

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS  
Minutes January 29, 2013**

A rescheduled meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Tuesday, January 29, 2013 at 7:00 pm.

Present were Chair Wayne Harrall, Vice Chair Stephen Fry, Secretary David A. VanDyke, Commissioners: Bev Wall, Dave Pierangeli, Mark Prein and Scott Conners. Also present were Township Attorney Jim Scales and Planning Assistant Kara Hammond.

**1. Approve minutes of November 27, 2012.**

**Bev Wall**, seconded by **Mark Prein**, moved to approve the minutes with the following changes;

- p.1, 9<sup>th</sup> bullet under item #3, insert the word “be” between ‘will’ and ‘outside’
- p.2, 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet from top, change ‘more straight’ to “straighter”
- p.2, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph starting with Dave VanDyke, omit “number of” between ‘many’ and ‘trees’
- p.3, 1<sup>st</sup> sentence of 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph, insert “to child” between ‘parking’ and ‘is’
- p.3, 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence of 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph, omit “for” between ‘build’ and ‘that’
- p.5, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph, change the word “plats” to “site condominiums”
- p.5, last paragraph, omit “it” between ‘applicant’ and ‘the’
- p.6, sentence at top of page, remove ‘ in “Commissioner’s”
- p.6, under item #5, remove “(very upset)” between ‘three’ and ‘residents’

**Motion approved unanimously.**

**2. Public Hearing – Thomas & Linda Moleski (Church of Christ) – Special Land Use for a church located at 2655 Dean Lake Avenue NE.**

Bob Burchfield, the listing agent at Keller Williams, is representing the Moleski’s and gave a brief presentation:

- Currently there are 27 members of the church
- The building itself was originally built as a Jehovah’s witness meeting place
- Granted a variance for an optometrist office for 23 years
- No one in last 15 months has been interested in making it a home
- Interior walls are all nonbearing, which will make it easy to remodel
- Church put together a seating plan
- 41 parking spaces are being shown
- Current owners need to remove current variance, per GRT, in order to sell property
- Current owners have maintained the building and explained it could eventually become a place of financial hardship, so they are thankful for the opportunity to sell it

Steve Fry referenced the letter from the Township Attorney and noticed a size difference. Bob Burchfield stated he is in communication with the church about the interior remodel. Steve Fry asked the applicant to verify there will not be additions to building. Bob Burchfield stated no, there will not be additions to the building.

Scott Conners questioned if the applicant will do anything with the landscape or an exterior remodel. Wayne Harrall explained this is a Special Land Use application and the Commissioners want as much description as possible to what the applicant plans to do.

Wayne Harrall asked if the applicant is intending to use existing structure. Bob Burchfield stated yes they are.

Jim Scales gave the legal report.

Scott Conners referenced that there would be limited sizes on weddings and feels that is something that needs to be touched on. Jim Scales stated he does feel the possible overflow of parking onto Dean Lake Ave would be a safety concern.

Wayne Harrall questioned how they will know when the church reaches 250 people and the overflow parking spills out onto Dean Lake Ave. Jim Scales explained it is the seating capacity that drives the parking space limits.

Steve Fry clarified the seating capacity of 164 was based strictly on parking. Jim Scales stated that was correct that the existing 41 parking spaces would support a seating capacity of 164.

**Steve Fry**, seconded by **Dave VanDyke**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 7:19 pm.  
**Motion approved unanimously.**

Butch Meekof, 2632 Dean Lake Ave NE, is opposed to request:

- Never seen 40 cars in that parking lot and does not think 40 cars will fit in that lot
- Wants to keep it residential
- The proposed amount of traffic is a problem for him, headlights will be shining into his house

Bob Burchfield stated he understands where Butch is coming from, but does not see any problem with headlights because Butch's driveway is not located directly across from the lot entrance/exit.

Dave VanDyke noted the location has no way of buffering the neighbors and still is zoned residential and the commissioners need to assess that. Wayne Harrall recommended the Kent County Road Commission look at the driveway and configuration.

David Homant, 1964 Benjamin Ave NE, is opposed to the request and explained it is a simple matter of math. He doubts that lot would fit more than 20-25 cars.

Bob Burchfield stated Dr. Moleski went out and measured the existing parking lot lines. Scott Conners asked what his measurement of each space was. Bob Burchfield stated he did not know.

**Steve Fry**, seconded by **Dave Pierangeli**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 7:25 pm.  
**Motion approved unanimously.**

Dave VanDyke stated it does not look like there is a 24 ft. aisle and the parking spots that are labeled on the drawing will not fit on the actual site. Dave explained he sees lots of flaws in the plans submitted; the floor plan is not even close to the actual size of this building, does not meet the setbacks and does not meet the requirements of the acreage for this type of use.

Bev Wall suggested tabling the request until more information is provided.

**Steve Fry**, seconded by **Bev Wall**, moved to table the request until more accurate information and a better site plan/construction plan (and landscape plan (with codes; buffers, etc...)) is submitted.

**Motion approved unanimously.**

### **3. Public Hearing – Copperwood North – Site Condominium, step 3.**

Mick McGraw with Eastbrook Homes gave short presentation on the changes;

- The last plan that was submitted eliminated the connection between the two developments, after discussion with the Planning Commission they are back with the two developments being connected (as desired by the PC)
- Near to identical of the plan that was approved back in 2004
- Made the desired connection of the two neighborhoods
- They will make the request to have the street lighting done
- Trying to maintain some space and will accommodate that by moving road slightly to the south

Steve Fry touched on the request regarding the setbacks for lots 19 & 20. Mick McGraw stated they can work with the required setbacks and will remove that request.

Wayne Harrall asked if the sidewalk would be crossing to the north. Mick McGraw stated that is correct. Wayne explained the crossing would need to be marked as a pedestrian crossing. Mick said that would not be a problem.

Wayne Harrall noted the Township Engineer requested more detail. Mick McGraw explained their Engineer is talking with the Township Engineer and sees no problems complying with the requests. Wayne Harrall asked about the number of lots. Mick McGraw stated there is no change, there is same number as last time and the same as the original that passed in 2004.

Scott Conners explained he would like the paperwork to verify the detention pond is current and able to withhold the proper volume and is contained within an easment. Mick McGraw stated that was all done before his time and has been informed it is up to code.

Jim Scales gave the legal report.

**Steve Fry**, seconded by **Bev Wall**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 7:46 pm.

**Motion approved unanimously.**

Wayne Harrall summarized the three letters that were submitted in opposition of the request.

Eric Meulenberg, 2973 Coppergrove Dr NE, is opposed to the request:

- Asked the PC to reconsider the connection of the two neighborhoods
- Believes it is a better quality of life, property values will be higher
- Don't want people flying through and making it unsafe for the neighborhood

Wayne Harrall explained that 16 neighborhoods in the Township connect and only three in the entire Township do not connect. (Wayne explained the three that were not connected was because they were private site condos combined with a public plat.)

Mary Jane Fraker, 3032 Bird Ave NE, is for the request:

- Prefers to have two entries, with 27 more units going in there is a need for two entrances for fluidity
- Asked for starting dates and if water lines will be coming through 3 Mile

Paul Dymowski, 2969 Coppergrove Dr NE, is opposed to the request:

- Stated they pay for their road and is concerned with the construction coming in and out. Asked if any damage to their road will be taken care of?

Mick McGraw stated the construction traffic will be directed off of Bird and they intend to start construction as soon as possible, this spring/summer.

Steve Fry asked how many houses will be up before they topcoat. Mick McGraw said as many as they can as they prefer to topcoat after most homes are up.

Ray Weston, 2739 Roanoke Dr NE, stated his biggest concern is regarding noise and the elimination of trees in his backyard.

Dave Peterson, 3115 Bird Ave NE, asked if there are other drainage areas going to the north. Mick McGraw stated the existing areas will go to the north as the pipes are already there.

Ray Plath, 2991 Bird Ave NE, asked if there is any possibility for sidewalks on Bird. Dave VanDyke stated he is not sure about sidewalks but believes a bike path will eventually be on Bird.

**Steve Fry**, seconded by **Bev Wall**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 8:11 pm.

**Motion approved unanimously.**

Wayne Harrall touched on the three letters submitted by residents, who are all opposed to connecting the two neighborhoods, and noted they will be included in minutes.

Wayne Harrall stated both neighborhoods are going to have numerous things in common and will have to work with each other. Steve Fry explained combining the two neighborhoods is not done just because it's whimsical, it's done for safety and emergency vehicles will have two means in and out.

Wayne Harrall and Steve Fry both stated speed bumps are a good way to slow traffic down, and Wayne said fortunate for them they have a good sidewalk system.

**Steve Fry**, seconded by **Bev Wall**, moved to approve the Site Condominium request and recommend approval to the Township Board with the following conditions;

- Developer will make all reasonable efforts as interpreted by the township engineer to reduce construction traffic on already existing Coppergrove Drive (pvt) to the south of development
- Applicant to provide all necessary easements for ingress, egress and drainage, and documentation required by the township attorney and township engineer
- This recommendation for approval has not allowed any setback variances from the ordinance
- Sidewalk street crossing west of Bird Avenue must have "Pedestrian Crossing" signage and painted cross walk
- Sidewalks must be completed as each lot is constructed, at completion and occupancy of 70% of the homes, developer must complete the entire sidewalk on at least one side of the street from the cul-de-sac to Bird Ave
- Final roadway paving course shall be in place within 2 years after base course is placed
- The requirement for street trees is waived
- Applicant to provide the site plan dimensional information requested by the township attorney to determine lot conformity with ordinance requirements
- Developer to shift roadway slightly to the south near Bird Avenue to increase the parkway area between the north side sidewalk and the north edge of roadway

**Motion approved unanimously.**

#### **4. General Public Comment.**

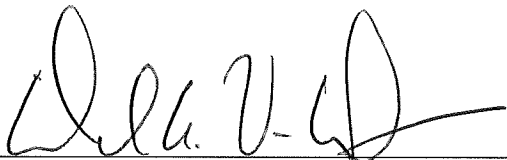
There was no general public comment given.

\*Commissioners discussion on future master plan;

- complete streets
- coming up with some type of structured policy
- preliminary stages
- not winning many commissioners over with the proposed districts
- when making the master plan 5 years ago, there was on staff planner and consultant, now there are neither...not comfortable just changing things without any direction

\*Commissioners discussion on upcoming items.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 pm.

  
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David A. VanDyke, Secretary