

OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP

PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD NOVEMBER 29, 2012

Agenda

KALAMAZOO CHRISTIAN MIDDLE SCHOOL - SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE - REGARDING THE EXPANSION OF AN EXISTING PRIVATE SCHOOL LOCATED AT 3800 S. 12TH STREET IN RR-RURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT (PARCEL# 3905-36-280-010)

ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS - PLANNING COMMISSION TO REVIEW PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO OSHTEMO TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE SECTION 76 REGARDING ELECTRONIC SIGNS AND BILLBOARDS.

ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS - PLANNING COMMISSION TO REVIEW PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO OSHTEMO TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE REGARDING MICROBREWERS AND OTHER SIMILAR USES.

NON-MOTORIZED PLAN - DISCUSSION OF UPDATES TO TOWNSHIP NON-MOTORIZED PLAN

REVIEW OF AMENDMENTS TO CITY OF PORTAGE MASTER PLAN

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR 2013

A meeting of the Oshtemo Charter Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, November 29, 2012, commencing at approximately 7:00 p.m. at the Oshtemo Charter Township Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kitty Gelling, Chairperson
Carl Benson
Bob Anderson
Millard Loy
Wiley Boulding, Sr
Richard Skalski

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

A representative of the Board of Trustees has yet to be appointed resulting in the empty seat.

Also present were Greg Milliken, Planning Director, Attorney James Porter, Laylah Fahwana, Minute Transcriptionist, and two other interested persons.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

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

Agenda

The Chairperson asked if there were any additions, deletions or changes to the Agenda. Hearing none, she called for a motion to approve the Agenda, as submitted. Mr. Skalski made a motion to accept the Agenda as submitted. Mr. Benson seconded the motion. The Chairperson called for a vote on the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

The Chairperson called for public comment on non-agenda items. There being none, she proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

Minutes

The Chairperson asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the minutes of October 25th, 2012. The Chairperson noted some corrections on pages 2, 3, and 4 which were read and stated for the record. With those corrections, the Chairperson called for a motion. Mr. Benson made a motion to approve the minutes, as amended. The motion was seconded by Mr. Boulding, Sr. The Chairperson called for a vote on the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

KALAMAZOO CHRISTIAN MIDDLE SCHOOL - SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE - REGARDING THE EXPANSION OF AN EXISTING PRIVATE SCHOOL LOCATED AT 3800 S. 12TH STREET IN RR-RURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT- (PARCEL# 3905-36-280-010)

The Chairperson said the next item for consideration was a special exception use and site plan review for Kalamazoo Christian Middle School, located on 3800 S. 12th St. in the RR rural district (parcel #3905-36-280-010). She said the Planning Commission was being asked to conduct a special exception use and site plan review for the application submitted by Hurley & Stewart Engineering to expand the current elementary school building located on 12th Street. The Chairperson called for a report from Planning Director, Greg Milliken.

Mr. Milliken proceeded to take the Planning Commission through his report, outlining the applicant's request for expansion which includes 12 new classrooms, a second auditorium/gymnasium (currently not planned for construction but is shown for approval as something that is desired in the future), a new circulation drive, a southern expansion to the current parking lot, a new western parking lot primarily for bus parking, and a new access point onto 11th Street.

Mr. Milliken indicated that there were a few items indicated in the Staff Report that were not yet provided or addressed. These included a Landscape Plan, lighting details, and dumpster enclosure. The applicant presented the Commission with information regarding the lighting and dumpster at the meeting.

At the conclusion of Mr. Milliken's report, the chairperson asked if there were any questions of the Planning Director.

Mr. Anderson asked about a comment in the Engineer's review letter regarding the drainage pond and problems with drainage that may result from development. The letter indicates that sediment was to be removed, and he wondered if the pond needed to be increased in size. Mr. Milliken replied that the engineer mentioned there were a lot of sediments in the pond and they should be cleared out to improve the functionality of the pond.

Mr. Loy asked about the bean field next door and rather or not grass can be put around the pond to stop sediment from the field from running off into the drainage pond. Mr. Hurley indicated that the plans will show grass around the retention pond.

Mr. Skalski had a question concerning sidewalks along 12th street, and whether or not this would become the school's responsibility in the future if the Township decided sidewalks would be necessary. Mr. Porter indicated similar situations and arrangements have been broached in the past and dealt with in a timely manner.

The Chairperson then invited the applicant to come forward. Todd Hurley, 2800 S. 11th St, of Hurley & Stewart Engineering, represented the applicant.

Mr. Hurley approached the Commission to discuss some key topics, his first being the parking aisle width. He indicated that they were requesting the reduction to 20 feet in order to be consistent with the existing parking lot aisles to the north of the proposed parking lot. Mr. Hurley continued to discuss the drainage pond and indicated that in fact it was proposed to be increased in size. Mr. Skalski brought forth a question concerning the life of the pond and whether or not a proper filtration system can be installed. Mr. Hurley responded that a sediment trap can be placed to better filter the pond once it has been cleaned out. However, he felt the issues with the sediments were likely a result of improper construction or not cleaning the pond after development.

The next topic Mr. Hurley began to discuss was the proposed access point on 11th Street, and stated that after working with the Road Commission, moving the driveway to 11th Street for buses was determined to be most beneficial, because it would be a way to better distribute the traffic. Mr. Loy stated that safety is the number one issue in this decision and the only way moving this driveway to 11th street would make sense would be if there was an added bypass lane. Mr. Anderson then stated that a request should be made to have the Road Commission consider a different option that may be safer.

The Chairperson asked how many parking spots are provided and, if they exceeded the minimum required, by how many. Mr. Milliken stated that with the new

parking lot there would be just enough spaces to accommodate the two auditorium spaces along with the indicated number of faculty. The Chairperson then raised a concern about the relocation/replacement of three fire hydrants with relocation/replacement of only two. Mr. Hurley confirmed that there would be three connections provided: two hydrants and a fire department hook-up. This had been improperly noted by the Township Engineer.

Mr. Boulding, Sr. asked a question concerning the driveway and whether or not it would become a one-way during peak hours. Mr. Hurley responded stating that it would not be a one-way but instead the driveway would be gated off during peak hours to block thru traffic and also for security purposes.

The Chairperson noted that the Planning Commission had not been properly supplied with all of the information and materials required in a timely fashion to fully expound on what was being asked of the Commission to review, and asked how long this project had been in the works. Mr. Mike DeLoof, 6432 Bayfield Dr., a representative of the Kalamazoo Christian School Board and the "Committee to Establish the New School" responded. Mr. DeLoof indicated that this project began about six (6) or seven (7) months ago. The Chairperson asked how long this project would take to complete, and Mr. DeLoof stated that they had hopes of completing the project by fall of 2013.

Mr. Boulding Sr. asked Mr. DeLoof if Kalamazoo Public Schools had purchased the current property, considering the buyer was announced four (4) to six (6) weeks ago. Mr. DeLoof responded that they had an agreement but there were still a few issues being worked out before the sale can be completed.

The Chairperson proceeded to ask Mr. Hurley what would be used for landscaping the property. Mr. Hurley stated that they will use similar plants and trees to what is currently used at the site. They have also had input about a learning garden for the students that may be implemented. She noted that Oshtemo Township was most passionate about trees/landscaping, and hoped they would leave as many trees as possible, but more is always appreciated.

The Chairperson stated that nothing can be approved without more information from the Road Commission, because they have jurisdiction over the roads. Mr. Loy commented that changing the Road Commissions' mind after they've made a decision is very difficult, but the Chairperson suggested on trying again with more force and persuasion. It would be better to have at least tried, than to not have tried at all. The possibility of tabling this agenda item until further information was received was an option for consideration.

Mr. Porter stated that he did not think the item should be tabled strictly due to the access issue as this is out of the Township's jurisdiction. The Commission should request a bypass lane and make it a condition that it should be installed, especially since the school is agreeable to the addition. He indicated that it is worth the effort and having another conversation with the Road Commission. He suggested the Planning

Commission make this a condition of approval (the installation of a bypass lane) subject to Road Commission approval. The Chairperson stated safety was of the utmost concern and requested representatives of the school (principal, superintendent), Hurley & Stewart, Road Commission, and the Township Planning Director meet in the near future and advise of the outcome. With there being no further discussion amongst the Planning Commission members, the Chairperson opened this up for public comment. Hearing none, Mr. Anderson made a motion to approve the special exception use for the expansion of the private school. Mr. Skalski seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Skalski made a motion to approve the site plan with the noted conditions as stated in the staff report, and the additional condition that a bypass lane be added on 11th Street subject to Road Commission approval. Mr. Loy seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS - PLANNING COMMISSION TO REVIEW PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO OSHTEMO TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE SECTION 76 REGARDING ELECTRONIC SIGNS AND BILLBOARDS.

Mr. Milliken indicated that the proposed amendments would change Section 76, dealing with electronic signs and billboards and stated that there were no changes from the draft reviewed a month ago. The Chairperson asked if anyone had questions of Mr. Milliken, and hearing none, she opened it up for public comment. There being none, she called for discussion amongst the Planning Commissioners.

The Chairperson stated she would entertain a motion. Mr. Benson made a motion to recommend approval of the proposed amendments to Section 76 of the Zoning Ordinance to the Township Board. Mr. Boulding, Sr. seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS - PLANNING COMMISSION TO REVIEW PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO OSTHEMO TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE REGARDING MICROBREWERIES AND OTHER SIMILAR USES.

Mr. Milliken indicated that there are no changes to the proposed amendments regarding microbreweries and similar uses. However, he indicated that Mr. Owen, the individual who first brought this topic before Oshtemo Township, will not be continuing on with his business plan at this point in time. Mr. Milliken stated that he and the Supervisor met with representatives from Southwest Michigan First to discuss potential economic development opportunities and assistance that could be provided to the Township.

The Chairperson noted that it was advantageous to have had the microbrewery concept brought before the commission, as it provided the impetus for getting the language drafted in preparation of making Oshtemo Township competitive for future business.

Mr. Loy made a motion to recommend approval to the Township Board of the proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance regarding microbreweries and similar uses. Mr. Skalski seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

NON-MOTORIZED PLAN - DISCUSSION OF UPDATES TO TOWNSHIP NON-MOTORIZED PLAN

Mr. Milliken began by stating a year ago the Capital Improvement Committee (CIC) asked Staff to review the Township's non-motorized plan, and they determined that 14 key corridors needed review. The non-motorized plan is a part of the Master Plan, which will eventually need to be amended to accommodate the update. Until that time, the CIC is requesting the Planning Commission approve the Resolution that will give the update authority. The Chairperson read the Resolution for the record.

The Chairperson made a motion to approve the Resolution. Mr. Boulding, Sr. seconded the motion. The Chairperson conducted a roll call vote: Loy – Aye, Boulding, Sr. – Aye, Skalski – Aye, Benson – Aye, Anderson – Aye, and Gelling – Aye. The Resolution was approved unanimously.

REVIEW OF AMENDMENTS TO CITY OF PORTAGE MASTER PLAN

The Chairperson indicated the City of Portage is amending the City Master Plan, and in accordance with the Planning Enabling Act, they have notified us of the changes. The proposed amendments impact the City's Open Space and Recreation Plan. Regarding the proposed changes to the City's Master Plan, the Chairperson stated there is no impact on Oshtemo Township. As everyone was in agreement, the Chairperson indicated the Commission would request and authorize the Planning Director to send notification to Portage that the Commission finds the amendments satisfactory.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR 2013

The chairperson presented the schedule of meetings for 2013 with the meetings proposed on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month.

The Commission will also be included in three Joint Meetings with the Township Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. These meetings will be scheduled in February, May, and September, subject to change.

Mr. Loy made a motion to approve the proposed schedule of meetings for 2013. Mr. Skalski seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

There being none, the Chairperson closed out this agenda item and moved to the next item.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There being none, the Chairperson closed out this agenda item and moved to the next item.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Mr. Loy indicated that he appreciated the impact Mr. Bushouse had on the Commission and will miss his presence on the Board.

Mr. Boulding, Sr. asked about the memorial that he had discussed previously. Mr. Porter indicated that he had researched whether other communities had regulated this type of thing and could not find an example. He found some Road Commissions that had standards related to this, and if the Planning Commission wants to pursue this, he recommended the Township Board contact the Road Commission about this.

Mr. Skalski complimented the Board on making the adjustments to accommodate the School and concurred with Mr. Loy's comments on Mr. Bushouse.

Mr. Benson indicated he was very pleased with the position that was taken on kids' safety.

Mr. Anderson stated he agreed with the comments about the schools.

The Chairperson thanked Mr. Anderson for stepping up as Chair in her absence at the last meeting. She indicated that the next meeting (December 13) would be the last meeting for Mr. Benson and Mr. Anderson, and that she would have refreshments to help celebrate their generous commitments to the Township.

ADJOURNMENT

Having exhausted the agenda, and with there being no other business, the Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:46 p.m.

Minutes Prepared:
December 10, 2012

Minutes Approved:
December 13, 2012