

MINUTES BIG RAPIDS CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Tuesday, August 11, 2015 --- 7:30 p.m.

Big Rapids Township Hall, 14212 Northland Drive, Big Rapids, MI 49307

I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:30 P.M.

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, Secretary Vivian Smith called the regular meeting of the Big Rapids Charter Township Planning Commission to order at the township hall on Tuesday, August 11, 2015 at 7:37 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Present: Gordon Oliver, Carman Bean, Jim Shane, Vivian Smith and David Hamelund. Michael Hults and Philip Keating are excused. The record shows a quorum is present. Also Present: Brent Mason, Recording Secretary.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the July 14, 2015 meeting were reviewed, and Mr. Shane made the motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Bean. The motion carried unanimously with 5 yeas.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

V. OLD BUSINESS:

Engineering report from Progressive AE on the Mecosta County Pole Storage Building at 14485 Northland Drive. Mr. Mason gave a brief update on the contents of the report. Mike Oezer, the engineer has spoken with Bob Cassidy from Mecosta County and Jackie Fitzgerald, Drain Commissioner, about the storm water drainage concerns at the site, and options for storm water control are being considered, but have not been finalized. The Drain Commissioner does not think the requirements are necessary, but they will comply with the recommendations of the engineer. Mr. Shane made a motion that the process be continued until the final site plan agreement is obtained and the drawings are submitted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hamelund. Mr. Shane commented that it is very beneficial to have the engineering report when reviewing these requests. No further discussion took place, and the motion passed unanimously with 5 yeas.

The engineering report from Mike Oezer was presented for the Campus Creek II Apartment project. A complete site plan has not been presented, and the applicant's engineering firm is aware of the need for a complete plan. There is no action to be taken on this project at this time. Mr. Hamelund asked about the need for a future sidewalk plan for the commercial areas of the township. When will we require sidewalks? The commission discussed at length the options that could be taken, possibly including a requirement for frontage sidewalks and or "walkability" in the Commercial or the Highway Interchange districts. More concern about traffic control and the possible need for a traffic light at Northland Drive was raised and discussed regarding an additional 248 people leaving Gilbert Drive at potentially the same time each day. Sidewalk issues and bike path/lane issues and were they go, the concern for internal site sidewalks on this site

was also raised. Mr. Shane requested that Mike Oezer be asked what he means by “walkability,” in regards to this site. Mrs. Smith wondered about the need for a traffic study to determine if the speed limit could be reduced. Further discussion occurred about the costs of sidewalks and who should be responsible for them. Enforcement of the potential ordinance changes also needs to be looked into. Mr. Mason was asked to look into how other communities have addressed the issue of walkability and what measures they use to implement the changes that help them grow.

VI. UPDATES FOR THE ZONING ORDINANCE:

The changes in the zoning ordinance were distributed to the commission members, and put into their Zoning Ordinance Books. Mr. Mason gave a brief report on LeeAnn’s Flowers and where they stand. Mr. Stanek spoke with Mr. Engels previously, and told him that when he is finished with the project, Mr. Stanek will inspect the site for compliance with our requests. Mr. Hamelund updated the commission about the Perry Street sidewalk project. October 1 will be the date when the township will know if the assessment is finalized, unless there is an appeal of the assessment. All of the businesses in the special assessment district are supportive of the project, but there are some that are not excited about paying for it. We are hoping the timing of the project will line up with the MDOT project for the intersection of Perry Street and Waldron Way.

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

Mrs. Smith entertained a motion to adjourn at 8:21 p.m. The motion was made by Mr. Shane and seconded by Mr. Oliver. Motion carried with 5 yeas.

Motion to approve the Planning Commission minutes of August 11, 2015

by: Carman Bean, Seconded by: Gordon Oliver. Roll call vote carried with 4 yeas:

Michael Hults, Chairman
BIG RAPIDS CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION

Date Approved