to the north.

Wayne Harrall would like to see the minimum side yard setback requirements be 25 ft. and would also like to see building 9 moved to the south, increasing the distance between the building and north property line.

Mark Prein, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to approve the rezoning request at 2409 Knapp St NE with the following conditions;

- final site plan submitted to full Planning Commission for approval
- 35 ft. setback, 25ft. buffer (non-disturb) to remain
- center turn lane/3rd lane; defer to Kent County Road Commission
- Engineer review; investigate wetland elevation increase and stormwater runoff
- realign east entrance
- shift building #9 to southeast
- retaining wall on building #9 parking lot, cul-de-sac to east 25 ft.

Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

4. **Public Hearing - Birds Trail - Proposed residential site condominium, consisting of 16 site units for one/single-family detached dwelling each, to be located on a private road extending west from Bird Ave.**

Dave Van Dyke recused himself.

Steve VanKooten, engineer of the project, gave the presentation;

- 22 ft. paved private road
- 100 ft. wide lots
- 16 units
- increased the open space to meet requirement
- same amount of lots, exact same development that was approved in 2006 but now with a detention pond

Attorney Jim Scales gave the legal report.

Scott Conners asked about the road alignment and stated concern about the sharp curve, he proposed eliminating unit 15 and having a more gentle approach to the development and stated his concern about the topography and water flow.

The project engineer stated they have provided stormwater, 10 year storm sewer, and added if the south fills up it will be deterred to the north.

Mark Prein, seconded by **Dan Ophoff**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 8:55 pm.
Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.

Quintin Reader, 3259 Bird Ave NE;

- two lots that back up to the site
- question about drainage, significant concern
- to his understanding that it used to be a gravel pit
- wetland supports wildlife
- concerned if they fill in the site, changing the contour of the land, potentially will change the drainage and runoff, recently the vegetation had been cleared and the erosion has significantly increased due to the clearing going on there
- maintaining a buffer, can the clearing be stipulated to how much/many trees the applicant can remove
- concerned about density
- how much will that increase in traffic volume, on a small two lane side road

Patrick Duncan, 3209 Bird Ave NE;

- concerned about the drainage

Mario Castello, 3157 Bird Ave NE;

- asked about the minimum requirement for the private road
- site condo vs plat, cookie cutter homes built, site condo steer away from higher end custom built and it is a concern
- safety; where the entrance is... visibility
- curious about future expansion and the possibility of a stub
- asked the reason Secretary Van Dyke abstained from this item

Doug Nozal, 3168 Bird Ave NE;

- gave some background about the land and the water flow actually flows from the north to the south
- curves at end of the road
- talked about how he finds it odd that he asked the Twp. for the same thing and were their request was denied but 2 years prior, in 2006, this was approved

It was noted that a letter was submitted and read to the Commissioners.

Mark Prein, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 9:32 pm.
Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.

Mark Prein, seconded by **Dan Ophoff**, moved to table the request until a newer, updated plan be submitted to the Commissioners before acting on this item.
Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.

5. Public Hearing - GRT Zoning Ordinance Amendment - Residential Planned Unit Development (R-PUD) District, Chapter 15.

Attorney Jim Scales gave the legal report.

Scott Conners, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 9:41 pm.
Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

No persons were present during the Public Hearing.

Mark Prein, seconded by **Bill Culhane**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 9:41 pm.
Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

Dan Ophoff, seconded by **Scott Conners**, moved to recommend the amendment to the Grand Rapids Township Zoning Ordinance be submitted to the Township Board for final approval.
Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

6. General Public Comment.

No persons were present for Public Comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.



David A. Van Dyke, Secretary