

**MINUTES**  
Cascade Charter Township Planning Commission  
Monday, April 18, 2011  
7:00 P.M.

**ARTICLE 1.** Chairman Waalkes called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.  
Members Present: Hammond, Lewis, Logue, McCarthy, Pennington, Robinson, Sperla, Waalkes, Williams  
Members Absent: None  
Others Present: Planning Director Steve Peterson

**ARTICLE 2.** Chairman Waalkes led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**ARTICLE 3. Approve the Agenda.**

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

**ARTICLE 4. Approve the Minutes of the March 21, 2011 Meeting.**

**Motion was made by Member Lewis and supported by Member Robinson to approve the Minutes. Motion carried unanimously.**

**ARTICLE 5. Case #11-3022 Height Exception Zoning Amendments (Public Hearing)**

To consider Zoning Ordinance Amendments for Height Exceptions for parapet walls and similar structures.

Planning Director Steve Peterson explained that a parapet wall is the area above the roof-line that is typically used to help screen rooftop equipment. Currently we do not allow parapet walls to exceed the building height limit. We are the only community in a group of several neighboring communities who do not allow parapet walls to exceed the height limit. We require mechanical equipment to be screened, but if someone builds to the maximum it would be difficult to meet that requirement. Planner Peterson recommends that we amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow for parapet walls to exceed the building height limit by 4 feet.

Chairman Waalkes asked if any Planning Members had any questions for the Planner. Member Lewis asked if the materials used for a parapet wall can/will be dictated by the Township. Staff replied that the materials used for screening would have to be similar to the materials used on the front exterior of the building. Member Lewis also asked if in the event of an existing parapet being replaced in the future, would a business owner have to meet our proposed

requirements in regards to materials used. Staff replied that if it lost its non-conforming status it would have to comply.

There was discussion about the difference between a screen wall and a parapet wall. In Section 4.14 the proposed ordinance change will be in reference to either type of wall.

Chairman Waalkes stated that the meeting was scheduled for a Public Hearing and asked for a Motion to move into it.

**Member Hammond made a Motion to move into Public Hearing. Support by Member McCarthy. Motion carried.**

Staff reported that he had only one call asking what parapet walls were, but the caller didn't seem interested after learning about them.

**Member Lewis made a Motion to move out of Public Hearing. Support by Member Robinson. Motion carried.**

Chairman Waalkes stated that this case would require a recommendation to the Township Board for the Zoning Ordinance changes.

**Member Sperla made a Motion to approve the changes as reflected in the proposed amendments provided by Staff. Support by Member Williams. Motion carried.**

**ARTICLE 6: Case #11-3021 Expressway Service Zoning Amendments  
(From the table of March 21, 2011)**

To consider amendments to the Zoning Ordinance regarding the Expressway Service (ES) Zoning District

Chairman Waalkes stated that this case was tabled on March 21, 2011.

**Member Lewis made a Motion to remove this discussion from the table. Support by Member Pennington. Motion carried.**

Planner Peterson summarized for Members who were absent at the last meeting by saying that we incorporated the comments that were made in regards to LEED Certification and incentives and made the changes to allow for the Step setbacks for the buildings taller than 48 feet and added Figure 11-2.

Chairman Waalkes asked if any Members had questions for Staff. Hearing no comments Chairman Waalkes asked for a Motion to approve the changes to the Expressway Service Zoning District and to forward the recommendations on to the Township Board.

**Member Robinson made the Motion and support was made by Member Sperla. Motion carried.**

**ARTICLE 7: Case #11-3024 B-1 Zoning Amendments  
(Public Hearing)**

Consideration of amendments to the Zoning Ordinance regarding the Village Business (B-1) Zoning District

Planning Director Peterson reviewed that last year we had a Focus Group consisting of property owners in the B-1 area. Later we invited the Focus Group to a work session with the Planning Members. The proposed changes are in response to those meetings.

Member Sperla expressed concern with the residential use changes. He was involved with the sand mine development in the 80's. He stated that there was a very strong agreement among committee members that there would not be any multi-family residential use in that area. When he worked on the PUD Task Force, they were concerned with PUD amendments. Deed Restrictions were put in place and recorded. He is not in favor of residential in the Village. Planner Peterson reminded the Members that the B-1 area is much larger than the Family Fare shopping center. Peterson explained that we already have several residential projects in the village and some of these changes simply recognize what is already there. We have also had interest from developers over the years about additional residential in the village but it appears to them that we don't want it because it is not a use permitted in the Zoning Ordinance and they are left with going through a PUD rezoning. People in the Master Plan Focus Group were in favor of more options for residential.

Member Williams was in some of the Focus Groups and Master Plan Meetings. She said there was a desire to revitalize that whole area. There had also been discussion at that time about encouraging some retirement facilities in the area.

Member Lewis said he feels there is enough of a residential mix now and tends to agree with Member Sperla.

Member Logue commented that changing the Ordinance would not mandate that it will happen; it would just leave it up to the market. A multi-family residential type of building does provide a better transition between business and residential rather than just having business and then residential. Member Hammond said that he has seen this type of development work in urban situations. This could work, maybe not now, but in the future.

Chairman Waalkes stated that the meeting was scheduled for a Public Hearing and asked for a Motion to move into it.

**Member Pennington made a Motion to move into public hearing. Support by Member Hammond. Motion carried.**

Staff reported that there were no comments or questions from the public. There was no one in the audience to address the Members. Chairman Waalkes asked for a Motion to close public hearing.

**Member Lewis made a Motion to close public hearing. Second by Member Robinson. Motion carried.**

Chairman Waalkes asked if anyone wanted to make a Motion to approve the B-1 Zoning Ordinance Amendments.

**Member Hammond made a Motion that a favorable recommendation would be made to the Township Board regarding the proposed changes to the B-1 Zoning Amendments. Support by Member Logue. Eight Members were in favor, one opposed.**

**ARTICLE 8: Case #11-3023 Sign Ordinance Amendments  
(Public Hearing)  
Consideration of changes to the Sign Ordinance**

Planner Peterson mentioned that as we have been working on the changes to the B-1 Village Business Zoning District several comments were made relative to the Sign Ordinance. In order to address the comments, the Planner has made some proposed changes to the Sign Ordinance for consideration. There are proposed changes to several sections covering signs such as: directional, light pole, sandwich board, electronic, special signage for the village, and industrial signage.

Member Lewis has a concern regarding sandwich board signs. He feels that the proposed change will create problems. Chairman Waalkes asked the Planner where the proposed change came from. Staff replied that it came about from constant comments and concerns by the business community. Staff believes this is a good way to address some of their concerns while not allowing the signs out by the road. Member Logue commented that he sees the proposed change to sandwich boards as a solution to a need voiced by the business community.

**Member Lewis made a Motion to approve the changes to the Sign Ordinance, with the exception of the allowance for sandwich board signs. Support by Member Robinson.**

Chairman Waalkes asked if there was further discussion. Member Sperla expressed that sandwich board signs could be allowed, but other than by right. He suggested that the business owner could request a Special Use Permit effective for a period of time or by some other means of control.

Member Williams expressed that we have been trying to be helpful to businesses in the community. She personally is not offended by sandwich board signs. She feels it gives a business an opportunity to highlight a menu item or a special; then when there isn't something big going on the sign wouldn't be out. Chairman Waalkes said he would tend to agree.

**Chairman Waalkes asked for a roll call vote in to recommend the proposed changes without allowance for sandwich board signs.**

**Hammond - no**

**Lewis - yes**

**Logue - no**

**McCarthy - no**

**Pennington - no**

**Robinson - yes**

**Sperla - yes**

**Waalkes - no**

**Williams - no**

**The Motion was not passed.**

Chairman Waalkes asked if anyone else would like to make a Motion to approve the Sign Ordinance Amendments in some other way, form, or fashion.

**Member Logue made a Motion that a favorable recommendation would be made to the Township Board regarding the proposed changes to the Sign Ordinance as presented by Staff. Support by Member Hammond.**

Chairman Waalkes asked if there was any additional discussion. With no other comments, the Chairman asked for a roll call vote:

**Hammond – yes**

**Lewis - yes**

**Logue – yes**

**McCarthy - yes**

**Pennington - yes**

**Robinson - yes**

**Sperla - yes**

**Waalkes - yes**

**Williams – yes**

**Motion carries. The proposed Sign Ordinance changes are passed with the sandwich board option included.**

**ARTICLE 9: Case #11-3025 Term Limits Zoning Amendments  
(Public Hearing)**

Planning Director Peterson stated that this only impacts the Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals. Currently members are eligible for three - 3 year terms; a total of 9 years. He pointed out that it is important to remember that the State law requires each community to have a good mix of different people; from a professional background to a geographical mix. He polled other communities in our area to see what their practice is in regards to term limits. This proposal would eliminate term limits for our Planning and Zoning Members.

Chairman Waalkes asked if anyone had questions. Member Robinson stated that he believes we should eliminate term limits; however he would recommend that the Chairperson hold the Chair for 2 years only. This would give everyone on the Board the chance to become Chairman.

Member Williams asked if there could be other variations rather than either no term limits or stick with what we presently have. She does feel that there is an advantage to longevity. Staff indicated that you could have any number of terms that you wanted.

Chairman Waalkes said that if you eliminate term limits, and if a Member does not get reappointed by the Supervisor, they may only be on the Board for as little as three years. On the other hand, other people may not have a chance to serve if the current Members are able to stay on for an unlimited time. His feelings are mixed as he is not sure if an unlimited term is the right answer.

Member Sperla stated that there is value in continuity. One can regulate longevity by looking at things such as attendance, meaningful participation; of which the Supervisor and Board has some control over. He is in favor of removing term limits.

Member Pennington expressed that at times there may be people that you wish would get "term-limited out"; however he also feels that the benefits of letting people that want to serve an extended period of time should be allowed, and that out-weighs the restriction.

Member McCarthy agrees that experience and history is valuable. She feels that with the Supervisor and Staff reviewing participation, qualification, and who

might have expressed some interest; leave it up to them to figure out who to phase out and who to phase in.

Member Hammond stated that he has always been opposed to term limits. Member Logue said that he is always in favor of term limits in general.

Chairman Waalkes announced that this was slated for a public hearing and that they needed to move into public hearing.

**Member Hammond made a Motion to move into public hearing. Support by Member Robinson. Motion carried.**

Staff shared that he had only heard from one person who called to clarify that this proposed change was only in reference to the Planning and the Zoning Commissions.

**Member McCarthy made a Motion to move out of public hearing. Support by Member Sperla. Motion carried.**

**Member Robinson made a Motion to eliminate term limits. Support by Member Pennington.**

Member Lewis made some comments. He noted that many of the communities around us that are about our size have eliminated term limits. He feels that if you do your job well and you want to serve you should be able to participate as long as you like.

Chairman Waalkes requested a roll call vote:

**Hammond – yes**

**Lewis - yes**

**Logue – no**

**McCarthy - yes**

**Pennington - yes**

**Robinson - yes**

**Sperla - yes**

**Waalkes - no**

**Williams – no**

**Motion carries 6 to 3.**

Chairman Waalkes stated that the recommendation to end term limits will be forwarded to the Township Board.

**ARTICLE 10: Any other business:**

Planning Director Peterson said that the Township Board has requested that the Planning Commission begin investigating possible amendments relative to farm animals in the Residential Zoning District.

**ARTICLE 11: Adjournment**

Chairman Waalkes requested a Motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Motion was made by Member Hammond and supported by Member Williams to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Al Pennington, Secretary

Carol M. Meyer, Planning Administrative Assistant