

**PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GRAND RAPIDS
Minutes June 2, 2011**

A special meeting of the Planning Commission of Grand Rapids Charter Township was held at the Township Hall on Thursday, June 2, 2011 at 7:00 pm.

Present were Chair Wayne Harrall, Vice Chair Stephen Fry, Secretary David VanDyke, Commissioners; Edward J. Robinette, Mark Prein, Dave Pierangeli and Beverly Wall. Also present were Township attorney James R. Brown and Clerical Assistant Kara Ronda.

1. Public Hearing – ITT Technical Institute – Special Land Use request within ‘C’ (General Commercial) District at 1612 4 Mile Rd NE which includes the re-use and renovation of the existing building.

Jack Barr, of Nederveld Inc. representing ITT Technical Institute, presented the plan:

- proposing the re-use of the existing, vacant, building in the southeast corner
- the building is part of a larger 11 acre parcel, not proposing to divide the parcel
- would like to remodel the building to conform to ITT
- proposing re-facing the building, adding windows, colors, etc...
- 165 parking spaces are being proposed
- parking islands will be an added addition but will conform to ordinance
- proposing removing the pavement, creating enough parking spaces (ordinance requires 160, the applicant is complying and adding an additional 5 spaces)

Attorney Jim Brown gave the legal/staff report.

Jack Barr explained there are existing cross-access easements across the parcel and the 165 parking spaces are exclusive to ITT usage per the lease agreement.

Ed Robinette asked the applicant about refuge. Jack Barr stated it is in back of the site right now and they are proposing to use the same facility. Mark Prein asked if it was enclosed. Jack Barr replied he believes so.

Wayne Harrall asked the applicant if there is any indication the 165 parking spaces are designated strictly to ITT and if there was a lease agreement for parking beyond the designated area. Jack Barr explained there is no signage to indicate ITT parking; the only provisions are stated within the lease agreement.

Jim Brown asked the applicant for the expected parking demand. Jack Barr stated there will be a total of 150-180 parking spaces, other than ITT spaces. Jim asked the occupancy. Jack replied the occupancy rating is 50 maximum in the building at one time, including students and facility.

Steve Fry asked if the existing directional parking will stay. Jack Barr stated yes it will along with the existing arrows, and noted the pavement markings on the proposed plan are existing.

Bev Wall asked the height of the light poles. Jack Barr replied they are approximately 30 ft. poles. Mark Prein asked if the applicant intended to remove existing landscaping. Jack Barr explained ITT buildings typically have concrete on the front of them, they are proposing to remove the existing front landscape and make it part of the actual building turning that area into the front entrance.

Dave VanDyke asked if the applicant is proposing any other signs than the two (2) wall signs shown. Jack Barr replied they are not proposing any other signs on the building but requesting a ground sign somewhere on 4 Mile Rd, the location has not yet been determined. Ed Robinette questioned if there is an existing sign currently on 4 Mile Rd. Jack Barr confirmed there is an existing pole off 4 Mile Rd. which is 20-25 ft. in height. Steve Fry clarified the applicant does not intend to use the existing sign on 4 Mile Rd. with their proposal. Jack Barr stated that is correct because the Township's ordinance no longer allows that type of sign.

Wayne Harrall asked if the applicant would have any consideration in lowering the grade of the sidewalk, primarily the one that lines up with the front of the building. Jack Barr stated the existing sidewalk is in good condition and they were not planning on changing it. Wayne Harrall referenced the letter submitted from PACIA in support of the proposal.

Ed Robinette, seconded by **Steve Fry**, moved to open the Public Hearing at 7:16 pm.
Motion passed unanimously.

No public comments were given.

Ed Robinette, seconded by **Steve Fry**, moved to close the Public Hearing at 7:17 pm.
Motion passed unanimously.

Wayne Harrall referenced the letter submitted from GRTFD and the Township's engineer and noted there were no concerns from either party.

Wayne Harrall asked if the applicant intends to remove the existing vegetation within the currently existing islands in the parking lot. Jack Barr stated yes they will due to the fact some are in very poor condition and the applicant intends to replace the removed vegetation with mulch.

Bev Wall asked about the signage criteria. Wayne Harrall replied this proposal is a special request within the C district and does not go to the Township Board. Jim Brown explained one ground sign is permitted with a maximum height of 8 ft. Jim also explained the total square footage allowed is 150 square ft. per parcel and ITT is proposing two (2) wall signs equaling 120 square ft.

Steve Fry noted the applicant needs a handicap sign on the designated handicap parking space. Steve expressed he would like to see some more “green” on the building; he does not see the reason to have all that concrete on the building. Jack Barr stated he would be willing to do a 4-5 ft. planting bed adjacent to the building. Steve thinks that may help create a ‘plaza’ or ‘campus’ type feel.

Mark Prein asked about the dumpster enclosure. Steve Fry stated the plan does not indicate any openings on how the trash will be removed. Jack Barr explained there is an entry door off the north side. Jim Brown asked about the dumpster location. Wayne Harrall stated east of the east building line. Jack Barr confirmed that is correct. Wayne questioned if the dumpster will be located outside of the lease area. Jack Barr stated that is correct as well. Wayne asked who will be held responsible for the dumpster. Jack Barr stated it will still be their responsibility.

Steve Fry, seconded by **Ed Robinette**, moved to approve the Special Land Use request and the draft ordinance provided by the Township’s attorney with the following conditions:

- final detailed landscape plan must be submitted to Township staff, including 4-6 trees and complimentary ground plantings and new islands and modifications must be shown
- ground mounted sign with a maximum of 30 sq. ft., (with average ground elevation to top of sign), be shown on a landscape plan with maximum height of 6 ft. 8 in. indicating only the name of user and address
- approval of two (2) 60 sq. ft. wall mounted signs as shown on submitted plan
- dumpster shall be enclosed in a dumpster enclosure which meets Township’s guidelines
- handicap sign to be placed on correct parking space
- require applicant to arrange for additional parking if need be and make the necessary adjustments if deemed a problem

Motion approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 pm.

David VanDyke – Secretary