

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

Monday, October 7, 2019
2009 Township Drive
Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

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

ROLL CALL: Present:

Larry Haber, Chairperson
Russ Schinzing, Vice Chairperson
Brian Winkler, Secretary
Tom Jones
Bill McKeever
Brian Parel
George Weber

Also Present:

Dave Campbell, Township Planning Director
Jay James, Engineer/Building Official
Jason Mayer, Township Engineer
Mark Stacey, DDA Director
Randy Thomas, Insite Commercial

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Jones, supported by Schinzing, to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Agenda of October 7, 2019, as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Jones, supported by Schinzing, to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of September 9, 2019, with the following corrections:

1. Page 2, Winkler, 4th Bullet, \$2.5 *million* advance...
2. Page 3, Mr. Rosenthal, 2nd line, ... *Commission* in place of division.
3. Page 9, Jones, 3rd line, ...that *just missed* damaging my house.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

D. UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES

Bill McKeever – Zoning Board of Appeals

- I have nothing to report from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

George Weber – Township Board of Trustees

- We are in the final throes of developing and approving the budgets for each of the Township activities for 2020. We will have more reviews tomorrow night.
- Dodge Park, Phase I, as it relates to Scarlet's Smile Playground was approved and is moving forward, with the fine help of Jason and Giffels-Webster.
- We approved the ordinance relating to land division and boundary movements. I think as everybody on the Commission knows, we had an ordinance as it related to divisions. We did not have one for combining lots, so we cleaned that up.
- Tomorrow night, we will be moving forward with a motion to approve the sale of one acre of the Benstein Cemetery to Benstein Grille.

- We continue to wrestle and work through the issues associated with the Horse Farm on the west side of the Township.
- Outrun Hunger is moving forward and we have approved their banner permits throughout the Township.
- I would also take this opportunity to say that this Saturday, the Township will be having it's first 5K. We have 92 people signed up, so if there's 8 people in this room that would like to help us get to 100 for the inaugural race, that would be awesome. I know Mr. Campbell and myself are signed up and I think Jason is signed up.

Jay James – I'll be in Vegas.

Weber – I'm sure there's other members, and you don't have to run. You can walk. I'll be looking for your names on Saturday morning.

There are two other important items for this group:

- We approved a new schedule that Oakland County put together for REUs as it relates to the Water Resource Commission. It will not have any effect on the personal residences, but will impact a number of the businesses within the community. We will be notifying those that are going to have any significant movements, up or down.
- Finally, we're working with the Township Attorneys to revise and standardize agreements for the groups and leagues who use our parks for activities. We want to ensure we are treating everybody the same, and at the same time, allowing them a bit of uniqueness.

Chairperson Haber – Regarding the land acquisition at the Benstein Grille, is there a clause in there that if they cease to function as a restaurant, that the land reverts back to the Township?

Weber – No, it does not, and I would have to go through the agreement again, but there are requirements for what they need to do. This is not about improving the value of the land. This is about the Township providing them an opportunity to function better as a business. Right now, they do not have enough parking for the size of the building, and for what they need to accomplish they are using the land next door. Many people also just park in the cemetery, but they're not supposed to. This will solve those issues.

Chairperson Haber – My concern has always been that restaurants come and go. There was another restaurant in there before, and they're gone. I was thinking maybe the land should revert back to the Township at cost, if they cease to operate.

Dave Campbell – I might have a couple thoughts if it helps. One of the obligations that they would have to comply with as a condition of the sale is they have to get that piece of land that they're buying rezoned. Currently it's zoned residential, because it's part of the cemetery, so it would have to be rezoned to commercial. I hear what you're saying that restaurants come and go, but regardless of what restaurant may use that site in the future, they're not going to have enough parking regardless. Based on the square

footage of the restaurant, relative to the number of parking spaces that they currently have, they're under-parked. They also want to do an addition as part of all this. They want to expand their parking lot, and then they also want to add, I think it's a 3-seasons room so they can do some outdoor seating most months out of the year. That's part of why they need additional parking.

Weber – I would say too, cemetery land is precious land so this was not an easy decision. There was a lot of work that went through with Dave's help to identify that we have enough cemetery land in Commerce to last us well over 500 years if everybody gets buried in a standard plot. That's based upon the acreage that's there, which is a lot, and based upon statistics.

Brian Winkler – Downtown Development Authority

- The September DDA Meeting was a public informational meeting. It was sparsely attended, but Mr. Golotta attended and had a couple of good comments.
- For the Aikens property, closing activities continue.
- Mark Stacey may want to add to those comments.

Mark Stacey – Aikens is scheduled to close by the end of the month. In addition, you'll note that Barrington has a cement plant onsite. You'll be seeing roads going in and basements being poured before winter. He is moving ahead and very soon you'll begin to see the exciting part of the construction happening.

Jay James – Building Department

- Barrington will be paving the roads within a week. They ran into some issues and delays and had a difficult construction season.
- We have a preconstruction meeting for Rolling Hills on Wednesday. They're getting ready to start.

Jason Mayer – Township Engineer

- Scarlet's Smile Playground sidewalks should be finished this week. At the meeting tomorrow, we're recommending award for the surfaces out there. It's just gravel right now.
- Hopefully we will still have time to open up Scarlet's Playground this year. That's the plan.

Randy Thomas – Insite Commercial

- We have a fair amount of activity ongoing with the DDA parcels, but nothing imminent that would be coming in front of you right now.
- We have a group looking at the site to the east of the Pulte development along Haggerty Road. We had another childcare facility that has approached us.
- We've also got two groups looking at retail for the area next to Sonic along Pontiac Trail where there are currently two homes.

Chairperson Haber – Also, the credit union on Pontiac Trail is now open.

E. PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None.

F. TABLED ITEMS

None.

G. OLD BUSINESS

None.

H. SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS:

None.

I. NEW BUSINESS

ITEM I1: PSP19-0007 – HOMESTEAD INDUSTRIAL PARK UNIT 19

David Biel of Commerce MI is requesting site plan approval to construct a new light manufacturing building located on Unit 19 within the Homestead Industrial Park on the south west corner of Pioneer and Richardson Roads. Sidwell No.: 17-13-326-042

Dave Campbell, Planning Director, gave a review of the Planning Department's report. He noted that Mr. Biel's proposed 15,000 square foot building is speculative as Mr. Biel does not have a user lined up yet. Dave elaborated on the numerous issues to be addressed, as outlined in the recommended motion language, including architectural elevations and building materials, adjustments to parking, screening of loading areas, the request for a waiver of sidewalk requirements, the need for preservation of landscaping/buffer, and the need for submission of updated lighting plans and screening of rooftop mechanical equipment.

Mr. Biel, Squeals Landscaping, 4184 Pioneer Drive, Commerce Township, MI, and 535 Laguna Court, Wolverine Lake, MI, was present to address the request.

Mr. Biel – I am the developer for this project. I intend to build this as a proposed building for our street, Pioneer Drive. It is going to be done purely for speculation. I bought this building, this vacant land, approximately 6 or 7 years ago when times were really bad. I bought it from Comerica Bank out of foreclosure, and got what I thought was a great price. After a year or two, I knew Martin Parkway was going to be coming in and I was hoping the economy would get better. I planned on building a building there. I've already built a couple buildings on my street so I have some experience. I've been there for over 25 years and I've owned several lots. I'm quite familiar with the area and with the demand for tenant space.

I discovered that this property was rezoned to Research and Development, which is another whole story. Then they changed that to TLM. I didn't fully realize what my restrictions were. I sat on the land for a couple years waiting for the economy to get better. I had Randy Thomas as my agent trying to sell the lot, but could not get any interest whatsoever. I figured I would just keep it in my portfolio. Year in and year out, I'm paying taxes on this property. I'm paying association dues because we're a private street, and I have no interest, no desire. People do have interest in this for industrial space. I am in the Homestead Industrial Park. I moved in there in 1994 because I

needed outdoor storage and the area fit my needs, but then the whole area was changed to TLM, and really, nobody knew about that. I was and still am the president of the Association. I'm representing 23 property owners over there that really were all surprised with this change to TLM.

There is demand for our area, but it's for outdoor storage and industrial space. TLM is very difficult. If you go down my street, you will see almost every single building or vacant land has a for sale sign. There has not been any development on our street for well over a decade, since Wynn Berry made this change to TLM, or originally to Research and Development, nobody has done anything. I've had a lot of conversations with realtors, including Randy Thomas, and I built the building next to Squeals Landscaping, which was a 20,000 square foot building. I had tenants there and I've always struggled with keeping them. I didn't know what I did wrong. I built a great building. I would end up hiring a realtor, they'd bring in a tenant and a year later they'd be out of business. I had a tenant who was going to move because he wanted to build his own building. I sold him my building. Since he bought it, it's been vacant, and it's for sale right now. He's my next door neighbor. On other side, there's vacant land that's been for sale for 20 years. And Mike Huntsman has 5 lots that have been for sale. My intention here with this property is to stimulate activity on my street. Nobody wants to step up to the plate. I'd like to build a building over there. I think the economy is getting better, Martin Parkway is done, and I'd like to get the ball rolling. I'm trying to sell vacant land or get tenants, but I need site plan approval. I'm taking a huge gamble here with my life savings to build a building on speculation without a tenant.

Mr. Biel continued to elaborate on his business experience, his concerns with TLM zoning, this undesirable location for TLM, and his need for a compromise as it relates to the architectural standpoint of his proposed building. He discussed the industrial environment of Pioneer Drive and pricing per square foot for renting. He added that he has proposed to put brick on all four sides of the building. He described the neighboring properties adjacent to his business, issues with the fact that outdoor storage is not permitted, and the only interest he's had is for growing marijuana or for outdoor storage. Mr. Biel reiterated his above comments, and noted that there is so much vegetation along Richardson Road that the proposed building won't even be visible. He couldn't understand why he would need brick and a fancy façade, but he is trying to compromise. In closing, he explained that most of the issues in dispute in the report can be resolved administratively. His biggest issue is the design of the building and making the numbers work. He is trying to survive and compromise. His building backs up to nothing on two sides.

Commission Comments:

Chairperson Haber – All right, David. Thank you. I think we got the point.

McKeever – I don't think it's ready for us to review. There's an ordinance in place, and we're bound by that ordinance. I'm not comfortable with deviating that much from it.

Weber – We do have ordinances. I'll give you a couple of other opinions. I understand the gun club side, the west side, and I think there's opportunity for compromise there because it is screened, not visible and not residential.

Along Richardson, while there are some evergreens, there's lot's of hardwoods. In the wintertime, that lot is completely visible. It's actually very visible now, especially if you're heading from east to west.

I'm very familiar with the businesses that are on Pioneer, including those that are close to the Richardson side. I've gone through there sometimes to go to different businesses, so I understand the south side, the challenges and what those buildings look like. No disrespect at all, but when I look at this, the first word that came into mind was *prison*. It is just red brick on the two visible sides with no architectural deviations and no office space. If you look at every other building on the north side of Pioneer, they all have offices, and glass, and parking out front. It's not just a giant red brick wall with no windows and no doors. I struggled with that. The parking I think is easily solved, but I would not be prepared to approve based on these elevations.

Parel – I'm in agreement with everything that's been said. Dave Campbell, you mentioned a 15' buffer that's required between residential and light industrial zonings. If we're going to pass on that now, and the gun club were to one day be redeveloped, would it be on the owner of that parcel to put that back in place?

Dave Campbell – If you did not require the buffer yard now, then if and when the gun club ever develops, then it would be up to that developer to make a determination of what would be adequate screening from their development to the manufacturing and light industrial to their east along Pioneer.

Parel – I appreciate that. I too think it's too early to review this.

Schinzing – I agree with the comments of my fellow Commissioners.

Jones – I personally am in agreement with what George had to say. We've got ordinances in place. We can't be deviating for one person because the next person will want something else. I'm sorry, but I'm not in favor.

Winkler – I unfortunately have to agree with what's been said by the other Commissioners thus far. You might have to go back to the drawing board to address the comments in the Planning Department's report. One thing I do want to point out is that I did look at the other buildings on Pioneer Drive, and although the other buildings may or may not meet the current TLM requirements for appearance and exterior materials, all of them have expanses of windows and things of that type that Section 27 requires, which I think this building could also have so that there's consistency with the other buildings.

Chairperson Haber – I'm pretty much in agreement with everybody else too. Unless there's a drastic change in the ordinance, I can't see this happening as it is now. I feel for your pain for what you've got going on there, and everybody in the area, but I don't think we can help you unless there are changes made.

Schinzing – Would you like another chance at this?

Mr. Biel – Is this just a matter of adding windows?

Chairperson Haber – Well, there's more than just the windows. There's landscaping, lighting and a few other things that have to go on. There was a comment made here that it looks like barracks. I wish I could say it was that nice. It's not. It needs more; it needs something. We have an obligation to the community, not just to the landowners. Unless something drastically changes, I can't see this going through.

Weber – If you look at the buildings that are closest to the property you're discussing, and look at the architectural designs of those; you need something that gets this building closer to those. It doesn't have to be fancy, but it needs to be consistent with that, which is consistent with Article 27 of the ordinance.

Dave Campbell – So just a couple comments and/or questions. I don't know that you necessarily need to make a formal motion if you want to simply direct the applicant to resubmit based upon the comments he's heard this evening, and bring it back to a future meeting. That is a potential action.

If that is the route that you and the developer want to go, there are a couple things I want to get the Planning Commission's opinion on, beyond the architecture. First, the 50' buffer yard. If they were to revise the plans and bring them back, are we comfortable with waiving that requirement, relative to the gun club property?

Chairperson Haber – I think we could probably take a good look at that. I wouldn't have a problem.

Chairperson Haber polled the Commissioners and they were in agreement.

Dave Campbell – As far as having parking in the side and in the rear yard; that again is within your discretion. Are you comfortable with how the parking is laid out, and the fact that parking on the south and on the west is partially within the required rear and side setback?

The Commissioners did not appear to have an issue with that either.

Schinzing – I would like to see the 18' spaces with the overhangs.

Chairperson Haber – 18', you wouldn't have any objection to that?

Mr. Biel – No, absolutely not.

Dave Campbell – Having two overhead doors on the south side of the building where they are arguably visible from public view?

Chairperson Haber – Personally, I would like to see them in a different position.

McKeever – Could they be screened by vegetation at the drive?

Dave Campbell – That is a potential solution, if you're advising them to look at this area and see if there's more opportunity for some landscaping.

McKeever – Keep in mind that the parking lot is going to be pulled back by those two spaces.

Chairperson Haber – Before we move on, I just want to make a comment, David. Let me tell you that the comments here are not binding at this point.

Mr. Biel – Understood.

Dave Campbell – I think these eastern most spaces have to be removed, unless they make a trip to the Zoning Board of Appeals. I think what I'm hearing is that by lengthening the driveway, that gives them an opportunity to provide a little more greenery to better screen those doors.

The Commissioners agreed.

Dave Campbell – Sidewalks along Richardson and/or Pioneer Drive?

Jones – No.

Chairperson Haber – That's a tough one.

Schinzing – I don't know want to see all those trees get ripped down for a sidewalk. I love Richardson trees.

Mr. Biel – There's no other sidewalks anywhere around, so it would be the bridge to nowhere.

Chairperson Haber – Bill, you'd rather see the greenery?

McKeever – Yes.

Jones and Winkler also replied yes.

Dave Campbell – So specifically where they should focus their attention is on the architecture of the building, and particularly along Richardson Road?

The Commissioners agreed.

Weber – From my view, the most visible spot is a bit of Richardson, but also facing on Pioneer.

Jones – George, are you also saying that brick on the back side, facing the gun club, is not a necessity, but you'd rather see some windows?

Weber – I don't have an issue with the side that faces the gun club because that's not visible from the road, or by people across the street.

Chairperson Haber – I think you'd have trouble marketing this building with no windows, but that's just a personal opinion.

Dave Campbell – Windows are required per Article 27. It would be up to you whether or not you want to deviate from that.

Chairperson Haber – I think the feeling is we don't want to deviate from that.

Dave Campbell – So if the opportunity for compromise does exist, it might be not looking as much at the west side of the building where it faces the gun club as far as improvements, but maybe transferring those improvements to the north and east sides of the building.

Chairperson Haber – Good discussion. So David, I'm going to give you the opportunity to tell me what you want to do.

Mr. Biel – I'd like to table this to consider the changes.

Chairperson Haber – I think that's a good thing and I would appreciate that.

MOTION by Schinzing, supported by Jones, to table Item PSP19-0007, Homestead Industrial Park Unit 19, the request by David Biel of Commerce MI for site plan approval to construct a new light manufacturing building located on Unit 19 within the Homestead Industrial Park on the south west corner of Pioneer and Richardson Roads.

Sidwell No.: 17-13-326-042

Tabling is to allow the petitioner time to work through the issues presented in the Planning Department's report and as discussed herein.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ITEM I2: MARTIN ROAD TOWNHOMES – CONCEPT REVIEW

Joe Skore with Pulte Group of Michigan LLC is requesting a conceptual review of a proposed attached residential townhome development located at 3144 Martin Road.

Sidwell No.: 17-24-202-005

David Campbell, Planning Director, delivered a preliminary review of the Planning Department's report for this Conditional Rezoning proposal.

Joe Skore, Pulte, 100 Bloomfield Parkway, Bloomfield Hills, MI, and Bill Anderson, Atwell, Engineering & Planning Consultant, 311 N. Main, Ann Arbor, MI, were present to address the proposal and deliver a presentation.

Mr. Anderson – We are here tonight to talk about the Martin Road Townhomes and get some feedback from you. We are looking at a Conditional Rezoning project, which allows some negotiations. The project area is located across from the Township Hall, on

Martin just north of Merrill Park. It's located near shopping, restaurants and other amenities by your town center. It's kind of a transitional property in our opinion, given what's out there today and what is projected to be in the future, and it's part of the Towne Center area.

The existing site is about a 35,000 square foot building. There's a picture of it (on the overhead). It's mostly vacant. It's multi-tenant office/industrial. As indicated, there was a golf operation in back.

Again, this is in your TLM zoning district, but when we looked at your master plan for the Township's future land use for this area, we saw that it was master planned to be included in the Commerce Towne Center Overlay which allows for the townhomes, so the proposed project conforms with your master plan.

Our proposed project sits on 16 acres. We're looking to construct (103) 2-story townhome units. Those are going to be for-sale, single-family attached units. We have a net density of 6.6 dwelling units per acre. We have just over 6 acres of open space. We have significant buffers along all of our perimeters. We have a nice wooded preserve area. There's some nice trees on the northeast, and we're intending to preserve the southeast corner. Then we have a nice central park area and we're still thinking through our intentions on that.

We will hone these details as we go through the Conditional Rezoning; 16 acres, 103 townhomes. These are 3-bedroom units. When you do the calculations, the allowable density for the Towne Center area is 6.7 units per acre. We're a little less than that with 103, with our net acreage, coming in at 6.6 units per acre. I think the density is right where it needs to be for consistency with the master plan.

Setbacks: When we looked at the perimeter, we're proposing 130 feet off of Martin Parkway, which is significantly greater than required. Our side setbacks and our rear setbacks all exceed the requirements using the master plan zoning.

Building Separation: We have rear-to-side proposed as 40 feet to sunroom option, and 45 feet to the building. Rear-to-rear we have 60 feet, and side-to-side we're looking at 20 feet, which is a little less than your multi-family zoning requirements for side-to-side. We would be looking for that deviation.

I would tell you again, this is a 2-story product. When you look at typical multi-family zoning, you're generally looking at a little higher scale, 3-story building, but we think that's a pretty appropriate scale for this project.

Some of the project benefits, just briefly; we're looking to fill a housing need that we think exists in the Township. We're looking to target young families and active adults, keeping valued residents in the community and trying to attract young families. The new development is in the Towne Center area, so it's going to have close proximity to amenities and the M-5 transportation corridor. It's right where you want your people to be.

We're looking at preserving over one acre of woodlands in that northeast area. I think there's some nice woods in the southeast area as well, providing some buffers and some mature aesthetic appeal to the development plan.

Again, it's compliant with your master plan, achieving your community vision for this area. I think this is a great transitional piece on the edge of the Towne Center District. It borders the light industrial area to the north, and the single-family to the south.

As you know, all of these have walkways and pathways, so it will really frame out the Towne Center nicely.

We're developing a high-quality residential neighborhood. That's our intent and we think it's going to be great. We have excess open space provided, a townhome product and nice architectural designs. We'll have complementary landscaping over the foundations, newly planted trees throughout, and we'll put in some park open space in the central park.

Joe Skore – We do appreciate your feedback tonight. We're very excited about the development. As you know our Merrill Park development was very successful, which is contiguous to this property, and it is just about to be closed out.

Chairperson Haber – We're hard pressed to go more than two miles without seeing a Pulte project.

Bill Anderson – I hope that's good.

Commission Comments:

Winkler –

- I appreciate the brevity of the presentation. It was to the point.
- The density is spot on, as far as the ordinance is concerned.
- The project serves as a good buffer between the TLM District to the north, and the Commerce Towne Place developments to the south.
- It appears to be a real complement to the Commerce Towne Place development.
- I know the elevations in the packet are conceptual, but overall I like what I see.

Jones – I agree with what Brian had to say. I assume these places will have basements in them.

Joe Skore – They do. We do offer slabs for certain buyers that prefer slabs, but in general, we offer basements. When we do offer slabs, we see about an 80/20 mix, with 80 basement and 20 slabs.

Jones – I don't know what the ground level situation is or if there's room to have that with the water level. I like the project.

Schinzing –

- I like that this is finally “own” and not “rent” townhouses. I think Commerce Township needs more “own” options versus “rent”.
- I've had three calls from Merrill Park residents. They will be at the public hearing. Their biggest concern is the buffer. I think this is a pretty good option for all the things that could have gone there.

Parel – Dave, can we pull up the aerial? While you're doing that, I'd like to point out that I loved your comment in the report, *Pulte is well aware that Commerce is better than*

Novi, and therefore has an expectation of an even better project than what they're building down there.

On the aerial, can you scroll down to the south, the existing residential area. Is that a path?

Dave Campbell – Yes, you should go back there. It's very lovely. This is the public park space that Pulte provided as part of the Merrill Park site plan. There's a path that loops around the detention pond and it has a stub to the Haggerty Road vacant lot.

Depending on what develops there, they may or may not connect to that stub. There's also a connection point down to the south, which connects to the DDA's trail way system. Mark, how many miles of trails in the DDA system?

Mark Stacey – Seven miles.

Dave Campbell – It's a pretty nice amenity for the residents of Merrill Park to be able to access all of those trails.

Parel – Yes, and I think it will be great if the new development connects to it as well.

Weber – I will echo some of the other comments, and I do think that a critical point here is that it's consistent with the master plan. I think that's what makes it easy for us to move forward with this. I think it's a great project. I'm familiar with what's going on at 10 Mile and Meadowbrook. I support it. I do want to stress and reiterate the buffer for Merrill Park. Dave, can you pull up the rendering of the elevations? In the rendering you've shown us, there's an issue that we've discussed previously with others who have come before us. Where you have gravel or stone in between the driveways, it makes it look like one giant sea of cement. When you come back, figure out how to separate that with something green.

McKeever – I don't have anything to add. I think everything has been covered.

Chairperson Haber – I think the only comment I have is that this is too dense for me. There's just too many people in one spot. The issue I have is that there's only one way in and one way out. If you have 103 condos, everybody is going to have 2 cars; that's a minimum of 4 trips a day on Martin Speedway. It's a very critical spot right there. There's a lot of people coming in and out around the roundabout, and they don't slow down. I'd like to see less here. Are you familiar with your Twin Beach property?

Joe Skore – In West Bloomfield?

Chairperson Haber – Yes.

Joe Skore – Yes.

Chairperson Haber – There's a lot less acreage there and you put up single-family homes. Why not here?

Bill Anderson – Why not single-family?

Chairperson Haber – Yes, I'd like to see less traffic there, not more.

Bill Anderson – Well, I just think this is a good transitional piece for the Towne Center area, and you want population density here. You're near really good infrastructure with having all the utilities and the road structure there. I think this is the ideal housing product for this exact location.

Chairperson Haber – I like the elevations and the aesthetics of it. That looks good, I just think there's too much of it. I'm really worried about the traffic because I drive down that street almost daily. People just fly by there and it will be a high accident zone.

Dave Campbell – With respect to traffic, circulation, ingress/egress and this connection to Ridgeway, which is the private road to the north; we had talked about whether this property has access rights to that.

Joe Skore – Dave, we believe that this property does have access rights to that road.

Dave Campbell – Do you know yet whether the intent would be for that to be a full drive accessible to the residents, or would it be a gated emergency only connection?

Joe Skore – That is something to be determined at this point. We don't have any strong opinion either way.

Chairperson Haber – I would like to see that as another alternative for getting in and out.

Jones – What are your plans for the entrance. Is that going to be a boulevard with a strip in the middle, rather than just one 25' entrance.

Bill Anderson – We have not drawn it up as a boulevard yet. Again, it's a pretty big, lush entrance and setback off of Martin Parkway, but it's a standard driveway.

Jones – I'd like to see it as a boulevard, separating the entrance and exit.

Chairperson Haber – Yes, you may want to think about a boulevard. I would like to emphasize again that what we've said here tonight is not binding.

ITEM I3: THE RESERVE AT CRYSTAL LAKE – CONCEPT REVIEW

Andrew Milia of Franklin Property Corp. and Gary Jonna of Whitehall Real Estate are requesting a conceptual review of a proposed single-family Planned Unit Development located on the north side of Sleeth Road, west of Bass Lake Road.

Sidwell No.: 17-08-300-007

David Campbell, Planning Director, gave a review of the Planning Department's report for this PUD. He defined the location, the western most and the largest of the three

gravel pit properties, with a large, man-made lake which will be called Crystal Lake. The 160-acre parcel, including the 40-acre lake, is proposed to be developed with 232 single-family homes on varying-sized lots, some with lakefront and others without. There are several challenges with this property as it is a former excavation operation. One of the primary challenges is servicing the property with municipal water and sewer, as both utilities would need to be extended about a mile to this development and obviously there is a significant cost to do that. In addition to seeking approval for the development, the developers are also likely to seek cooperation with the Township Board with a cost-sharing arrangement to upgrade the public infrastructure. The Planning Commission's focus will be on approval of the development, which the developer is likely to propose as a PUD because they have a mix of lot sizes, and it's a unique property with challenges. The PUD provides flexibility to the developer and to the Township. The developer is aware that a key element to any PUD is providing a recognizable and substantial public benefit. They'll likely consider their contribution to the infrastructure to be the benefit, servicing not just their site, but the sites along Sleeth Road with the opportunity to connect to municipal water and sewer.

Andy Milia, President, Franklin Property Corporation, 31500 Northwestern Hwy, Farmington Hills, MI, and Gary Jonna, President, Whitehall Real Estate Interests, 39525 13 Mile Road, Novi, MI, were present to address the preliminary proposal.

Mr. Milia – We appreciate the opportunity to have this conceptual meeting. We understand that brevity is preferred tonight. Mr. Campbell did steal a lot of our thunder, but I want to cover a few additional points.

We've developed an excellent development team for this project. As we go through some of the elements, you'll see a lot of difficulty with the site in terms of dirt, environmental and engineering challenges. Combined, Mr. Jonna and I have 70 years' experience and we've developed over 40 subdivisions in 20 different municipalities around town. This is a challenging site, but we've developed an excellent team of environmental, soil and engineering consulting to work on this project.

Mr. Milia presented a PowerPoint on the overhead, which was also included in the packet. He reviewed key objectives to develop a high-class, low density, single-family residential community, including several high-end quality neighborhoods within the community, featuring different sized homes and different price points. He discussed downsizing and housing trends. They plan to preserve natural buffer areas and enhance the man-made lake to develop the property in an environmentally sensitive manner. They are working with the Township officials and the Board regarding extension of municipal water and sewer to the property via a S.A.D. If the project is approved and moves forward, it would obviously be contingent upon the Board's decision and upon working out a mutually satisfactory S.A.D.

Mr. Milia reviewed several aerial photos for the Commissioners. He discussed the site borders, adjacent properties, the beautiful manmade lake, and he defined preservation areas on three of the four sides of the property. He elaborated on the 4 neighborhood products; (51) 100' lakefront homesites, and the rest being interior lots with (51) 100' lots, (78) 80' lots and (52) 60' lots, for a total of (232) lots on 157 acres. This equates to a very low density at 1.46 units per acre, which is believed to fit within the master plan.

In addition, there would be greenspace, common area and a proposed community beach, potentially with a clubhouse. He felt this would offer an opportunity for first-time home buyers, young home buyers or empty nesters who want to downsize. Mr. Milia discussed the extensions, connections and potential locations for municipal water and sewer, and actively working with the Building Department, Engineers and the Township Board on these matters.

Lastly, Mr. Milia stated that the Fire Marshal had suggested a second means of egress, which would create a loss of a couple lots; however, it is an appropriate idea for traffic circulation. No connection is proposed to Lake Sherwood.

Mr. Campbell – The Fire Marshal doesn't make suggestions. The Fire Marshal makes mandates, and he mandates there will be a second point of access. The potential exists that if and when the property to the east develops, then the second point of access off of Sleeth Road could be turned into another buildable unit.

Mr. Jonna – This is a very difficult site that was left in disarray. It is stunning in the sense of views, bluffs and the lake, but as Andy mentioned, it's a herculean task given the condition of the site, environmental issues, the soil conditions and dealing with issues related to the lake. It's very clear that the Chaldean Church will not be developing on this site, and here is an opportunity to restore and beautify the site, making it a valuable residential resource in the community. We're working very hard to make that happen.

Commission Comments:

Chairperson Haber – For my fellow Commissioners, I've been involved with this a couple times already. I like this a lot. I think the potential is great, and I thank you for not shoving a lot of homes here. I think it will be a nice development and I hope it goes forward.

McKeever – I agree with you. I'm very interested to see what they come back with.

Weber – I'm very familiar with the area. I used to hike back in there. My preference would be, where you have the (52) 60' lots that it would not be quite that dense right there. Adding significant density to an area that doesn't have any density right now is always a bit of a concern for me.

Jason, ballpark – what's it cost to run sewer and water a mile?

Jason Mayer – We've been talking with them. I believe the estimate I gave was \$1.5 million for each utility, so we're talking about \$3 million to run water and sewer to this site. The water is actually upsized to a 20" line to be part of the master plan for the water main, and that's part of the discussions that we've been having.

Weber – Upgrade to 20" from where? The initial...

Jason Mayer – All the way to the west side of their site. They're at the end of a pump station district, so we just need to get sewer to the east side of their site then they would take it from there to service their site.

Mr. Campbell – Mr. Weber, with you being our Township Trustee liaison to the Planning Commission, you're going to see a lot of these guys. I think the plan is for them to come to the Township Board meeting in November and present a preliminary proposal for a S.A.D. to extend water and sewer to this property.

Mr. Milia – That's correct.

Weber – Have you developed any preliminary price points?

Mr. Milia – It's still early on. We are land developers. We actively work with all top 10 builders in the metropolitan area, as well as a number of custom home builders. Given the cost of land, land development and construction, these would be fairly expensive homes. We anticipate they'd be approximately \$800,000 homes, potentially up to \$1 million on the water, and \$600,000 to \$800,000 on the interior, and some of the 60' to 80' lots, potentially we could start in the low \$300,000's, but realistically it would be \$400,000.

Weber – One of your points, which I think was desired, was the opportunity for first-time home buyers in the community. There aren't a whole lot of \$400,000 first-time homeowners. So with those smaller lots, that's where I'm struggling with the 60' versus the 80'.

Mr. Milia – I may have misspoken when I used first-timers as move-up home buyers. It's very hard, unless you're building just a townhome condo, to have an affordable single-family home in today's environment, but we do want to develop a product for somebody who is coming out of a townhome to move into a \$350,000 to \$400,000 home, or if somebody is moving out of a \$700,000 home and wants to downsize. I used the word entry-level incorrectly. We need a lower price point product within there that's not \$800,000 or a \$1 million home.

Weber – My desire and my feedback would be to change the 60' to 80'. That would take a few homes out of that particular area. Other than that, I like the project.

Parel – I have no comments.

Jones – Since this is a rather extensive project, have you done any soil borings or anything that has given you confidence that this project can be successful?

Mr. Milia – We have just spent about \$40,000 on soil borings, including as late as 4:00pm today. We're still going through the process. Preliminary indications are that it's good. It's very challenging under a couple bad spots in the area, which is where we were proposing to do the park and beach area as it's unbuildable. There is a tremendous amount of fill on the property and we're analyzing where the fill can be used as engineered fill and where it would just be used as buffer area. The reason we've been going through this, and spending a lot of time and money with our engineers and soil consultants, is that we're figuring that part out. That remains a bit of a challenge.

Jones – I would think people aren't going to come up with \$1 million if they can't, for example, have a basement where they can develop a rec room.

Mr. Milia – One of the good things is there's no groundwater issues. The lake is down low and the lots will be higher, so they could all have full basements. Another thing we're doing, because we're spending so much time on it, we want to engineer the whole site, so when we develop it, all of the lots are pre-engineered so we're not dealing with pilings or engineered basements at that time. We're designing it to be pre-engineered when the entire site is mass graded.

Jones – Thank you.

Schinzing – I have nothing to add.

Winkler – I agree with Larry's assessment. We have a petitioner that knows the challenges. Good luck.

Chairperson Haber – It's a good project. I'd like to see it go forward. I hope it all works out and I think it will be very nice for the community.

Mr. Milia – We appreciate your time. Our next step is that we're going to be in front of the Board in November to work on the S.A.D. Then, based on this feedback, we'll make some tweaks and we'll be back in a couple months in front of you with more details.

ITEM 14: TEXT AMENDMENT DISCUSSION: Signs; Industrial District Dimensional Standards; Crumb Road "Major Thoroughfare"; Detached accessory structures

Chairperson Haber – This is just a preliminary discussion?

Dave Campbell – Yes it is, just to give you a heads up on what we hope to get in front of you in the near future, acknowledging that we're overdue to get to some of these, and particularly the text amendments to the Zoning Ordinance relative to signage.

- What we've talked about in the past is having some new provisions about the setback for a ground sign that's more, in part, based upon the average of other ground signs in the area, as opposed to what is usually a strict 75' setback from the centerline of the right-of-way.
- We also talked about having some sort of a sliding scale for wall signage, based on how far back your building is from the road and how big your building is, so that we can get wall signs that are in better proportion.
- We are waiting for some direction from the Township Board on banner signs. Currently, with regard to banners, the Zoning Ordinance states, *...for nonprofit events in Commerce Township*. The Board wants to make some adjustments to those revisions.
- Jay will help me come up with revisions and clarifications for detached accessory structures on corner lots. We've got some language in our Zoning Ordinance that is a bit confusing and/or contradictory when it comes to detached garages, sheds and pools for residential lots on corners.

- Randy Thomas really wants us to take a look at the dimensional standards for our industrial zoning district. Up until 2010, Commerce Township had a light industrial and a heavy industrial zoning district. Then, we adopted a new Zoning Ordinance in 2010 and combined those two districts into a singular industrial zoning district, but the dimensional standards that we applied were the dimensional standards that had previously applied to the heavy industrial district. That took what had been light industrial lots and applied a heavy industrial setback requirement to them. We want to adjust those and apply what had been our I-1 dimensional standards.
- Hopefully this is just a housekeeping item. Crumb Road is still in our Zoning Ordinance classified as a major thoroughfare, which was likely appropriate when Crumb Road actually went through. Now that M-5 has come through and basically severed Crumb Road into two dead-end segments, it doesn't make sense for it to be classified as a major thoroughfare anymore, with the setback requirements that would typically apply. With the developments we're seeing along the easterly leg of Crumb Road, off Haggerty, we think by making this adjustment, it will help some of those developments.

I brought this to you for the purpose of discussion and to answer questions. We hope to be back to you shortly with a public hearing for some if not all of these.

Weber – As technology improves with LED signs, specifically as it relates to monument signs, there's more and more data on the distraction that those are causing for drivers. I see a little bit of a conflict, but it's moving from advertising a business so that somebody can find it to becoming more about 30-second commercials. I know we have ordinances that address how many lumens per square foot, et cetera. While it's not an issue now because we don't have very many of them, 10 years from now I have no idea. I'm assuming every monument sign in the Township would probably be converted to an LED sign with the help of good, smart marketing people.

Dave Campbell – I remember having this discussion, and it is not in my cover memo. A couple thoughts; one is, Mr. Parel would like to get rid of LED signs entirely?

Parel – Please.

Dave Campbell – As far as whether they're displaying a message that's more directional in nature, versus promotional in nature; that's something we want to look at. I want to get the Township Attorney's input on that, because now we're getting into speech issues, and are we differentiating between speech.

Jay, correct me if I'm wrong, but we don't allow the LED signs in every zoning district, right?

Jay James – Correct, only in commercial.

Dave Campbell – B1, B2 and B3?

Jay James – Correct.

Weber – So, Union Lake Road, Martin Parkway, Haggerty Road.

Chairperson Haber – It will look like Las Vegas.

Jay James – More of a Reno.

Parel – That's not better.

Dave Campbell – So, Mr. Weber, if there's a way to legally do it, your suggestion is to look at limiting the message to just saying, "this is McDonald's", as opposed to, "2-for-1 double cheeseburgers" or whatever.

Weber – Exactly. I think you used the right words; it's more location versus promotion.

Jay James – Our attorneys need to be involved in that. They preach to us. You can only regulate size and location, not content.

Dave Campbell – If you have to read what the sign says to determine whether or not it's legal, then that's not a good thing.

Weber – Everybody agrees, but there's a difference between the desire of a sign to advertise a business versus running a commercial. I get the complexities of free speech, but that's where I think we have to see if we can put a line in the sand.

Chairperson Haber – There's been discussion about this in the past. One way to combat this is that they cannot change their sign for a minute because that takes the distraction out of it.

Weber – Even if it's a minute, if you're at that minute, and every minute you've got 400 cars in front of that sign, something's happening, versus 24 hours.

Discussions continued regarding timing for changing the messages on signage.

Weber – What is the timing on the next generation of the Master Plan?

Dave Campbell – Good practice is to at least review your Master Plan every 5 years. We last updated through 2015, and actually adopted it in early 2016. So, we are due to take a look at it.

J: OTHER MATTERS TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION:

None.

K: PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dave Campbell discussed the following:

- The Michigan Rail Trail is getting its final course of asphalt.
- We are having the big M-5K on Saturday.

- The bridge over M-5; the only thing we are waiting on is the Township's logo in the center. That was delayed because they mis-drilled the holes on the wave panel behind it. Otherwise the bridge is 99% complete, and color changing aspect is functional. I've been provided with software which allows me to create my own lighting schemes.

Schinzing initiated discussion about Granger/First & Main's Phase II. Dave Campbell stated there has not been any communication from them since they presented their concept plan to the Planning Commission.

Dave Campbell –

- You received a draft of the tentative meeting calendar for the 2020 Planning Commission Meeting schedule. I would note dates that had to be adjusted are January 13th, April 13th and July 13th. In addition, the August and November meetings are being pushed because of the primary and the election at the beginning of each month.

The Commissioners were in favor of the calendar as presented, including the adjustments as discussed.

- **NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE: NOVEMBER 4, 2019 @ 7PM**
- Chairperson Haber and Russ Schinzing noted that they would be absent on November 4th. Brian Winkler will chair the meeting.

L: ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Schinzing, supported by Parel, to adjourn the meeting at 8:54pm.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Brian Winkler, Secretary