

**GRAND RAPIDS CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS  
APRIL 8, 2008**

A meeting of the Grand Rapids Charter Township Zoning Board of Appeals was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with the following present: Chair Ronald Hall, Vice-Chair George Orphan, Secretary David VanDyke, Lee VanPopering, and Jim Kubicek. Also present was Planning/Zoning Clerical Assistant Robin Rothley.

**1. Approval of the March 11, 2008 minutes.**

**Lee VanPopering**, seconded by **David VanDyke**, moved to approve the minutes with the following corrections:

- Ron Hall's name was misspelled.
- Page 1, item #3, paragraph 2; insert "and" after lot.
- Page 1, item #3, paragraph 2; second sentence end with "home" and make the rest of the sentence into it's own sentence changing the first word, "which" to This.
- Page 1, item #3, paragraph 3; the word "to" should be removed.
- Page 2, item #3, paragraph 1; the word "it" should be removed.

Motion passed unanimously.

**2. #2008-02 – TVC Plainfield 4, LLC – 3544 and 3590 Plainfield Ave.**

John VerPlank, URS Corporation, explained that CVS was granted a variance in March of 2007; this variance expired so they have returned for an extension. He outlined the Zoning Ordinance setback requirements. They are requesting to have a 10' side setback on the south east side where the drive through canopy will be located.

The two existing non-compliant buildings on the site will be removed. The lot is irregular shaped with three street frontages and each requires a 75' setback which makes it difficult to fit a building of this size.

Jim Kubicek asked if the drive through would be two lanes. John VerPlank said there will be two lanes; the outside lane will be for drop off only. Neither lane will allow retail purchases; customers will only be able to access their prescriptions.

Lee VanPopering asked if the loading area will be flat or raised. John VerPlank said it will be flat; the types of deliveries they receive are mainly smaller trucks such as milk and bread trucks.

Ron Hall verified that the building envelope was indicated by the dotted line and pointed out where the canopy would overlap the envelope.

George Orphan asked what changes have been made from the previously approved variance. John VerPlank said there are no changes to the variance request; they've returned because the previous variance expired.

Ron Hall opened the Public Hearing at 7:07 p.m.

Ted Siereveld, 2714 McIntosh Ave NE, verified that the site plan is the same one from the March 2007 approval. Ron Hall explained that the previous approval expired because they had not begun construction.

As there was no one else wishing to comment the Public Hearing was closed at 7:08 p.m.

Ron Hall said moving the building further back from Plainfield Ave. and 4-Mile Rd will be an improvement.

Lee VanPopering said the project will be a much needed improvement for the Plainfield Corridor.

**George Orphan**, seconded by **Lee VanPopering**, moved to approve the requested 10-foot side yard setback variance for the construction of the pharmacy canopy per the site plan dated 2-18-2008. Motion passed unanimously.

3. **#2008-03 – Forest Hills Vet Clinic – 4769 Cascade Rd.**

Chris Veneklasen, a.j. Veneklasen Inc, distributed handouts to illustrate the rough dimensions of the subject and neighboring properties with the aerial views. Forest Hills Veterinary Clinic is requesting a variance to be allowed to construct additions to their existing building which would encroach on the front, rear, and side yard setbacks.

The clinic is located on a long very narrow lot which makes it difficult for expansion.

The veterinary business in general is greatly expanding services provided to their customers, which requires additional building space. Forest Hills Vet Clinic has been in business 35 – 40 years and would like the opportunity to expand services for their existing clients.

The existing entry goes directly into the lobby so the front addition would be a vestibule to improve the comfort of their clients in the winter months.

The rear addition would provide additional room for services such as grooming which requires a fair amount of space.

Employee parking will be moved to the rear of the building. Six feet along the back lot line has been planned for a landscape buffer. The owners have agreed to fencing, Evergreens, or whatever the township would require.

Both neighboring buildings are closer to the rear property line than this request and many other buildings along Cascade Road are closer to all property lines.

Ron Hall asked about the design of the proposed parking area and if it would be back, raised with a retaining wall. Chris Veneklasen said they don't anticipate the need for a retaining wall, their civil engineer believes they can work with the grade. Ron Hall discussed parking lot to the west and drains located on site.

George Orphan asked if they planned to have onsite detention for storm water. Chris Veneklasen said that he has discussed the issue with Rick Sprague and they don't believe that will be an issue. If in the process it is decided that detention would be required they will most likely place it under the parking lot.

George Orphan mentioned an existing lean-to on the west side of the building that houses a chest freezer. The board members discussed and decided the lean-to should be removed and the freezer relocated inside of the building.

Ron Hall opened the Public Hearing at 7:20 p.m. and as there was no one in the audience wishing to comment he closed the Public Hearing at the same time.

Lee VanPopering said he visited the site and is concerned that a retaining wall is not planned for the rear parking. Cars will be parked facing downhill so if someone doesn't set their parking brake they could end up in the neighbor's yard. He discussed drainage and Dave VanDyke said that could be addressed at Site Plan Review Committee.

Dave VanDyke wondered if six feet would be a wide enough buffer. Lee VanPopering said he spoke with the neighbor immediately behind the site and she is in favor of the request. This addition doesn't go back as far as neighboring buildings.

The Board discussed conditions to be put in place if approved.

George Orphan said they are requesting an additional 750 square feet of building space.

Dave VanDyke discussed the 6' buffer from the parking to the neighbor's property line. He believes the ordinance states the parking should be a minimum 15' from residential property. Precedence has already been set in the area for parking so a variance should be included for this issue.

Ron Hall discussed the North West corner of the addition and the distance to the property line. George Orphan measured the plan, after verifying the plan is to scale, and said there would be a 3 1/2' setback. Ron Hall said he's not very excited about how tight that is. Dave VanDyke asked about the building overhang. Chris Veneklasen said there will be a minimal overhang on the west and east sides of the building. Lee VanPopering said the whole thing is tight in an area where nothing conforms.

George Orphan believes the concept is good. Ron Hall said he has no problem with the front entry addition and moving the parking to the rear.

George Orphan said he is concerned that if an inspector were to visit the site there may be a problem with the building being so close to the property line in addition to the overhang. Dave VanDyke said provided a variance is granted for the setback and the overhang doesn't go over the property line there shouldn't be an issue.

**Dave VanDyke**, seconded by **Lee VanPopering**, moved to approve the request to allow the following variances:

1. Front yard setback from required 75' to 45' 10".
2. West side yard setback from required 30' to 3 1/2'.
3. Rear yard setback for the building addition from required 75' to 51' 6".
4. Per Section 28.5.6 the greenbelt will be reduced from the required 15' to 6'.

With the following conditions:

- The existing lean-to on the west side of the building must be removed and the chest freezer moved inside the building.
- The west wall must continue on a straight line with the existing structure.

Motion passed unanimously.

4. **Update from Township Planning Director.**

Township Planning Director Rick Sprague was absent so there was no update given.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
David VanDyke