

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS  
Minutes April 25, 2023**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, March 28, 2023, starting at 7:00 P.M. EST.

Present were Chair, Wayne Harrall, Secretary, David Van Dyke. Commissioners, Dan Ophoff, Mark Prein and Steve Waalkes. Also present was Township Attorney, Jim Scales and Recording Secretary, Laura Peters. Absent were Scott Connors and Doug Kochneff.

**1. Approval of minutes from January 24, 2023, regular meeting:**

Dan Ophoff requested on Page 2 of the meeting minutes to be amended to "Motion by Dan Ophoff."

Wayne Harrall requested on Page 6 of the meeting minutes be amended to cross out prior verbiage "The roads will not be widened except for potentially at Maguire and Knapp Ct." and add the new verbiage of "Knapp Street will not be widened. A future signal may be located at the intersection of Maguire Avenue and Knapp Court."

Motion by Mark Prein, seconded by Dan Ophoff, for approval of the meeting minutes from January 24, 2023, as amended.

**Motion Approved: 5-0**

**2. Approval of minutes from March 28, 2023, regular meeting:**

Wayne Harrall requested on Page 7 to amend with the removal of the mention of the "Act \_\_\_\_" and amend to "violates state law."

Motion by Steve Waalkes, seconded by David Van Dyke to approve the meeting minutes from March 28, 2023, as amended.

**Motion Approved: 5-0**

**3. Braeburn Plat: Request for an 8-unit residential plat on a 5.85-acre parcel located at 4739 Braeburn Street SE.**

Wayne Harrall opened for presentation from the developers.

Adam Feenstra from Feenstra and Associates explained that this development would be an 8-lot subdivision. All lots are wider than required by Zoning Ordinance. The Kent County Drain Commission has approved drainage for storm water and Road Commission for 60 foot right of way. They pushed drainage as far north as they could go with minimal vegetation damage and met required open space per Zoning Ordinance.

Wayne Harrall asked if the pines are on the North side of the plat. Adam Feenstra responded that they are on the South side.

Wayne Harrall asked the Township Attorney for legal review.

**Attorney Review:**

Jim Scales explained that the review is under the Land Division Act and Subdivision Ordinance. The Planning Commission makes a recommendation after public hearing. Tentative preliminary plat approval grants 1 year for layout approval. As noted in our review memorandum, the development meets the standards in the Subdivision Ordinance.

**4. Public Hearing:**

Motion by David Van Dyke, Seconded by Mark Prein to open the public hearing.

Mr. Joe Salowitz, 4723 Braeburn Streets, asked for the likely schedule of construction. He asked what would occur if there was damage to the street from construction equipment and asked about the retention pond. He expressed concern about traffic safety of residents crossing Forest Hill Avenue. He also mentioned that there was an easement shown on a survey and if that was taken into consideration.

Adam Feenstra responded that construction would likely begin summer or late fall of 2023 and they would take email addresses to keep neighbors informed. The retention pond is designed to drain out within 72 hours according to Kent County Drain Commissioner requirements. The water levels would be five feet deep maximum, and only during extreme storms. Mr. Feenstra stated that they had performed a title search, and that the easement mentioned did not appear to be valid.

Wayne Harrall commented that because there is no sidewalk connecting Braeburn to Forest Hill, and because Forest Hill is two lanes with a left turn lane, it was unlikely that there could be a crosswalk at that location.

Mark Donker of 4638 Braeburn Street SE expressed concern that the lots are smaller than the neighboring lots and would like to see larger lots to reduce traffic, crowding, and to keep in with standard of neighborhood that are already present. Wayne Harrall noted that the developers are exceeding Zoning Ordinance standards.

Kristine Neitzel of 469 Village Springs Dr SE asked about the trees in lots 1 through 4 that extend on the East side of the property along the white fence, and if those pines would stay. Adam Feenstra advised that they believe those pines would be and that they would maintain the vegetation when they can.

Ken Edwards of 4750 Catalpa Dr SE, asked about the appearance of the pond area and if the north fence be taken out. Adam Feenstra stated that on the West half of lot 8 the trees would be staying and that on the East half they are attempting not to go all the way to the property line.

Dave Vandegrift at 4738 Catalpa Dr SE followed up with the concern of tree removal expressed by others at the meeting. Noted that one of the trees fell on a property and could cause serious damage to homes.

Christine Bernier at 473 Village Springs Dr SE was concerned about dramatic land elevation changes to lots 5, 6, and 7 due to how low the lots are. Adam Feenstra advised that lots 5, 6, and 7 would be walk-out lots and lots 1, 2, 3, and 4 would be daylight walk out basement to minimize elevation changes. There would be some filling, but not the back yard grades.

Motion by Dan Ophoff, seconded by Steve Waalkes, to close public hearing.

**Motion Approved: 5-0**

**Public Hearing Closed**

The Planning Commission discussed whether to require street trees, sidewalks, and streetlights. It was the consensus of the Planning Commission that these should not be required, however, there is language in the approving resolution requiring these property owners participate in any special assessment district for sidewalks, if that occurs in the future.

The Planning Commission also asked if the retention area could be made smaller by requesting steeper slopes than the current design approved by the Drain Commissioner. Mr. Feenstra responded that this request could be made, and this was made a condition of approval.

Motion by Mark Prein; seconded by Steve Waalkes, to recommend tentative preliminary plat approval according to the resolution presented with the changes described above.

**Motion Approved: 5-0**

**4. Discussion of the Supplement to the GRT Master Land Use Plan**

The Commission reviewed updated demographic information prepared for Chapter 2 of a supplement to the Master Plan. The Commission also reviewed the map of the current zoning districts and generally agreed to leave them as is, with a possible addition of a special planning area for the East Beltline corridor to be discussed in the future.

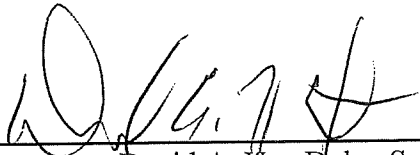
The information concerning the number of rental units in the Township was questioned in that it showed a lower number than in 2010. Further investigation will be performed on that, to reflect the great increase in rental units in the Township in the last several years.

The Planning Commission will work with Attorney Jim Brown, and potentially schedule future work sessions to work toward the amendment of the Master Plan.

5. **Adjourn:**

Motion by Steve Waalkes, seconded by David Van Dyke, Planning Commission meeting adjourned at 8:35 P.M.

**Motion Approved: 5-0**

  
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David A. Van Dyke, Secretary