

MINUTES

Cascade Charter Township Planning Commission
Monday, October 19, 2009
7:00 p.m.

ARTICLE 1. Chairman Robinson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
Members Present: Hammond, Lewis, Logue, McCarthy,
McDonald, Pennington, Robinson, Sperla, Waalkes.
Members Absent: None.
Others Present: Township Planning Director Peterson, Assistant to
the Township Manager Otey and Members of the Public.

ARTICLE 2. Chairman Robinson led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**ARTICLE 3. Approval of the Agenda for the October 19, 2009 Planning
Commission Meeting.**

Chairman Robinson requested a motion for the approval of the
October 19, 2009 Agenda.

**Motion was made by Member Waalkes and supported by
Member Sperla to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion
carried unanimously.**

**ARTICLE 4. Approval of the Minutes from the September 14, 2009
Meeting.**

Chairman Robinson asked if there were any corrections to the
September 14th Minutes or requested a motion for approval.

Member Lewis noted on Pages 6 and 7 he does not believe the
minutes capture his observations regarding his concerns for
parking at the Watermark Country Club project. Parking is already
a challenge and parking in the far back of the lot can be a challenge
for some of the customers.

Member McCarthy noted on Page 5, in the second full paragraph
in the third sentence put quotes around the word "green".

Member Hammond noted on Page 8 under Any Other Business,
third paragraph, he does not recall asking if there was any progress
regarding Tassell Park and Member Sperla said he had asked for
the update.

**Motion was made by Member Lewis and supported by
Member McDonald to approve the September 14, 2009
Minutes as corrected. Motion carried unanimously.**

**ARTICLE 5. Consider Approval and Resolution for the Capital
Improvement Plan**

Chairman Robinson noted that the Commission is being asked to consider approving the Capital Improvement Plan this evening. A roll call vote will be taken.

Planning Director Peterson noted that this year's process has been a little different than prior years due to having Planning Commissioners who worked on a committee to help prioritize the projects.

Assistant to the Manager Sandra Otey is the one who pulled the packet of information together. The documentation is useful in developing budgets and in coordinating the projects.

In general, the language and priorities do not change a lot. Some projects have been shifted in priority and some have been in the Plan for over six (6) years. The document is a planning document utilized by the Township Board for budgeting purposes.

Planning Director Peterson noted that the Board has not always adopted the Plan though they do utilize it. The Plan is also utilized for planning purposes with the State or the Kent County Road Commission (KCRC) or for grant applications. It is a very useful document to the Township.

Chairman Robinson thanked Assistant to the Township Manager Otey for pulling the information together and developing its contents. He opened the meeting for the Commissions' questions or comments.

Member Logue noticed the budgeted amount for the roundabout at Cascade Road and 28th Street. As far as he knew, there was a committee reviewing its feasibility and is not sure if a budgeted amount should be allocated at this time since it is in its feasibility study. Planning Director Peterson said that the feasibility study has been completed and the DDA will be reviewing the project to determine if the Township wants to proceed. The amount that is shown in the document is what the project will cost if it would be done. The document does not state the project will be done but the monies have been allocated so we can plan and coordinate for such a large project. The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is working on the roundabout study and will be evaluating if the roundabout project moves forward.

Member Logue asked if the KCRC has been contacted regarding the feasibility of the roundabout and Planning Director Peterson said they have been involved with evaluating the project.

Member Sperla asked if the feasibility study has been completed and Planning Director Peterson said it has. KCRC has been involved in the study and are evaluating it along with the DDA.

Member Sperla asked if this is a project that should consume 50% (fifty-percent) of the expenditures over the next six (6) to eight (8) years and if the Township wants to commit to that? Assistant to the Township Manager Otey noted that the roundabout would be paid for out of the DDA fund.

Member McDonald thought the budget for Hall Street looked low and Planning Director Peterson noted it is broken up a couple of ways: the budget for the path and the budget for the road. The hope is that we would share costs with KCRC and Ada Township.

Member Waalkes questioned the 28th Street interchange that is projected for next year in the installation of sidewalks from Kraft under the I-96 overpass to Waterfall Shoppes, is this in coalition with any MDOT (Michigan Department of Transportation)? Assistant to the Township Manager Otey said there is enough room to install a sidewalk and the Township is working with MDOT regarding the project. She noted that the DDA has been developing this project and has slated it for 2010. The sidewalks will only be installed on the south side of 28th Street as MDOT will not allow them on the north side.

Member Lewis asked about the 30th Street Cemetery Irrigation Project and Assistant to the Township Manager Otey said this is the project that was reviewing the potential of tapping into public water.

Member Lewis also commented that he believes last year the Township had \$150,000 in the budget for the soccer field at the park. It seemed to him that \$150,000 was extremely expensive. He sees this item is in the budget with a desirable ranking and noted that "...some of the users have indicated that they would be willing to contribute to the costs of improvements..." that is noted under the justification of the project, does this mean that the Township has received offers from the users to help defray some of the costs? Planning Director Peterson said that nobody has made a monetary offer but some in the past have commented that they would be willing to help. He also believes that the engineers projected the costs closer to \$90,000 for the project but this document has carried the numbers into this year from the prior.

Member McDonald noted the Laraway Lake Extension Project and how this project keeps getting pushed further out and questioned if

a project is ever removed from the Plan? Assistant to the Township Manager Otey said that the project still has some potential so it has been left in the Plan.

Member McCarthy noted the projects are all great projects and hard to choose one above another. As the parent of a student who attends Forest Hills Central, she cannot stress enough the importance of completing the Hall Street improvements. She would love to see this project moved up on the rankings. Planning Director Peterson does not believe that this project could be moved up prior to 2011 due to the KCRC processes for improvements.

Member Logue noted that the school has reconfigured their traffic patterns on campus that creates a greater back up on Hall Street. He hopes that these new problems could be conveyed to the KCRC.

As a member of the Township Board, Member Lewis thanked the Planning Commission for their comments regarding the Capital Improvement Plan.

Member Lewis said he is comfortable with the Capital Improvement Plan that has been presented to the Planning Commission and motioned to send a recommendation of approval to the Township Board, supported by Member McDonald.

Chairman Robinson asked if there was any further discussion.

Member Louge is concerned if showing the budget for this project and if the government contributes, would the project have the community's support versus the Township's need for the project.

Assistant to the Township Manager Otey noted that just because a project is listed in the Plan does not mean it will actually develop or the project could be pushed back.

Member McDonald said the projects are budgeted in the Plan but it does not mean that any specific date for development has been planned and the project is not being approved. It is just earmarked for budgeted funds as a potential project of the Township. Planning Director Peterson noted that the roundabout project is not being approved in this document it is simply setting aside funds for the potential improvement.

Chairman Robinson requested Planning Director to take a Roll Call vote:

Member McCarthy – yes.

Member Hammond – yes.
Member Sperla – yes.
Member Lewis – yes.
Chairman Robinson – yes.
Member Waalkes – yes.
Member McDonald – yes.
Member Logue – yes.
Member Pennington – yes.

ARTICLE 6.

Discussion: Proposed Centennial Park Overlay Zone

Planning Director Peterson referred to the map within the Commissions' packets and said the Township has been working with the business end of Centennial Park. The Township, business owners and DDA have done some work in developing the plan to re-energize Centennial Park.

From the Township's perspective, this is one of the older developments in the Township and one of the first P.U.D.'s developed. Unfortunately, there is not good documentation of the setbacks and rules of the P.U.D. and the township has had to rely on variances, minutes and interpretations dating back to the 1970's. One of the results of the Centennial Park study was to develop a set of recommendations with how the Township would regulate Centennial Park. The recommendations were developed with the business owners.

Before the Planning Commission this evening is the development of the new overlay zone within Centennial Park.

The current zoning for the business portion of Centennial Park has three (3) different zoning districts, which include a couple of different P.U.D.s. The other half of Centennial Park consists of residential and the golf course. Staff felt it best to apply this overlay zoning in just the business end of Centennial Park for regulating the Park.

One of the biggest changes would be to allow for additional building height up to 48-feet in this area. In addition to this, allowing buildings up to 75-feet tall along the highway if they meet certain criteria. The lots along Orchard Vista drop down significantly and the concept is that the buildings really would not show above the other buildings and would appear to be at 48-feet since they are in a hole. This is only a couple of lots.

One of the recommendations is to develop a review committee of made up of the business owners in Centennial Park. The committee would review the projects prior to coming before the Planning Commission. Once the project comes before the

Commission, the committee would either recommend their support or denial of the project.

In terms of the Township's zoning standards, Staff has followed the standards in use today regarding setbacks, etc. and is what the Township has been using for Centennial Park with the exception of the lots along 28th Street and have been using the Commercial Zoning restrictions.

Although the Township is allowing for some business identification signs at their entrances, the Township will be limiting their signage along 28th Street to the low-profile signs.

Planning Director Peterson said there has been a committee of four (4) that have been working with Staff in the development of the overlay zone. The Township Attorney and Business Association comments have been incorporated into the document. He is seeking the Commissions' input before proceeding forward.

Chairman Robinson noted that Member Lewis, Member Logue, Chairman Robinson and Member Hammond have been working on this overlay zone as a subcommittee of the Planning Commission.

Member McDonald noted that this plan has been in development for a long time now. The Business Association has really stepped up the process along with the residents.

Member Lewis noted the one concern he has is that this is precedence setting and he hopes that once the final zoning has been written it will not allow precedence to be set for allowing signs and other things.

Member McDonald noted that the Master Plan notes consistency throughout the Township and this is consistent.

Member Sperla has a concern with the legal and practical applications of the under-lying zoning district being superimposed by the overlay zone. He is concerned with the impact of the overlay ordinances and the regulations governing the under-lying zoning district. Such as if three businesses had signage at 30-foot tall but the overlay would not allow for that, what types and conflicts would arise? Planning Director Peterson said the overlay would prevail. Planning Director Peterson noted that the overlay zoning would make the lots legal as there is no formal documentation of their original P.U.D. Member Sperla noted that the overlay zoning would only apply to the new construction, which is approximately 20% of Centennial Park making the other 80% non-conforming. Planning Director Peterson does not believe

that the 80% of the lots would become non-conforming, they would be governed by recommendations and documentation would be developed. He stated that it is possible that something may become non-conforming as a result of the changes but right now we have no regulations for the park so it is different from the "normal" situation. Member Hammond noted that the PUD ordinance documentation does not exist and Planning Director Peterson said that is correct. What the committee has heard from the business owners is that they do not mind the rules of the Township and they are better off with some rules so investors, renters and owners can have some certainty of what they can and cannot do and how much.

Planning Director Peterson said they could note what would become non-conforming and he does not believe there is a lot that would become non-conforming and everyone hopes to regenerate the park.

Member Sperla asked if there is consideration in tearing down some of the older buildings and reconstructing. Member McDonald said the committee has discussed installing sidewalks, improving the roads, consistent signage throughout, street-lighting, and landscaping. Planning Director Peterson noted there has been some interest in redeveloping some of the sites out there.

Chairman Robinson noted some of the concern regarding the buildings that could be 72-feet tall and asked for some of the thoughts of the Commission.

Member Sperla said he is not in favor of a lot of height but in this particular area where the topography drops it seems taller buildings would be appropriate in this area as they would appear to be the maximum height allowed since they are built lower than the surrounding buildings.

Chairman Robinson asked if there is any way a developer could set the building on one of those low lots and have the building be over 48-feet with the rest of the topography and surrounding buildings? Planning Director Peterson said it is written with the intention that the buildings are not taller than those around them that are restricted to 48-feet. Planning Director Peterson said he could work on making sure that that does not happen.

Chairman Robinson indicated that the overall strategy looks good and instructed staff to continue with what they have put together along with the comments and suggestions tonight.

Planning Director Peterson thanked the Commission for their comments.

ARTICLE 7.

Discussion: Farmland Preservation District

Staff has been working with Williams & Works regarding this items since the adoption of the Master Plan.

Staff is looking for comments regarding what we have developed so far before we continue any further.

The Farmland Preservation District is being developed to get the Township certified so farm owners could take advantage of the PDR program.

The new zoning district would be developed from the Master Plan and referred to the GVMC map.

If the Farmland Preservation District were developed, changes to the Township's ordinances would need to be done.

The district would be similar to the Agricultural Conservation District which is rural zoning in Cascade Township and would keep this district as close to the ARC Zoning as possible in terms of uses and setbacks. The only changes were for uses, eliminating group daycare homes as special use in this district. In the section regarding parks the uses, such as: activity centers, libraries, etc. and eliminating those portions of use in this district.

In regards to the subdivision ordinance, there is a requirement that was developed that the open space must be utilized to ensure their Farmland Preservation Use and density of the property. The developer would have to protect at least 50% of the area.

Another significant change in the ordinance is the limiting of private roads in the Farmland Preservation Area. A private road would become a Special Land Use and therefore would be reviewed by the Planning Commission.

The Standards have been developed and are included within the Commissions' packets. The Standards were developed as an evaluation tool.

Member Waalkes noted that on Article V – 5 # 2 under section 5.10 under item C and refers to Item Number 3 and this should be clarified.

He also noted Page 7A-1, Number 9 under 7.04A the entire sentence should be changed due to the removal of swimming

pools, park, community centers, libraries, etc. Planning Director Peterson noted that the government as well to allow for the program also governs the land use.

On Page 18-1, Section 18.02 add "F P" to one of the columns along with the following section below that.

Chairman Robinson indicated that the proposal looks good and instructed staff to follow through with the idea and to clean up the areas discussed tonight before proceeding.

ARTICLE 8.

Any Other Business

Chairman Robinson opened the meeting for any other business.

Planning Director Peterson said the Industrial Zoning Committee will be starting and is looking for committee members. Member Lewis, Chairman Robinson, Member Logue and Member Waalkes volunteered to serve on the committee.

Member Sperla asked if there is any new information regarding the two (2) parks and Planning Director Peterson said the Board is going to receive the report from the design consultant on October 28th. As far as the Grand River Dr and Bolt properties, he just had some communication from the State of Michigan and they needed more information and is moving along. Member Sperla did not see any money allocated and is this because the money would come from the millage and grant? Planning Director Peterson said that is correct.

ARTICLE 9.

Adjournment

Chairman Robinson requested a motion for adjournment.

Motion was made by Member Lewis and supported by Member Waalkes to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Sperla, Secretary

Lisa Hern, Recording Secretary