

MEETING MINUTES  
GRAND HAVEN CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
JUNE 19, 2017

I. CALL TO ORDER

Cousins called the meeting of the Grand Haven Charter Township Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Members present: Cousins, LaMourie, Robertson, Kieft, Wilson, Reenders, Chalifoux and Wagenmaker

Members absent: Taylor

Also present: Community Development Director Fedewa and Attorney Bultje

**Without objection**, Cousins instructed Fedewa to record the minutes.

III. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Without objection**, the minutes of the May 15, 2017 meeting were approved.

V. CORRESPONDENCE – None

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY – None

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Special Land Use Amendment – Ag in RR District – Loftis

Wagenmaker recused himself because family members live within the notice area. It should be noted that Kieft previously recused himself, but it was later determined he was not within the notice area and was eligible to vote on this application.

**Motion** by Robertson, supported by Wilson to **approve** the Special Land Use Amendment application to allow an Agricultural operation in the Rural Residential zoning district on 13.26 acres of property located at Parcel No. 70-07-22-100-023. This will expand the existing operation into a total of 26.71 acres. This approval is based on the application meeting the applicable requirements and standards set forth by the Grand Haven Charter Township Zoning Ordinance. This motion is subject to, and incorporates, the following report.

## REPORT

1. This approval is based on the affirmative findings that each of the following standards of Section 19.05 have been fulfilled:
  - A. The proposed use is consistent with, and promotes the intent and purpose of this Ordinance.
  - B. The proposed use is of such location, size, density, and character as to be compatible with adjacent uses of land and the orderly development of the district in which situated and of adjacent districts.
  - C. The proposed use does not have a substantially detrimental effect upon, nor substantially impair the value of, neighborhood property.
  - D. The proposed use is reasonably compatible with the natural environment of the subject premises and adjacent premises.
  - E. The proposed use does not unduly interfere with provision of adequate light or air, nor overcrowd land or cause a severe concentration of population.
  - F. The proposed use does not interfere or unduly burden water supply facilities, sewage collection and disposal systems, park and recreational facilities, and other public services.
  - G. The proposed use is such that traffic to, from, and on the premises and the assembly of persons relation to such use will not be hazardous, or inconvenient to the neighborhood, nor unduly conflict with the normal traffic of the neighborhood, considering, among other things: safe and convenient routes for pedestrian traffic, particularly of children, the relationship of the proposed use to main thoroughfares and to streets and intersections, and the general character and intensity of the existing and potential development of the neighborhood.
  - H. The proposed use is consistent with the health, safety, and welfare of the Township.
2. The application meets the site plan review standards of Section 23.06 of the Zoning Ordinance. Specifically, the Planning Commission finds as follows:
  - A. The uses proposed will not adversely affect the public health, safety, or welfare. Uses and structures located on the site take into account topography, size of the property, the uses on adjoining property and the relationship and size of buildings to the site. The site will be developed so as not to impede the normal and orderly development or improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in this ordinance.
  - B. Safe, convenient, uncontested, and well defined vehicular and pedestrian circulation is provided for ingress/egress points and within the site. Drives, streets and other circulation routes are designed to promote safe and efficient traffic operations within the site and at ingress/egress points.
  - C. The arrangement of public or private vehicular and pedestrian connections to existing or planned streets in the area are planned to provide a safe and efficient circulation system for traffic within the township.
  - D. Removal or alterations of significant natural features are restricted to those areas which are reasonably necessary to develop the site in accordance with the requirements of this Ordinance. The Planning Commission has required that landscaping, buffers, and/or greenbelts be preserved and/or provided to ensure that proposed uses will be adequately buffered from one another and from surrounding public and private property.
  - E. Areas of natural drainage such as swales, wetlands, ponds, or swamps are protected and preserved insofar as practical in their natural state to provide areas for natural habitat, preserve drainage patterns and maintain the natural characteristics of the land.
  - F. The site plan provides reasonable visual and sound privacy for all dwelling units located therein and adjacent thereto. Landscaping shall be used, as appropriate, to accomplish these purposes.

- G. All buildings and groups of buildings are arranged so as to permit necessary emergency vehicle access as requested by the fire department.
- H. All streets and driveways are developed in accordance with the Ottawa County Road Commission specifications, as appropriate.
- I. Appropriate measures have been taken to ensure that removal of surface waters will not adversely affect neighboring properties or the public storm drainage system. Provisions have been made to accommodate storm water, prevent erosion and the formation of dust.
- J. Exterior lighting is arranged so that it is deflected away from adjacent properties and so it does not interfere with the vision of motorists along adjacent streets, and consists of sharp cut-off fixtures.
- K. All loading and unloading areas and outside storage areas, including areas for the storage of trash, which face or are visible from residential districts or public streets, are screened.
- L. Entrances and exits are provided at appropriate locations so as to maximize the convenience and safety for persons entering or leaving the site.
- M. The site plans conform to all applicable requirements of County, State, Federal, and Township statutes and ordinances.
- N. As appropriate, fencing has been required by the Planning Commission around the boundaries of the development to minimize or prevent trespassing or other adverse effects on adjacent lands.
- O. The general purposes and spirit of this Ordinance and the Master Plan of the Township are maintained.

Wagenmaker rejoined the Planning Commission.

#### VIII. REPORTS

- A. Attorney Report – None
- B. Staff Report – None
- C. Other – None

#### IX. EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Dave Rickard – 11487 Loggers Trail, has questions related to accessory buildings within front yards.

- Questions the reason they are not permitted within front yards.
- Believes if certain criteria are met a person should be able to put an accessory building within the front yard. For example, a dead-end street, a private road, accessory building matches dwelling, additional screening, etc.
- Has a wooded lot and does not want to remove additional trees and pour more impervious surface to construct the building in the rear yard.
- Feels the Zoning Ordinance needs to use common sense.

The Planning Commission then began to discuss this subject, and noted the following:

- It was noted the Township spent a lot of time developing these regulations and what appears to be common sense for one property may not translate the same way on another.
- Attorney Bultje provided a few examples of how this subject is addressed in other communities—specify provisions in the accessory building regulations, special land use, etc.
- Issuing variances in this situation is not the correct method because a precedence is set, but a special land use permit would not set a precedence.
- Fedewa indicated that residents regularly request to have accessory buildings in front yards and generally use the same three arguments:
  - the building will match the dwelling,
  - the lot is wooded and cannot be seen from the road; and
  - the lot is large and cannot be seen from the road.

Concerns related to these arguments are:

- aesthetics are subjective,
- the lot can be clear cut, which would make the building visible from the road; and
- the lot could be divided, which could make the building visible from the road.

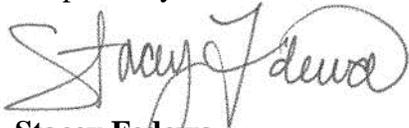
If these three concerns occurred the basis for allowing the building in the front yard would be removed. A method to protect those common arguments must be found to move forward.

- The Planning Commission directed Fedewa to contact other municipalities and gather information on how they address this subject to determine if it is a direction the Township wants to pursue.

## X. ADJOURNMENT

**Without objection**, the meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



**Stacey Fedewa**  
Acting Recording Secretary