

City of Grand Ledge
Planning Commission Meeting
Minutes from Meeting Held on
Thursday, December 1, 2016

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

Attendance - Present: Mike Stevens, Bill Kane, Todd Gute, Matt Salmon, Eric Morris, David Rademacher, Rodney VanDeCastele, Paul Viles & Stephen Rivet. Also present: Council Representative Keith Mulder, City Administrator Adam Smith & Zoning Administrator Sue Stachowiak.

Pledge of Allegiance – Mr. VanDeCastele led those present in the pledge of allegiance.

Approval of the Agenda

Chairman Stevens approved the agenda by unanimous consent.

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Morris made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gute to approve the October 6, 2016 minutes, with the following corrections:

Page 3 – change the vote from (5-0) to (6-0)

Page 4 – 5th paragraph, 3rd line, change “on” to “an”:

On a voice vote, the motion carried 9-0.

Notice of Agenda Items Conflicts - None

Business from the Floor - None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Public Hearing – Preliminary Plat – Fieldstone Estates, Phase 5

Ms. Stachowiak stated that a preliminary plat for Phase 5 of Fieldstone Estate that included 12 lots was approved by the City in March, 2016. The applicant is now requesting approval of a revised preliminary plat that includes 14 lots. She said that the additional lots are necessary to cover the infrastructure costs for the development. Ms. Stachowiak said that the first 4 phases of Fieldstone Subdivision are located in Oneida Township. The subject property, along with the properties to its north and west, were annexed into the City of Grand Ledge in 2015. The proposed phase 5 is merely an extension of the existing subdivision from where it current ends at the north terminus of Stone Bluff Drive. Ms. Stachowiak said that this phase will complete the subdivision as it was designed in the original preliminary plat.

Ms. Stachowiak said that all of the lots in the subdivision exceed the minimum lot size requirements. She said that the plat also shows a 5 foot wide sidewalk along the subdivision streets as well as Saginaw Highway as required by City Ordinance. Ms. Stachowiak said that there are some utility related comments in the review from City Engineer Jim Foster that will need to be addressed during the administrative construction plan review process. She said that none of the City Engineers comments would affect the layout of the development and therefore, it is recommended for approval. Ms. Stachowiak stated that the applicant will have to come back to the Planning Commission and City Council for final plat approval.

Mr. Stevens opened the public hearing at 7:13.

Timothy Marsh, 11838 Arrowhead (Oneida Township) expressed concerns about the sidewalk to nowhere along Saginaw Highway. He also stated that the proposed lots in Phase 5 will be smaller than the other lots in the subdivision which are all at least 90 feet wide. Mr. Marsh stated that the lots will not fit in with the remainder of the subdivision and will result in additional impervious surface that will exacerbate the drainage issues that already exists in the area. He said that the water pressure in the area is very weak and adding additional service to the system will make that problem worse as well. Mr. Marsh questioned why there is a 50 foot right-of-way along Saginaw Highway because there is a berm in the excess right-of-way on the property to the east that would have to be removed for anything to be installed.

Rick Gilbert, 11968 Sweetwater Drive (Oneida Township) stated that the Eaton County Road Commission is requiring 50 feet of right-of-way along Saginaw Highway as shown on the plan. He said that there is a 50 foot right-of-way along Saginaw Highway for the development to the east as well.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Mr. Stevens closed the public hearing at 7:17.

Mr. Morris asked where the sidewalk has to go within the road right-of-way.

Ms. Stachowiak said that she does not know but it would likely be up to the Road Commission since it is their right-of-way.

Mr. Gute said that the City Engineers should look into the water pressure situation that Mr. Marsh mentioned.

Ms. Stachowiak said that this is not a discretionary approval. She said that if the plat complies with the requirements of the Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances, it must be approved. Ms. Stachowiak said that the sidewalk along Saginaw Highway is required by ordinance and is not something that can be waived by either the Planning Commission or Zoning Board of Appeals. She stated that the intent is for the sidewalk to extend along Saginaw Highway to provide a pedestrian connection between the area that was annexed into the City and the rest of the City.

Mr. Gute made a motion, seconded by Mr. Morris to recommend approval of the Preliminary Plat for Phase 5 of Fieldstone Subdivision (lots 121-134), as depicted on the plan dated January 27, 2016 and revised on September 29, 2016, subject to compliance with the conditions contained in the City Engineer's letter dated November 22, 2016. On a roll call vote (9-0), the motion carried unanimously.

2. **Public Hearing – Meadow Woods East Site Condominium Development, Phase 2**

Ms. Stachowiak stated that the applicant is requesting approval of the site plan for Phase 2 (21 lots) of Meadow Woods East Site Condominiums, located at the east end of Bolton Farms Lane. She said that the subject parcel is zoned R-MD, Single Family Residential, which district permits site condominium developments in accordance with the standards of Section 220-17 of the Zoning Ordinance. Ms. Stachowiak said that all of the lots exceed the minimum lot size requirements. The City Engineer has noted some technical issues in his review that will need to be addressed during the administrative construction plan review process. Ms. Stachowiak stated that the site plan is in full compliance with the Zoning Ordinance and therefore, staff is recommending that it be approved.

Mr. Stevens opened the public hearing at 7:27. Seeing no one wishing to speak, Mr. Stevens closed the public hearing at 7:27.

Mr. Kane stated that he is concerned about not having a second outlet from the neighborhood to W. Main Street. He asked about having a road across the City property at 704 W. Main Street.

Ms. Stachowiak said that the City is not in a position to build this road and the developer is not required to do so.

Mr. Morris asked why Chesham Lane is not being installed all the way to Pennine Ridge.

Dan Larabel, Westview Capital, LLC, said that the reason they cannot install this connection right now is because the sanitary sewer runs out of grade in this area and is needed to serve the houses to the north. He said that this situation will be resolved in a future phase of the development when all three streets are tied together. In the meantime, there will be a temporary, gravel turn-around at the north stub of Chesham Lane for emergency vehicles.

Mr. Morris asked about temporarily paving the connection to improve access between Pennine Ridge and Bolton Farms easier.

Mr. Larabel said that they would have to tear up the pavement when the permanent road is installed, at a significant expense.

Mr. VanDeCastele said that the temporary turn-around will have to be plowed during the winter.

Mr. Morris made a motion, seconded by Mr. Kane to recommend approval of the site plan for Phase 2 of Meadow Woods East Site Condominiums as depicted on the plan dated October 28, 2016 and revised on November 3, 2016, conditioned upon compliance with the applicable items contained in the City Engineer's letter dated November 22, 2016. On a roll call vote (9-0), the motion carried unanimously.

3. 2016 Annual Report

Ms. Stachowiak stated that the Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires the Planning Commission to submit a report to the City Council at the end of each calendar year describing its activities for the year. She said that the Commission met 10 times during 2016 and acted on the following applications:

1. Site Plan Review:
 - a. Capitol Bedding Manufacturing Facility—320 Winstanley Blvd. - 38,072 square foot manufacturing facility
 - b. Office Building Addition – 403 S. Clinton Street - 3,288 square foot addition to the south side of the office building
 - c. O'Reilly Auto Parts - 608 S. Clinton Street - 7,225 square foot retail building
 - d. Meadow Woods East Condominiums, Phase 2 - 21 site condominium units at the east end of Bolton Farms Lane
2. Rezoning - 205 W. Scott Street: 205 W. Scott Street, Rezoning from R-MD, Single Family Residential to CBD, Central Business District, with conditions restricting the allowable uses for the site.
3. Preliminary Plat - Fieldstone Estates Phase 5: 14 lots
4. Other -118 S. Bridge Street: Approval of a request to utilize the 1st floor of the building at 118 S. Bridge Street for a single family residential apartment.

In addition, the Commission completed a draft of the updated master plan which is currently in the process of being reviewed by City staff.

The following Zoning Ordinance amendments were approved in 2016:

1. Section 220-72, Access to a Street
2. Section 220-74, Access Management
3. Section 220-36, Central Business District – providing for overnight lodging and regulating accessory structures

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The Planning Commission is currently working on an amendment to establish architectural standards for commercial buildings. In addition, the amendment to permit high density single family residential development is on this agenda for referral to the City Council. Ms. Stachowiak said that the following ordinance amendments are currently pending at the City Council level:

1. Section 220-63, Recreational Vehicles
2. Section 220-70, Exterior Lighting
3. Section 220-80, Site Plan Review
4. Article XX, Nonconforming Lots, Structures & Uses

Ms. Stachowiak said that the annual report must include recommendations to the City Council on matters of planning. The proposed recommendations are:

1. Approve/endorse the updated Master Plan. Work with City commissions and boards to develop a capital improvements plan for incorporation into the Master Plan to be used as a tool for implementation of its recommendations.
2. Process recommended Zoning Ordinance amendments so that the overall goal of updating the Zoning Ordinance can be achieved in a timely manner
3. Work with the Planning Commission on matters of public improvements (roads, recreational facilities, etc.) as required by the Municipal Planning Enabling Act, Section 125.3861.

Mr. Kane made a motion, seconded by Mr. VanDeCastele to approve the 2016 Annual Planning Commission Report for submission to the City Council. On a voice vote (9-0), the motion carried unanimously.

4. 2017 Work Plan

Ms. Stachowiak stated that the Commission must also submit a work plan for the upcoming year to the City Council. She said that the proposed work plan includes the following goals for 2017:

1. Zoning Ordinance Update – Work with Council to get all of the pending ordinance amendments approved and continue to work on updating the use chapters of the Zoning Ordinance.
2. Master Plan Update - Finalize the Master Plan update and work with the City Council to obtain its approval/endorsement. Review development projects and capital improvement projects to ensure compliance with the Master Plan.
3. Coordinated Planning - Continue to work with the City Council, DDA and Parks and Recreation Commission on all matters of planning and zoning through participation on committees, attendance at meetings and open communication and reporting between Board representatives and liaisons. This includes fulfilling the requirements of Article IV of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act by reviewing and making recommendations to the City Council with respect to capital improvement projects.

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Mr. Kane stated that the proposed work plan includes coordinated planning which was occurring until the Joint Planning Committee was recently disbanded. He said that there were 3 Planning Commissioners (Bill Kane, Mike Stevens and Bob Doty) and members of the DDA and Parks and Recreation Commission that met on a regular basis to review projects that were of interest to all three groups. It was an excellent way to establish communication and encourage the exchange of ideas. The dam study, boat launch plan and Jaycee Park master plan were primarily the result of work by the Joint Committee. Mr. Kane said that it is a real shame that it was felt that this Committee was no longer necessary.

Mr. Doty said that disbanding the Committee had a lot to do with a concern about him serving on both the Committee and the Charter Commission. He said that the Joint Committee was not a City appointed board and therefore, he refused to resign from it when he was asked to do so. Mr. Doty said that the Joint Committee did good work and created open lines of communication. He suggested that the chairs of the 3 boards get together to discuss alternative means of accomplishing communication and coordination of activities.

Mr. Mulder said that there may be an attempt to reestablish the Joint Planning Committee which he thought did a great job. He said that it started with the boat launch project and resulted in the development of a complete master plan for Jaycee Park. Mr. Mulder said that he will speak to other Councilmembers about reestablishing a joint planning committee.

Mr. Stevens said that even though the boat launch project eventually was very different from what the joint committee recommended, the committee was still a very good means of communication and planning between the Planning Commission, DDA and Parks & Recreation Commission.

Mr. Kane asked that "Continue to work with the..." under item 3 be changed to "Encourage communication between the Planning Commission,..."

Mr. Gute made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rademacher to approve the 2017 Work Plan with the change to item 3 as noted by Mr. Kane. On a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously (9-0).

The Planning Commission recessed at 7:43 to allow the Planning Commission to attend the public hearing being held by the Parks & Recreation Commission on its proposed master plan.

Chairman Stevens called the meeting back to order at 7:50.

5. 2017 Meeting Schedule

Mr. Morris made a motion, seconded by Mr. Salmon to approve the 2017 meeting schedule with the following changes: Change June 1 to June 8 and July 6 to 13. On a voice vote (9-0), the motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Commercial Building Architectural Standards

Ms. Stachowiak said that she made the following changes to the ordinance based on the discussion at the last meeting:

- Renamed the document from “Commercial Building Design Standards” to “Architectural Building Design Standards”.
- Section 1: Removed “tinted/textured concrete masonry units”
 Changed “20%” to “25%”
 Changed “Smooth-faced concrete block” to “Concrete block”
- Section 2: Delete “..., with the exception of non-street facing rear facades.”
- Deleted: “Building colors, including roofs, shall be low reflective, subtle, neutral, or earth tone shades. Fluorescent or metallic colors are prohibited.”
- Added: “The Planning Commission may waive or modify the requirements of this Section where circumstances exist that justify said waiver or modification.”

The Planning Commission agreed to make the following changes:

- Section 1: Change “Smooth-faced concrete block” to “standard faced concrete block”
- Section 2: Change “4 sides” to “exposed sides”
- Section 7: Remove “...and at least 10% of all side walls that are visible from a public street...”

The Planning Commission agreed to hold a public hearing on the proposed amendments at its January 5, 2017 meeting.

2. Zoning Ordinance Amendments–R-MD, R-LD, Single Family Residential Districts

Ms. Stachowiak said that if the Commission so desires, this amendment can be forwarded to City Council to complete the adoption process.

Mr. VanDeCastele stated that a fire truck consumes 21 feet in width when it is completely spread out. He said that a 36 foot wide street is standard as it allows a vehicle to pass when the fire truck is completely spread out.

Ms. Stachowiak said that the way the proposed ordinance is written, the road width could only be reduced if the City Engineer, Public Service Director, Fire Chief and Planning Commission all agree to it.

Mr. Morris made a motion, seconded by Mr. Salmon to recommend approval of the proposed amendments to Article V: R-LD, R-MD, One-Family Residential Districts. On a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously (9-0).

OTHER BUSINESS

Zoning Administrator's Report - None

Zoning Board of Appeals Representative's Report

Ms. Stachowiak said that the ZBA did not meet in October or November.

Council Representative's Report - None

Comments from Commissioner's

The Commissioners welcomed Mr. Viles and Mr. Rivet to the Commission.

Mr. Rivet said that he has lived in the City for about 20 years and is originally from Bay City. He said that he is married, has 4 grown children and 4 grandchildren. Mr. Rivet stated that he works for a computer company in the downtown, has an degree in engineering from Wayne State and a master's degree in pastoral ministry.

Mr. Viles stated that he retired from Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber as an engineering technician. He said that he has lived in Castle Ledges Estates for about 20 years and has 4 grown children.

Comments from Chairman

Mr. Stevens welcomed Mr. Viles and Mr. Rivet to the Commission.

Adjournment

Mr. Stevens adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Submitted By:

Susan Stachowiak
Zoning Administrator