

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

Monday, January 11, 2016

2009 Township Drive

Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

CALL TO ORDER: Vice Chairperson Jones, called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

ROLL CALL: Present: Tom Jones, Vice Chairperson
Brian Winkler, Secretary
Bill McKeever
Jay Czarnecki
John Hindo
Russ Schinzing
Absent: Larry Haber, Chairperson (excused)
Also Present: Dave Campbell, Planning Director
Mark Stacey, DDA Director
Randy Thomas, Insite Commercial

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Czarnecki, supported by Jones to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of December 7, 2015, with one addition to reflect Larry Haber's absence as excused. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

MOTION by Jones, supported by Schinzing, to approve the Planning Commission Special Meeting Minutes of December 14, 2015. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES

Bill McKeever – Zoning Board of Appeals

- Nothing to report.

John Hindo – Township Board of Trustees

- Nothing to report. Our meeting is tomorrow night.

Brian Winkler – Downtown Development Authority

- Jim Gotts attended our December meeting. It was really good to see him back.
- Dave Campbell was introduced to our Board.
- We also received updates from Jim Galbraith, Bruce Aikens and Randy Wertheimer on each of their DDA projects which will be discussed further tonight.
- There was discussion about a joint meeting between the Township Board, DDA Board and the Planning Commission sometime in 2016.

Dave Campbell– Planning Department

- I've added a new standing item at the bottom of the agenda which is the Planning Director's report so I can speak to that at the end of the meeting.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None

ITEM 1: PSP14-0039 – BLAZING BAGELS – TABLED FROM 11-2-15

Christine LLC of Commerce MI is requesting an amendment to the approved site plan to add additional parking located at 510 W. Commerce Road. Sidwell No.: 17-10-260-010
REMAIN TABLED.

ITEM 2: UPDATE FROM THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Randy Thomas of Insite Commercial was present along with DDA Director, Mark Stacey, to deliver a presentation and update the Commissioners regarding the DDA area.

Mark Stacey - Thank you for the Planning Commission's special meeting last month to address issues with the title for Galbraith's closing. As you're aware, the property closed the next day. The DDA has received the check and the property has been turned over to Jim.

Tonight, we would like to walk you through the DDA projects to keep this board updated. We did have all three developers at our last DDA meeting.

Hunter Pasteur's project that's currently being built, Wynclyff, is 75% sold out. His price point excluding the first two lots are in excess of \$550,000, which is significantly higher than originally projected.

Jones - So making those lots a little bigger was a good thing.

Mark Stacey - Absolutely. He projects he will be sold out next summer, which leads us into Merrill Park, Hunter Pasteur's second project located directly to the left of the Township. They have conditional site plan approval and are working with the DEQ for a fill permit. This is about 30 days into the process.

Randy Thomas - The DEQ has 90 days to respond, so it will still be about 45 to 50 days before that reply is received.

Mark Stacey - He's very excited to move forward on that project and his intent is to be in the ground next summer so that when Wynclyff is sold out, he can direct his purchasers to Merrill Park.

Randy Thomas - The homes in Merrill Park will be 3600 to 3800 square feet, and smaller homes would be 2500 to 2700 square feet.

Schinzing - Are those an adjustment of what's here then? Parcel D and E? 2500 to 3200? So he's going higher again?

Mark Stacey - Yes, as long as there's demand, that's what he will be planning to build there. We are hoping to close on that property in the second quarter of this year.

Randy Thomas - As Mark shared, the Shapiro development closed last month and they'll be breaking ground. I believe they'll do some underground next year. I'm not sure when they'll go vertical. Maybe the following year, they'll really want to tie into the retail and bring that development up just ahead of the retail portion. He also has the commercial portion to the southwest which has not been in front of the Commission for

site plan approval. We have talked with a financial institution that's interested in that, and the balance of that commercial to the north and west of the Library will probably get developed after the major retail and commercial gets developed.

Jones - Which parcel is that?

Randy Thomas - That's Parcel A1, where the townhomes are going in. A2 could be retail. Right now, we're talking to a hospitality group and to restaurants, but again the developer will probably hold off on committing until something happens on Parcel B1. As I mentioned, Parcel H is where we are talking to a financial institution.

Jones - I saw the steel structure up for the new Library at South Commerce. What are you going to be able to do with regards to marketing the property where the Library is currently? Do you have any idea when that's going to be completely removed and available?

Mark Stacey - There has certainly been discussion on that. The Township is actually the owner of the Library and the DDA is not, so that will go through the Township Board. It would make sense to coordinate it into the development so we can achieve the downtown development we are looking for. I'm not sure of the date when the Library will be completed, but I've heard 2018. Does that sound correct, John?

Hindo - Yes, I believe so.

Mark Stacey - We received good news on Parcel B2 which is the Granger site. That property closed approximately a year ago in December 2014. Granger recently announced that they received their equity funding from AIG. They've come in as an equity partner on a number of their projects. This will now move forward more quickly.

Randy Thomas - Parcel B1 is where the retail development is planned. The intended plan that is presented to potential tenants is an open-air lifestyle center that is drivable, walkable and has multiple uses. It is interesting in the retail world as the evolution of the mall is going full circle.

Although most developments, especially malls, have a large anchor, the first phase of this development will not be anchored by a traditional, large department store. Instead, the focus will be more upon the entertainment and restaurant component, along with typical retail and soft goods. The potential tenants are best in class national retailers and Bruce Aikens is getting a great response from those looking to reduce their occupancy costs.

Insite has flown the interested retailers in the helicopter several times and there's excitement about the area and the development. Bruce is confident with the entertainment portion. He's put nonrefundable money down and is proceeding to the next step.

We attend the International Conference of Shopping Centers (ICSC), which is a venue where national developers and tenants meet several times per year. We attended the recent ICSC in New York and will also be in Vegas in May. We received good responses in New York. Aikens goal is to begin converting letters of intent into leases.

A great example of what the development will be like is the Village of Rochester Hills. That is the same developer, but what they're proposing to do here is bigger and better than what's been done there. That project was done 12 years ago and has been very successful.

Schinzing discussed West Oaks and Fountain Walk/12 Mile Crossing developments in Novi with Randy Thomas in comparison. Randy explained that this development will be more walkable and friendly.

Jones inquired about the entertainment component. Randy Thomas stated that he could only discuss general categories at this time, but one component would be a high-end theater by an international operator offering live acts and comedy. Mark Stacey added that he thinks everyone will be surprised and pleased at the list of stores for potential tenants.

Randy Thomas elaborated on the market and how the Insite helicopter helps to offer retailers a better visual of the big picture in the community and the funnel of the road network to this area created by natural traffic patterns.

Jones discussed roundabouts and inquired about possibly rethinking them for the success of the retail. Mark Stacey replied that this will be looked at, but he noted that while there might be a high number of accidents in roundabouts, the design actually avoids fatal accidents. Discussion continued regarding recent accidents, property damages, crosswalk requirements, traffic volumes and counts by the county. Mark added that he believes there is room for potential expansion of the Pontiac Trail roundabout.

Randy Thomas - On Parcel C, on the corner of Pontiac Trail and Haggerty, we had a developer at one point who was interested in putting up a 22,000 square foot retail space, and a user with a coffee drive-thru. He had also programmed a 6,000 square foot restaurant for that space. However, he backed away as he was unable to secure the deal with his anchor tenant so we're still out on the market with the intention that this will be some sort of retail use.

Parcel L is a piece that fronts Haggerty. It has been extricated from the DDA condo association so it will operate on its own to interact with the Haggerty Corridor.

Mark Stacey - That parcel is still part of the DDA, just not the condo association.

Randy Thomas - Parcel J at the southwest corner of Oakley and Haggerty is bisected by a gas main which has a 75' easement on either side of it. This can be parked over but you can't develop on it. We foresee this probably being a development on the east side, maybe some retail, and then on the west side maybe more light industrial or an extension of the other buildings there.

The last two parcels are north and southeast of the Township Hall. Both of these will probably be the latter pieces that will get sold and developed.

Mark Stacey concluded the presentation by adding that the DDA looks forward to an exciting spring and summer next year with a lot of dirt being moved on the project as the developments come into focus.

ITEM 3: CONCEPTUAL REVIEW - 2603 & 2615 UNION LAKE ROAD

Dave Campbell, Township Planner, gave a review. He explained that the developer could not make it to the meeting this evening; however he could introduce the concept. The developer hoped to get preliminary feedback from the Commissioners to relay to his clients, as they are considering several sites for their project.

The site is located on the east side of Union Lake Road between Commerce and Wise. They're looking to acquire two adjacent parcels, demolish the structures that are there now and redevelop them with a national fast food brand. The structures to be demolished would be the adult novelty store and a single family home next door. They would clear those structures, combine the properties and redevelop as a fast food restaurant. The properties are currently zoned B1 so they would need a rezoning to B2 or B3 as the restaurant would include a drive-thru. Conditional rezoning was also discussed, however no specifics were offered.

Dave noted that the Planning Commission would review the Master Plan designation, which was just adopted last month, and the designation here is for office. Dave explained that the Master Plan intended there to be a buffer between the commercial nodes along Union Lake Road between Commerce Road and then to the north at Wise. The proposed would create inconsistency with the Future Land Use Plan for what is envisioned for the area. He added that there is single-family residential just adjacent to the east. With any potential rezoning to a retail use, and an intensive retail use such as Taco Bell, the Planning Commission would certainly want to take under advisement the adjacent zoning and land uses.

Any input from the Planning Commission will be considered as preliminary and would not be taken as committal or binding. It will just help the developer and his clients do their due diligence as they consider these properties.

McKeever - I think it would be a tough sell. I know I wouldn't want to live across the street from a Taco Bell or any fast food chain.

Hindo - I think there's enough drive through fast food up and down Union Lake Road. I just don't see it fitting in there. It's not what we envisioned in our master plan. If you consider the area, you have a shopping center, then you have Kroger on the other side, then residential to the east. I know there's fast food across the street, Wendy's and Arby's. It would be a tough sell and I don't know if I would be in favor of it.

Czarnecki - I don't see it fitting with our future master plan. I agree with what Bill and John said.

Winkler - I'm in agreement also. Particularly with that residential property to the east, it's really a tough sell. I almost think a project like this, because of its effect on the traffic, would not be favorable as there's enough congestion already. We need to make sure we're not making it any worse than it already is.

Schinzing - I would echo the comments so far. We just approved the master plan and we agreed that it was well done and well researched. Why would we change it?

Jones - Right, I agree with everything that's been said here. The fact is that this type of place is open for so many hours and I'm opposed to it. We ought to look for a more suitable, not so intense use and wait for whatever time it may take.

Dave Campbell thanked the Commissioners for their input. He would provide the feedback to the developer so that the clients could make a decision and move forward.

OTHER MATTERS TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION:

- None

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dave Campbell provided a review of the Planning Director's report. He addressed upcoming potential rezonings, text and ordinance amendments, edits to the criteria for granting a variance by the Zoning Board of Appeals and a few other housekeeping items. A couple of items that will be addressed are reconstruction of a nonconforming fence and backyard poultry.

Jones discussed intensive by-laws of the homeowners associations with Dave Campbell and how the Township ordinance does not trump their additional restrictions.

Dave stated that the master plan is now available on the web site and a hard copy can be provided upon request.


Dave addressed other potential proposals to come before the Planning Commission soon, related RCOC requirements for road improvements, and upcoming busy agendas. He suggested that a subcommittee might be formed in the future to allow for concept plans to be reviewed preliminarily. He would present this suggestion again for further consideration at an upcoming meeting.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE: FEBRUARY 1, 2016

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Czarnecki, supported by Schinzing to adjourn the meeting at 7:49pm.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



Brian Winkler, Secretary