

**OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION**

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD APRIL 23, 2015

Agenda

PUBLIC HEARING: SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE REQUEST OF THE APPLICATION FROM BOSCH ARCHITECTURE ON BEHALF OF CONSUMERS CREDIT UNION FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A 5,299 SQUARE FOOT FINANCIAL INSTITUTION WITH DRIVE-THROUGH LANES LOCATED AT THE CORNER @ DRAKE COMMERCIAL CENTER AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF CENTURY DRIVE AND DRAKE ROAD IN THE C COMMERCIAL DISTRICT. (PARCEL #3905-25-240-009).

A meeting of the Oshtemo Charter Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, April 23, 2015, commencing at approximately 7:00 p.m. at the Oshtemo Charter Township Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Fred Antosz
Wiley Boulding, Sr.
Dusty Farmer
Pam Jackson
Mary Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT: Millard Loy
Terry Schley

Also present were Greg Milliken, Planning Director; James Porter, Attorney; and Martha Coash, Meeting Transcriptionist. Approximately six other persons were in attendance. Due to the absence of Chairperson Schley, Vice Chair Jackson assumed the duties of the Chairperson.

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Jackson at approximately 7:00 p.m. and the "Pledge of Allegiance" was recited.

AGENDA

The Vice Chair asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

Mr. Boulding, Sr. made a motion to accept the agenda as presented. Ms. Farmer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Vice Chair Jackson asked if anyone in attendance wished to comment on non-agenda items.

There were no public comments on non-agenda items. Vice Chair Jackson moved to the next item on the agenda.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF APRIL 9, 2015

The Vice Chair asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the minutes of the Meeting of April 9, 2015.

Vice Chair Jackson asked for clarification of comments from Ms. Farmer regarding the Statement of Purpose at the beginning of each zoning district chapter in the Ordinance. Ms. Farmer said she believed the Statement of Purpose was supposed to be an explanation of the chapter that followed. There was some question whether the Statement of Purpose in this case is actually a reflection of the following Ordinance. There was a question regarding whether the Statement of Purpose could be used in making a decision on the Ordinance and it was decided that it could not, so she commented that it alone was not enforceable, so she commented that the Commission should be certain that the standards of a district match the stated purpose.

Attorney Porter confirmed that the Statement of Purpose can be taken into consideration but that it cannot override the Ordinance itself. He agreed with Ms. Farmer that if you have a Statement of Purpose and then the actual Ordinance doesn't fulfill that, it should be addressed.

There were no further comments, and hearing no additions, deletions or corrections, Vice Chair Jackson asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Mr. Antosz made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 9, 2015 meeting Ms. Farmer seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Vice Chair Jackson moved to the next item on the agenda.

PUBLIC HEARING: SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE REQUEST OF THE APPLICATION FROM BOSCH ARCHITECTURE ON BEHALF OF CONSUMERS CREDIT UNION FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A 5,299 SQUARE FOOT FINANCIAL INSTITUTION WITH DRIVE-THROUGH LANES LOCATED AT THE CORNER @ DRAKE COMMERCIAL CENTER AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF CENTURY DRIVE AND DRAKE ROAD IN THE C COMMERCIAL DISTRICT. (PARCEL #3905-25-240-009).

Vice Chair Jackson said the next item on the agenda was a public hearing regarding the special exception use request for establishment of a Consumers Credit Union located at the Corner @ Drake Commercial Center. She asked Mr. Milliken to provide background for the Board's consideration.

Mr. Milliken explained the subject property is located in the Corner @ Drake commercial development. The specific building site within the development is located immediately north of Century Avenue with frontage on Drake Road. The lease area is 1.05 acres in size with approximately 150 feet of frontage on Drake Road.

He said the proposal is to construct a two-story, 5,922 square foot office for the credit union housing both retail and administrative offices for the business. Drive-thru lanes and 32 parking spaces are also included.

He said the property is located in the C Commercial zoning district. Financial institutions are a permitted use in the C district, but with the drive-through lanes, this makes it a special exception use.

Mr. Milliken noted the setback along Drake Road is 120 feet from the centerline of the road. The setback of the proposed building well exceeds this setback. The setback for structures along private access drives is 15 feet from the easement boundary. This is the setback on the south and west sides of the property. Again, the building exceeds this requirement.

He explained access to the property is via the private access drive that runs along the west boundary of the property. In addition, the site will provide a connection to the parking lot of future development to the north providing for greater connectivity and flow within the overall development.

Mr. Milliken told the Board four drive-thru lanes are provided on the northwest side of the proposed building. Section 68.300.G provides requirements for drive-through lanes and stacking spaces. There is no specific requirement for the number of stacking spaces; rather, the stacking is required to be on-site and designed so as not to impede circulation. Stacking has been provided for at least eight vehicles, and the applicant has indicated that experience at other facilities suggests that is more than adequate.

Although not yet constructed, Mr. Milliken said a non-motorized facility has been committed along the Drake Road frontage of the site. The applicant has provided a sidewalk connection to this Drake Road facility as well as a pedestrian connection to the future development site to the north.

He said to provide internal pedestrian connectivity, Staff has suggested that development to the north not only be interconnected but also a connection be provided for pedestrians to the existing sidewalk along the east side of the Costco building.

Pedestrians can then utilize this walk and strategically located crossings to safely access buildings north of Century Drive.

Mr. Milliken continued, saying landscaping has been shown on the overall site plan demonstrating the landscaping proposed as part of this development. Both perimeter landscaping and parking lot landscaping is required. Perimeter landscaping is required along the east, south, and west property lines. Existing landscaping has been provided in these areas as part of the overall development. Additional landscaping has been added as necessary to satisfy the requirements of the Ordinance.

He told the Board a lighting plan is provided on sheet. A total of eight new LED pole mounted lights are proposed around the perimeter of the parking lot to provide site lighting along with eight building mounted lights.

He also told the Board stormwater drainage has largely already been addressed during preparation of the overall development. As part of the establishment of the overall development, drainage needs were projected and necessary infrastructure installed.

Mr. Milliken said all Standards for Approval are met by the proposal.

In conclusion, Mr. Milliken said this is the first outbuilding development at the Corner @ Drake development, and it is anticipated that several others will come forward in the months ahead. The proposed development is consistent with plans proposed during review of the overall development as well as with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. The two-story building and new architectural style (relative to a traditional franchise branch) will help frame the entry to the development. He indicated he recommends approval subject to conditions in his Staff report.

Vice Chair Jackson thanked Mr. Milliken for his comments and asked if Commissioners had questions for him.

Ms. Farmer asked Mr. Milliken to explain how the special exception use fulfills the requirements for sidewalks.

Mr. Milliken explained there is already commitment for a sidewalk along Drake Road, but that grant funds are being sought for the total length of the facility. He noted the plan calls for a pedestrian connection to the north. One of the conditions is to provide a connection to the west along the access drive to an existing sidewalk along the east side of the Costco building. Someone from the Consumers Credit Union building could walk to Costco.

Ms. Farmer asked what would happen if grants are not secured for that facility.

Mr. Milliken said the sidewalks are a commitment of the original development approval and therefore are required, but that all those involved are working together to secure the grant money.

Ms. Farmer asked if funds were being held in escrow for sidewalk construction.

Mr. Milliken said there are no escrow funds for this purpose.

Ms. Smith wondered if there was a steep hill at the non-motorized connection point; she was concerned about wheelchair access for nearby residents.

Mr. Milliken said the steep incline was further to the north, that it is still quite flat at the access point.

Hearing no further questions from Commissioners, Vice Chair Jackson asked the applicant to speak.

Mr. Steve Bosch, of Bosch Architecture, 8065 Vineyard Parkway, representing Consumers Credit Union, noted Mr. Milliken had presented the salient points, but said it is an exciting project for Consumers Credit Union to be at the Costco site, the expansion is key pin for their future development, and that this location will be a two story, full service retail, regional branch.

Mr. Boulding, Sr. asked whether the assumption for future development to the north would mean parking will be funneled south to the access drive.

Mr. Bosch said hypothetically the access drive to the north will be funneled out to the service drive.

Mr. Milliken noted anything built to the north would go through the site plan review and approval process.

There were no further questions for Mr. Bosch. Vice Chair Jackson asked whether there was public comment.

Mr. Joe Gesmundo, developer of the Corner @ Drake, indicated his excitement regarding this first project, one of seven letters of intent they are working on. They believe they will have more leases following close after this first project and that there are really exciting things to come. His intent was to include exceptional architecture in this development; the two-story Consumers Credit Union is unusual and he thinks CCU and Bosch Architecture have met that objective for this first project.

Regarding sidewalks, Mr. Gesmundo said the plan is to make the connection so that people who park behind the buildings can walk to the front of the retail stores and to Costco. He addressed connecting south from the southwest corner of the CCU site, noting that traffic coming in from traffic light at Drake Road doesn't stop, and most of the

traffic is turning left. Having pedestrian traffic crossing free-flowing traffic is probably unwise. He believes having a sidewalk on Drake, south across Century Ave., with buttons for a safe crossing, and then west on the south side of Century, is a safer route. The recommendation in the staff memo speaks to this issue and may need to be looked at.

Hearing no other public comments, Vice Chair Jackson moved to Board Deliberation.

Attorney Porter noted two motions for consideration would be appropriate.

Mr. Milliken said he understood Mr. Gesmundo's concerns about the safety of a connection to the south across Century Drive and had no problem eliminating that recommendation from the staff conditions for approval.

Ms. Farmer made a motion to approve the special exception use as presented. Mr. Antosz seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Farmer made a motion to approve the site plan contingent on recommendations #1, 2, 4 and 5 from the Staff memo and a change to #3 to include the installation of a pedestrian connection to the west across the service drive to Costco, but to eliminate a connection to the south across Century Drive. Mr. Boulding, Sr. seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Vice Chair Jackson moved to the next item on the agenda.

CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF SANITARY SEWER STRATEGIC PLAN AND PLANNING AND ZONING IMPLICATIONS.

The Vice Chair asked Mr. Milliken to speak on this agenda item.

Mr. Milliken explained this will be an important discussion to have, but that he had nothing formal to present at this time. Much time has been and will be spent by Staff members on educating themselves about sanitary sewers, septic tanks, and the Township policies on the issue. The project is comprehensive. This is an important issue, but without valuable information to inform discussion, he doesn't want the Board to waste its time.

Ms. Farmer said she accepted that. As liaison to the Township Board, she was happy the Planning Commission chose to move ahead to a conclusion on this discussion, and understands the urgency to have the discussion finished.

Mr. Milliken said he wants to provide the Commissioners with valuable information for discussion, but the process will likely involve what could be a year-long process to analyze the Ordinance. It is not realistic to think it can be done by summer,

which was discussed originally. The Board will have to develop a strategy/game plan for the vision. A lot is planning based and insight from the group will be valuable.

Vice Chair Jackson told Mr. Milliken if there were ways Commissioners could help with background information development they would do so.

Mr. Milliken said he would welcome assistance, but at this point is not sure what it would be, but suggested for now they review the 4-5 pages in the Master Plan that address these issues.

Mr. Boulding, Sr. noted the two major factors driving the need for action are population density and the topographical structure which limits development to the west. Future development, tied to both zoning and planning, has to be considered.

Ms. Farmer said the fact that Kalamazoo County gets 100% of its water from the ground shapes her opinion.

Mr. Milliken apologized for not being able to provide a basis for discussion at this time.

OLD BUSINESS/OTHER BUSINESS

Vice Chair Jackson asked if there was old business or other business to come before the Commission.

Mr. Milliken introduced Ben Clark, newly hired Zoning Administrator, to the Board. He explained that Karen High will now be shifting her time to Parks Administrator, and that her experience and expertise could still be called upon as needed for zoning issues. Commissioners welcomed Mr. Clark.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Ms. Farmer invited Commissioners to attend the April 24 Prairie Ridge School fundraising event for Loaves & Fishes.

Mr. Milliken told the Board a new K-8 charter school to be located west of Copper Beech Apartments has been proposed. Because it is a school it is exempt from zoning and most local control. He said everything the Township has asked of them has generally been agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Having exhausted the agenda, and with there being no further business to discuss, Vice Chair Jackson asked for a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Boulding, Sr. made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Farmer seconded the motion.
The motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chair Jackson adjourned the Planning Commission meeting at approximately 7:46 p.m.

Minutes prepared:
April 24, 2015

Minutes approved:
May 14, 2015