

City of Grand Ledge  
**Planning Commission Meeting**  
Minutes from Meeting Held on  
Thursday, April 4, 2013

Chairman Mike Stevens called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Attendance:** Bob Doty, Jamie Malecki, Todd Gute, Bill Kane, Steve Baribeau, Ron Graber and Eric Morris. Also present: Zoning Administrator Sue Stachowiak. Absent: Steve Willobee, Mike Stevens & Council Representative Thom Sowle

**Pledge of Allegiance** – Ms. Stachowiak led those present in the pledge of allegiance.

**Approval of the Agenda**

Mr. Kane made a motion, seconded by Mr. Graber to approve the agenda as written. Motion carried 7 - 0.

**Approval of the Minutes**

Mr. Kane made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gute to approve the minutes with the correction to page 1, delete “Ann Lawrence” from attendance list. Motion carried 7 - 0.

**Notice of Agenda Items Conflicts** - None

**Business from the Floor**

Chris Morrison, 510 Liberty Street, stated that he received a violation notice regarding parking over the sidewalk and in the public right-of-way. He stated that he has 2 vehicles and there is only enough room in the driveway for one vehicle. He also stated that the garage is being used for storage. Mr. Morrison said that he could move the car into the street except for the hours between 2:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. when on-street parking is not permitted.

Ms. Stachowiak stated that the driveway could potentially be expanded. She said that a driveway can occupy up to 30 percent of the front yard.

Mr. Morris suggested talking to the police dept. about a temporary license to park in the street while Mr. Morrison cleans out the garage or finds some other long-term solution to the parking situation.

Mr. Baribeau stated that it is unlikely that what Mr. Morris suggested would be approved. He said that the property has parking for one vehicle in the driveway and one in the garage and it needs to be used as such.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Site Plan Review – Units 13 & 14, Ledges Commerce Park – New Parking Lot**

Ms. Stachowiak stated that the site plan is for a parking lot to provide additional parking for Dr. Smith’s medical building located at 1045 Charlevoix Drive. This submittal is for the parking lot only. The future building shown on the drawing will be submitted under a separate site plan review application at the appropriate time. As of right now, there is no schedule for when the future building may be developed.

**Planning Commission Minutes**

**April 4, 2013**

**Page 2**

Ms. Stachowiak stated that, as noted by the City Engineer, driveway cross connections, access management, or construction to neighboring parking lots must include written access agreements with each land owner. A copy of these agreement documents must be on file with the City and the Eaton County Registrar of Deeds prior to construction.

Ms. Stachowiak stated that a photometric plan demonstrating compliance with all requirements of Section 220-70 of the Zoning Ordinance has been submitted. She said that staff is recommending approval of the site plan, subject to compliance with the applicable items contained in this staff report and the review letters from the City Engineer, Public Service Director and the Grand Ledge Area Fire Department.

Mr. Morris asked if storm water calculations have been provided and if they need to be reviewed by the Commission.

Mr. Gute stated that storm water calculations are reviewed by the City Engineer.

Dr. Smith stated that it is primarily staff that will use the proposed parking lot. He said that it will be jointly used by his business and the ophthalmology building to the west.

Mr. Doty stated that this project is very forward-thinking of Dr. Smith. He said that while there will be several trees removed, Dr. Smith is proposing a very nice landscape plan that far exceeds the city ordinance requirements.

Mr. Gute asked about any potential conflicts between parking lot trees and light poles.

Paul Furtaw, Bergman Associates, stated that he will review the trees and lights to ensure that there will not be any conflicts.

**Mr. Morris made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gute to approve the site plan prepared by Bergmann Associates, dated March 15, 2013 for a parking lot located on Units 13 & 14, Ledges Commerce Park, subject to compliance with the applicable items contained in the staff report, the reviews from the City Engineer, Public Service Director and the Grand Ledge Area Fire Department. Motion carried 7-0.**

**Zoning Ordinance Amendments – Section 220-71, Corner Clearance – Section 220-72, Access to a Street – Section 220-73, Residential Entranceway & 220-74, Access Management**

The Commission agreed that the height limitation should remain at 2 feet under “Corner Clearance”.

Mr. Kane stated that there is a violation of this ordinance at the corner of Cedar and Edwards and at the corner of Edwards and Old Post Road.

The Commission agreed that lines 5 & 6, item “B” under “Access Management” should read “...the City Engineer AND THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION...”. The Commission also agreed that this should apply strictly to state trunklines.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**Joint Planning Committee Report**

Mr. Doty stated that the Opera House wants a deck by the river. He also said that the suggestion has been made that the river be lowered for one year. He stated that while the DEQ would probably allow this, the Committee is opposed to the river being lowered.

There was discussion regarding the new street signs. Mr. Morris stated that the signs would not comply with MDOT standards for color, font, etc.

**Review of Violation Report**

Ms. Stachowiak reviewed the violation report.

**Zoning Administrator's Report - None**

**Zoning Board of Appeals Representative's Report**

Mr. Graber stated that the ZBA approved a variance for 216 S. Clinton Street (Serenity Place). He said that the property is being sold and in order to secure financing for the sale, the site has to be in complete compliance with all zoning requirements. The only aspects of the site that are not in compliance with the zoning requirements are the height and number of stories for the building. The current ordinance allows a maximum of 2 stories and 30 feet in height for the subject property. The existing building is 5 stories and 38.6 feet in height. The ZBA approved variances to bring the building into compliance with the existing Zoning Ordinance.

**Council Representative's Report - None**

**Mayor's Comments - None**

**Comments from Commissioners**

Mr. Gute stated that the Council is still working out the financing for the Greenwood School project. He said that they will discuss bond issues at the Monday night Council meeting. He also said that the City will have roofing contractor walk the roof to determine what needs to be done. Mr. Gute stated that a vinyl coated fence around the outdoor play area is being considered, although a final decision has not been made.

Mr. Morris stated that there was a news article about MDEQ providing some funding for dam repairs in Michigan. He said that the funding is small, however, the State has some discretionary funding available as well. Mr. Morris suggesting contacting Rick Jones office.

Mr. Kane stated that it would be very sad if the river became more of a creek than a river. He said that it is an asset to the city. He also said that if there was a millage proposal for the dam, passage would be very slim. Mr. Kane said that it would take a community effort including the DDA,

**Planning Commission Minutes**

**April 4, 2013**

**Page 4**

merchants, Historical Society, Parks and Recreation, the Opera House and the Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Morris stated that a funding drive may be prudent. He said that taking out the dam would impact the fish habitat and would diminish recreational use of the river as well.

Mr. Graber agreed with Mr. Morris that the City should contact Rick Jones office about funding possibilities.

Mr. Baribeau stated that if the river gets smaller, it will have serious negative impacts on the city. He said that he is opposed to lowering the dam at all. He said that at some point the damage will be irreparable.

Mr. Morris stated that at a minimum, the gates need to be replaced.

Mr. Doty stated that the gates could be reduced to 3. He said that the gates are 6 feet deep right now and the boats need 4 feet of draft. Mr. Doty stated that if boulders are used, the river depth would drop about 2 feet.

**Chairman's Report - None**

Mr. Doty stated that there will be a community de-junking day on April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Mr. Doty stated that the City is in the process of trying to get one City logo.

Mr. Doty stated that the trees that are being planted in the road right-of-way by the Garden Club do not appear to be 3.5 inch caliper.

Ms. Stachowiak stated that right-of-way trees are not subject to Zoning Ordinance standards.

**Adjournment**

Ms. Malecki made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gute to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m.

Submitted By:

Susan Stachowiak  
Zoning Administrator

Jamie Malecki, Secretary  
Planning Commissioner