

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
PLANNING COMMISSION ****SPECIAL**** MEETING**

Monday, October 20, 2014

2009 Township Drive

Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

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

ROLL CALL: Present:

Larry Haber, Chairperson
Tom Jones, Vice Chairperson
Brian Winkler, Secretary
Bill McKeever
Jay Czarnecki
David Law
John Hindo

Also Present:

Kathleen Jackson, Planning Consultant & DDA
Director
Terry Carroll, Community Development Director
Amy Neary, McKenna & Associates
Jason Mayer, Giffels Webster
Matt Schwanitz, Giffels Webster

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None

UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES

David Law – Township Board of Trustees

- The budget is done.
- The new Library location has been selected at Dodge V, at the corner of Commerce and South Commerce Roads.

Brian Winkler – Downtown Development Authority

- Nothing new to report at this time.
- We have our regular monthly meeting tomorrow.

Bill McKeever – Zoning Board of Appeals

- We have not met since the last meeting of the Planning Commission.

Terry Carroll – Community Development Department

- I've been in contact with Planet Fitness and they are doing some improvements.
- I will get back to the Commission on this in the next couple of weeks.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Susan Averbuch, 9005 Campbell Creek Drive, Commerce Township - While I am excited to hear about Granger, I also have a number of concerns. One is with the numerous curb cuts on Martin Road as it is 45mph. I hope the speed limit will be revisited. I also want to raise the issue of the master plan of a showcase for this whole area and encourage the parties to achieve a cohesive development.

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ITEM I: PSP14-008 – FIRST & MAIN – ASSISTED LIVING DEVELOPMENT SITE PLAN

The Granger Group of Wyoming, Michigan is requesting site plan approval for the construction of an assisted living facility on property located on Martin Parkway, North of Pontiac Trail and South of Oakley Park.
Sidwell Nos.: 17-24-401-054

Jay Czarniecki requested recusal from this review as he works for the company who drafted the plans. There were no objections from the Commissioners.

Amy Neary gave a summary of her review dated October 15, 2014.

Haber - How much latitude or leeway do we have with the PUD?

Amy Neary - This proposal is located in the PUD area, but the PUD only trumps the Towne Center Overlay district where we have made the amendments to that specifically. There is some flexibility, but only on those items that were approved for amendments recently, which were the private roads and prohibition of sales to non-taxable entities. If it is not addressed in the PUD or has not been amended, then there is no flexibility.

Haber - Is this an approval or a recommendation?

Terry - It would be an approval by the Commission.

Amy Neary - Yes. The PUD amendments were a recommendation by the Commission to the Township Board, but this is just a site plan approval.

Jones inquired about splitting of the parcels with Terry Carroll and Amy Neary. He wondered if this should be done prior to site plan approval. Terry explained that the parcels are dependent upon county action that takes place after a development such as this is proposed and approved by the Township. Amy added that the motion can include a condition regarding the establishment of the new unit in the condominium plan, along with the requirement easements as depicted on the site plan.

Jones discussed revisions to the condominium master deed with Kathleen Jackson. She explained that changes to the master deed go directly to the Township Board. She added that amendments to the PUD do come before the Planning Commission for recommendation, and then proceed to the Township Board.

John Godwin, Marcus Millichap, 32530 Oakwood, Farmington Hills, MI was present on behalf of Granger to address the request, along with Tom Dillenbeck, Hobbs + Black, 100 N State St, Ann Arbor, MI, and Jim Butler, PEA, Inc., 2430 Rochester Court, Suite 100, Troy, MI.

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John Godwin - We are delighted to be invited to the Township and to be able to put the Granger project together. There are three phases of the development, with the last being cottages. The 1st phase expected to be upwards of \$20 million, creating a tax base and employing 100 employees in one facility.

Kathleen Jackson - For the purposes of the McKenna review, there were only two phases. The 1st phase included the two buildings for assisted and independent living, and the 2nd phase was the duplex component.

John Godwin agreed and continued his review. It would be a 3-story project, with memory care on the 3rd floor, and independent and assisted living on the 1st and 2nd floors.

Tom Dillenbeck reviewed renderings for the Commission. The left side of the building faces Martin Parkway, and the main entrance is located on the corner of the building. Both sides of the building have been designed to feel like main entrances, but the entry will be facing on the new road as described in McKenna's review. He reviewed the high-end residential design, building materials and sample boards. He explained that this project was modeled after Granger's Grand Rapids project

Jim Butler reviewed site related issues. He described the pathway connection differentiation. He stated they were in agreement with Amy Neary's review and were happy to change this to stamped concrete as she suggested. A sketch of the area was prepared. This area would also be raised up as a ramp way and an island would be created to prevent parking in that area, and to prevent snow from being piled up at the connection.

In relation to the building, Martin Parkway is existing and the road to the south will be constructed in the future. He explained how he had reviewed the ordinance in relation to the Planner's review and there was somewhat of a conflict with regard to having the building entrance on the street front. The ordinance goal is to accomplish parking on the rear and sides of the buildings, and the new road creates a corner so it will have a front, but the type of use proposed is a senior facility; therefore, having remote parking away from the entry points creates access issues. Granger is asking to allow parking in front as shown in a limited area to provide for this specific use. Jim concluded with a review of the topography and a color illustration of the retaining wall.

Commission Comments:

Haber - Where is the retaining wall going?

Jim Butler reviewed the location and discussed the materials.

Haber - What guarantees are there that Phase II will be built?

John Godwin - There is a high probability that it will happen. Phase I will be built, and Phase II should take place in 18 months or so after that I believe. It will be driven by demand. In terms of the demographics in the Overlay, there is a strong demand for

assisted living in the community and this will be 180 units. However, it cannot all be built at once.

Winkler - The white board used on the exterior, can I see a sample of that?

Tom Dillenbeck presented the sample of white Hardiplank board.

Haber - I may have a problem with that.

Winkler - With regard to the building, in my opinion, it looks very good. My only reservation is that the canopy looks a little plain when compared to the rest of the building.

Winkler - I might suggest that the canopy be peaked and more prominent.

Tom Dillenbeck - We did try to work with that; however, there is a bedroom window above it on the 2nd floor and we could not block the view.

Winkler - With regard to the site, it is pretty clear to everyone that the site is awkward, and particularly if you look at the eastern portion which is part of Phase II for the duplexes. It looks like there's not even enough width in that area to put any other residential development or other types of buildings there. It appears that the duplexes will work well. The use of this site for a senior facility is a great transition between the retail to the south and the single-family to the north. The building in Phase I as it's oriented does a good job of avoiding parking between the building and Martin Parkway. It seems to work well in my opinion.

McKeever - I agree with everything in the McKenna report, but we are missing the opportunity here to eliminate those two curb cuts on Martin. I see that the main entrance will be off the future street to the south, so the curb cuts on Martin Parkway could be removed and a cul-de-sac could be put in at the northern portion.

Haber - The fire chief would have a problem with that as he would not be able to get his equipment to go around all of that, and Phase II will also need access. I agree with the curb cuts.

McKeever - But it could be an emergency entrance and this would be something that the general public would not be trying to access.

Discussion followed regarding accel/decal lanes & curb cuts.

McKeever - I'm fine with the materials, the quality and the Hardiplank. I think it's a good material and it's not like Dryvit. It's cement board and it's going to last.

Law - I'm okay with the overall concept and have no issues with the design.

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Jones - First, I would say that there needs to be lighting at the curb cuts for safety reasons. I am concerned about the speed limit and the curb cuts as well. I would say that accel/decel lanes be mandatory and maximized as there needs to be a legitimate taper in both directions.

The sidewalk looks like it comes very close the edge of the roadway in one area and I am not comfortable with the setback at that point. Can that be moved farther away from the road?

John Godwin - That is an existing pathway.

Jim Butler - Yes, and we are paving that.

Jones - I would be strongly in favor of having the street constructed immediately with the appropriate accel/decel lanes as this is a matter of safety.

Discussion continued regarding shifting the pathway to increase the setback.

Haber - This is not what I envisioned for this area. I have two significant problems with the setback. I think it needs to be increased. When I look at this, I see trees on the roadway and shrubbery close to the pathway. Aesthetically, I don't think the positioning of the building is right and I would like to see it moved.

Tom Dillenbeck obliged and approached the Commission, detailing the building materials and presenting the samples, including the brick, stone feature around the base, the shingles, the siding and the windows.

Haber polled the Commissioners and all were in favor of the colors and materials as presented.

Discussion continued regarding the exterior, the street front entrance with two stories of glass, the arches, the windows with cupolas and other architectural features. Signage would enhance the entry down the road as the cohesive them for the Towne Center was developed.

Haber - There is a need for more landscaping near the dumpster enclosure.

Tom Dillenbeck - That is the service road to the dumpster enclosure.

Haber - I'm talking more on the west side.

Tom Dillenbeck - That is the mechanical service yard with the generator surrounded by a brick wall.

Haber - The front door was supposed to face Martin Parkway?

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Tom Dillenbeck - That's correct, but the front door was relocated to accommodate the residents as we would expect them to walk around the building to the main entrance.

Haber - Could you put a door on the west side?

Tom Dillenbeck - Technically, we do have a door there to the stair tower.

Amy Neary - I will add to that. The ordinance states that a main entrance shall face the roadway, and it would not just be a stairway door.

Haber - If they put that road in, then it would comply?

Amy Neary - Yes.

Haber - I am in agreement with Jones that the road should be constructed now and not later. It should also include the appropriate accel/decel lanes at the same time. In the Giffels Webster report, it states under storm, sewer and detention that the downspouts are not shown.

Jason Mayer - Those were added to the plan and all items in our report were addressed, or will be, and will appear on the engineering plans.

Discussion followed regarding landscaping.

Kathleen Jackson - Okay, because with the pathway, this is always a safety concern. This can be an obscuring landscaping treatment and can be included as a condition of any motion. The language that has been used in the past can be provided to the architects and engineers.

Discussions ensued regarding the location of the retaining wall as shown on Sheet 2.1, the substantial changes in the topography, the pathway and grade, the suggested pea stone type wall in a modular block material and the neutral tone.

Amy Neary - Can I suggest that the retaining wall be brought back, similar to the lights and signage that are still being determine for the Towne Center Overlay? There will be a palette developed for the area to maintain cohesiveness and this can also be a condition of any approval.

The Commissioners were in favor of Amy's suggestion.

Extensive discussion continued regarding the future road, curb cuts on Martin, emergency access, temporary access, and accel/decel lanes.

John Godwin noted that the future road is not located on the Granger property. It is on the south property which is involved in a potential sale with another developer and Granger would look to share in the cost of the road when that parcel is developed.

Haber - Who owns the property to the south?

Kathleen Jackson - The DDA.

Kathleen Jackson - I cannot commit DDA funds this evening. We are trying to work this out with the developer. There is a cost factor to be considered. The DDA meets tomorrow and I can relay this information, but the way this is proposed now, the temporary access could remain for up to 6 years. The DDA may participate, but it would have to be reviewed and approved.

Hindo - I'm in favor of the private road going in, but based upon what I've heard I am not in favor of asking the DDA or the Township to commit funds to construct it if there is another developer coming in who will help pay for the cost.

Haber - Eventually someone develops the property and the money comes back to the Township.

Hindo - If the developer is willing to pay for it.

Winkler - I have a suggestion. The petitioner is proposing to put in the temporary drive on the southwest corner of the site. Then, once this future street is constructed and the financial responsibilities for installing it have been determined with the involvement of Unit 4, then the temporary drive will be removed. The circle drive could be reworked and built in conjunction with the future private street. I wonder if it would be possible to build the curb cut onto the private street and give access to the circle drive at this point in time. This would avoid having to come back and rebuild the southwest corner along with the costs. If one small portion of the street were constructed now, just that section, it could be extended later and the retail would have a say in how and where it is done.

Amy Neary - The Fire Marshal and the Traffic Engineer would have to review it to make sure there would be enough room to turn and circulate.

Haber - Brian, can you sketch it out?

Winkler drew the plan as he'd suggested and reviewed it with the Commissioners, the Planner, staff, and the engineers and architects present on behalf of the Township and the petitioner. They discussed the options, including tapering of lanes and curb cuts.

Kathleen Jackson - It would also be subject to approval by the RCOC. In addition, as for the accel/decel lanes, sometimes they are not desirable as these curb cuts should be calming traffic. This would need to be addressed further with the RCOC for their input, and the curb cuts and taper lanes would still be up to the consent of the Commission.

Haber - Please have this part brought back to us for reevaluation.

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Haber - To recap, we are proceeding with the diagram as sketched out by Brian Winkler. If the RCOC denies it, it will have to be reevaluated and at that point, we will go with the temporary road. It also needs to be reviewed by the Fire Marshal in relation to access for emergency equipment.

Tom Dillenbeck - This will be drawn up and shown to the RCOC?

Haber - Yes.

Kathleen Jackson - And the Traffic Engineers.

Amy Neary - And the Fire Department.

Haber - It will likely come back before us, and it might very well go back to the temporary road instead.

Law - I understand the difficulty with providing any guarantees, but is there anything we can do to protect the Township if the 2nd phase does not take place?

Kathleen Jackson - The DDA has references to that in the purchase agreement; however, I'm unsure how to ensure that the duplexes would eventually be built.

Chairperson Haber and John Godwin discussed the eventual retail development of the south parcel.

MOTION by Jones, supported by McKeever, to approve, with conditions, Item PSP14-008, First & Main, Assisted Living Development Site Plan, the request by Granger Group of Wyoming, Michigan for site plan approval for the construction of an assisted living facility on property located on Martin Parkway, North of Pontiac Trail and South of Oakley Park. Sidwell Nos.: 17-24-401-054

Approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. Redesign and reconfiguration of the interim drive as presented by Brian Winkler and discussed by the Commissioners.
2. Review and approval by the RCOC, Traffic Engineer and Fire Marshal of the revised configuration and the elimination of the temporary southern driveway and curb cut, and utilization of a portion of the permanent street to provide access to Phase I with the appropriate accel/decel lanes.
3. Approval by the Township Board of the condominium plan creating a new unit, along with required easements, as depicted on the site plan.
4. Elevations for the connection to the Phase II building and mechanical equipment area screen wall must be provided and approved by the Planning Department administratively.
5. Parking lot sidewalk connections should be distinguished and separated from barrier free parking spaces.
6. The McKenna Planning Report dated October 15, 2014.
7. The Giffels Webster Engineering and Landscaping reports of October 2014.

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8. The Commerce Township Fire Department Report dated October 16, 2014, and review and approval of the proposed reconfiguration of the interim drive and emergency access.
9. A comprehensive plan will be developed for lighting, signage and the retaining wall that will come back before the Planning Commission which will coincide with the uniformity and cohesiveness of the Towne Center Overlay district, and a detailed plan will be provided for this particular project.
10. Lighting will be provided at the curb cut(s).
11. Landscaping around the mechanical area and additional on the western elevation.
12. The pathway will be straightened and moved easterly to increase the setback from the roadway.

Discussion:

Amy Neary - Brian, has the canopy been addressed to your satisfaction?

Winkler - I was suggesting that it be more prominent, but it is not really an issue as we cannot block the window.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Jones, McKeever, Hindo, Winkler, Law, Haber

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

RECUSED: Czarniecki

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

OTHER MATTERS TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION

The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting will be Monday, November 3, 2014 at 7:00pm.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Law, supported by Jones, to adjourn the meeting at 8:39 pm.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



Brian Winkler, Secretary