

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
GRAND HAVEN CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
APRIL 21, 2021  
**Remote Electronic Meeting**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Cousins called the meeting of the Grand Haven Charter Township Planning Commission to order at 7:00pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Members present: Cousins, Wilson, Taylor, Reenders, Wagenmaker, Mesler and Lemkuil

Members absent: Chalifoux and Hesselsweet

Also present: Community Development Director Fedewa, Associate Planner Hoisington, and Attorney Bultje

**Without objection**, Cousins instructed Hoisington to record the minutes.

III. STATEMENT ON REMOTE MEETING

It was noted the Planning Commission was meeting remotely on the Zoom platform because of health concerns associated with COVID-19 pandemic. Information on this remote meeting has been posted so that the public may participate. All officials present noted they are meeting remotely and are located within Grand Haven Charter Township.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Without objection**, the minutes of the March 15, 2021 meeting were approved.

V. CORRESPONDENCE

- Steve Buth – 14881 Fairmount Ct – SLU – Major Home Business
- Gasior Family – 17840 Hunters Ln – SLU – Major Home Business
- Lee & Marcia Haslick – 14887 178<sup>th</sup> Ave – SLU – Major Home Business (2 Letters)
- William & Donna Kitzmiller – 14988 178<sup>th</sup> Avenue – SLU – Major Home Business
- David Vallier – 15045 Fairmount Ct – SLU – Major Home Business
- Richard & Michal Wheeler – 14900 Fairmount Ct – SLU – Major Home Business
- Jeremy & Sharon Christian – 14964 178<sup>th</sup> Ave – SLU – Major Home Business

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

VII. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Special Land Use – Major Home Business – Dog Grooming

Cousins opened the hearing at 7:04pm.

Fedewa provided an overview through a memorandum dated April 16<sup>th</sup>.

The applicants, John and Kaila Wirtz, were present to provide information.

- Mrs. Wirtz has been in the dog grooming business for 12 years, deciding to pursue her own business last year. Family dogs are now licensed and up to date on vaccinations.

The correspondence received as part of the public hearing notice was read into the record. Seven letters opposed the proposed special and use, which included letters received in August 2020, when public notices were mailed for the hearing, but the applicant subsequently withdrew prior to the meeting. There was one letter of support.

There being no further comments, Cousins closed the hearing at 7:14pm.

The Planning Commission noted the following points of discussion:

- Questions about the hours of operation and how appointments were scheduled.
  - Hours are typically Monday to Friday between 8:00am – 4:00pm and Saturday from 8:00am – 12:00pm.
  - With Mrs. Wirtz as the sole employee she schedules one dog per hour, with an additional employee she could “stack” the dogs for appointments every half hour to comply with having a maximum of 5 dogs on the property at any time.
- Noted concern over increased traffic
  - Wirtz’s home is the first house on Hunter’s Lane, so it would not be anticipated that the business would have much impact on traffic on the rest of the road.
  - The business is currently running in a curbside fashion where Mrs. Wirtz comes out to the car to retrieve and return the dogs. Most cars are there for less than 10 minutes.
- Acknowledged neighbor’s experience with customers parking in the wrong driveway.
  - Fedewa confirmed a sign is not allowed for the business and recommended a physical marker on site to help customers find the site.
  - Mr. Wirtz agreed to install a boulder near the public road and use larger house numbers to display the address.
- Recognized neighbor’s concerns about loose dogs based on previous experience.
  - Loose dog appears to be a single incident, for which the Wirtz’s were not made aware until the neighbor contacted Animal Control after receiving the public notice.
  - The backyard is entirely enclosed with a locked fence. Mrs. Wirtz explained that all dogs brought on site are kept on leash. To access the garage, the owner must enter the gated rear yard, so there is a double security measure.
- Suggestion to allow one employee on site at this time, but to allow the Wirtz’s to apply for an amendment for a second employee. A minimum of 6 months must pass prior to applying.

**Motion** by Wagenmaker, supported by Reenders, to **conditionally approve** the Wirtz application for a major home-based business, providing pet grooming, located at their residence at 17822 Hunters Lane because it meets

the requirements set forth by the Zoning Ordinance. This motion is subject to and incorporates the following conditions and report:

1. The business shall be limited to a maximum of 3 dogs at any given time to ensure the maximum of 5 animals per property is not exceeded.
2. The business shall be limited to operate within the hours of 8:00am-4:00pm Monday-Friday, and 8:00am-12:00pm on Saturdays.
3. The business shall be limited to one additional employee on site for a minimum of 6 months, after which the applicant may seek approval from the Planning Commission for an additional employee.
4. The applicant shall provide the boulder and larger house numbers (*or similar method*) to clarify the location of the business for customers.
5. Shall comply with all written and verbal representations made during the meeting.

**Which motion carried unanimously**, as shown by the following roll call:

Ayes: Cousins, Wilson, Taylor, Wagenmaker, Mesler, Lemkuil, Reenders  
Nays: None  
Absent: Chalifoux, Hesselsweet

#### REPORT – SPECIAL LAND USE – HOME-BASED BUSINESS – DOG GROOMING

1. This approval is based on the affirmative findings that each of the following standards of Section 12.04 have been fulfilled:
  - A. The proposed use is consistent with and promotes the intent and purpose of this Ordinance.
  - B. The proposed use is of such location, size, density, and character as to be compatible with adjacent uses of land and the orderly development of the district in which situated and of adjacent districts.
  - C. The proposed use does not have a substantially detrimental effect upon, nor substantially impair the value of, neighborhood property.
  - D. The proposed use is reasonably compatible with the natural environment of the subject premises and adjacent premises.
  - E. The proposed use does not unduly interfere with provision of adequate light or air, nor overcrowd land or cause a severe concentration of population.
  - F. The proposed use does not interfere or unduly burden water supply facilities, sewage collection and disposal systems, park and recreational facilities, and other public services.
  - G. The proposed use is such that traffic and assembly of people relating to the use will not be hazardous, or inconvenient to the neighborhood, nor unduly conflict with normal traffic of the neighborhood.
  - H. The proposed use is consistent with the health, safety, and welfare of the Township.
  - I. The proposed use is such that traffic to, from, and on the premises and the assembly of persons relation to such use will not be hazardous, or inconvenient to the neighborhood, nor unduly conflict with the normal traffic of the neighborhood, considering, among other things: safe and convenient routes for pedestrian traffic, particularly of children, the relationship of the proposed use to main thoroughfares and to streets and

intersections, and the general character and intensity of the existing and potential development of the neighborhood.

2. The application meets the site plan review standards of Section 18.07.G of the Zoning Ordinance. Specifically, the Planning Commission finds as follows:
  - A. The uses proposed will not adversely affect the public health, safety, or welfare. Uses and structures located on the site take into account topography, size of the property, the uses on adjoining property and the relationship and size of buildings to the site. The site will be developed so as not to impede the normal and orderly development or improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in this ordinance.
  - B. Safe, convenient, uncontested, and well defined vehicular and pedestrian circulation is provided for ingress/egress points and within the site. Drives, streets and other circulation routes are designed to promote safe and efficient traffic operations within the site and at ingress/egress points.
  - C. The arrangement of public or private vehicular and pedestrian connections to existing or planned streets in the area are planned to provide a safe and efficient circulation system for traffic within the Township.
  - D. Removal or alterations of significant natural features are restricted to those areas which are reasonably necessary to develop the site in accordance with the requirements of this Ordinance. The Planning Commission has required that landscaping, buffers, and/or greenbelts be preserved and/or provided to ensure that proposed uses will be adequately buffered from one another and from surrounding public and private property.
  - E. Areas of natural drainage such as swales, wetlands, ponds, or swamps are protected and preserved insofar as practical in their natural state to provide areas for natural habitat, preserve drainage patterns and maintain the natural characteristics of the land.
  - F. The site plan provides reasonable visual and sound privacy for all dwelling units located therein and adjacent thereto. Fences, walls, barriers, and/or landscaping shall be used, as appropriate, to accomplish these purposes.
  - G. All buildings and groups of buildings are arranged so as to permit necessary emergency vehicle access as requested by the Fire/Rescue Department.
  - H. All streets and driveways are developed in accordance with the Township Subdivision Control Ordinance, the Ottawa County Road Commission and/or Michigan Department of Transportation specifications, as appropriate, unless developed as a private road in accordance with the requirements for private roads in the codified ordinances of the Township.
  - I. Sidewalks or pathways shall be deemed to be required along all public and private roadways unless the applicant provides compelling evidence, in the opinion of the Planning Commission, that they are not necessary for pedestrian access or safety.
  - J. Appropriate measures have been taken to ensure that removal of surface waters will not adversely affect neighboring properties or the public storm drainage system. Provisions have been made to accommodate storm water, prevent erosion and the formation of dust.
  - K. Exterior lighting is arranged so that it is deflected away from adjacent properties and so it does not interfere with the vision of motorists along adjacent streets. Lighting is minimized to reduce light pollution and preserve the rural character of the Township.
  - L. All loading and unloading areas and outside storage areas, including areas for the storage of trash, which face or are visible from residential districts or public streets, are screened.
  - M. Entrances and exits are provided at appropriate locations so as to maximize the convenience and safety for persons entering or leaving the site.
  - N. The site plans conform to all applicable requirements of County, State, Federal, and Township statutes and ordinances.

- O. As appropriate, fencing has been required by the Planning Commission around the boundaries of the development to minimize or prevent trespassing or other adverse effects on adjacent lands.
- P. The general purposes and spirit of this Ordinance and the Master Plan of the Township are maintained.

## VIII. OLD BUSINESS

### A. Special Land Use – Two Family Dwelling – Diekevers

**Motion** by Reenders, supported by Taylor, to remove the Diekevers Duplex application from the table for further consideration. **Which motion carried unanimously.**

Fedewa provided an overview through a memorandum dated April 16<sup>th</sup>.

The applicant, Bernie Diekevers, and his architect Jeff Harwood, were present to provide information:

- Proposed duplex is a standard build and identical to another project that was completed on Mercury Drive.
- The majority of homes in the area are larger in area than each proposed unit and provided examples.
- Per the direction of the Planning Commission, two alternate parking options are provided for consideration.
- Explained the desire to keep parking for each unit separate.
  - Would prefer to limit the amount of concrete on site. Do not want to run concrete drives on each side of the house for separate garages.
  - Expect to have two cars parked per unit and could limit the number of cars in the lease agreement.
- New site plans have provided required landscaping.
- Agreed to contract-out the lawn maintenance and landscaping services.
- Trashcan screening is not provided as it is expected residents will keep trash receptacles in the garage. Agreed to install an outdoor screen if a violation is found in the future.

The Planning Commission noted the following points of discussion:

- Consensus that Alternate Site Plan #1 is the preferred parking design.
- Fedewa noted the neighboring property owner has invested in a privacy fence to alleviate concerns over impact.

**Motion** by Wagenmaker, supported by Reenders, to **conditionally approve** the Diekevers application to construct a two-family dwelling at 15705 Comstock Street because it meets the requirements set forth by the Zoning

Ordinance. This motion is subject to, and incorporates, the following conditions and report.

1. The development shall follow Alternate Plan #1 as discussed in this meeting.
2. Shall contract-out all lawn maintenance and landscaping services to prevent noxious weed issues.
3. Submit planting details for the landscape plan to confirm compliance for administrative approval prior to obtaining a building permit.
4. The reserve drain field shall not be constructed at this time. If necessary, to construct in the future, a revised landscape plan shall be submitted for administrative review.
5. Refuse containers shall be kept either inside the garage or by a staff approved screening method.

**Which motion carried unanimously**, as shown by the following roll call:

Ayes: Cousins, Wilson, Taylor, Wagenmaker, Mesler, Lemkuil, Reenders  
Nays: None  
Absent: Chalifoux, Hesselsweet

#### REPORT – SPECIAL LAND USE – TWO FAMILY DWELLING - DIEKEVERS

1. This approval is based on the affirmative findings that each of the following standards of Section 12.04 have been fulfilled:
  - A. The proposed use is consistent with and promotes the intent and purpose of this Ordinance.
  - B. The proposed use is of such location, size, density, and character as to be compatible with adjacent uses of land and the orderly development of the district in which situated and of adjacent districts.
  - C. The proposed use does not have a substantially detrimental effect upon, nor substantially impair the value of, neighborhood property.
  - D. The proposed use is reasonably compatible with the natural environment of the subject premises and adjacent premises.
  - E. The proposed use does not unduly interfere with provision of adequate light or air, nor overcrowd land or cause a severe concentration of population.
  - F. The proposed use does not interfere or unduly burden water supply facilities, sewage collection and disposal systems, park and recreational facilities, and other public services.
  - G. The proposed use is such that traffic and assembly of people relating to the use will not be hazardous, or inconvenient to the neighborhood, nor unduly conflict with normal traffic of the neighborhood.
  - H. The proposed use is consistent with the health, safety, and welfare of the Township.
  - I. The proposed use is such that traffic to, from, and on the premises and the assembly of persons relation to such use will not be hazardous, or inconvenient to the neighborhood, nor unduly conflict with the normal traffic of the neighborhood, considering, among other things: safe and convenient routes for pedestrian traffic, particularly of children, the relationship of the proposed use to main thoroughfares and to streets and intersections, and the general character and intensity of the existing and potential development of the neighborhood.

2. The application meets the site plan review standards of Section 18.07.G of the Zoning Ordinance. Specifically, the Planning Commission finds as follows:
  - A. The uses proposed will not adversely affect the public health, safety, or welfare. Uses and structures located on the site take into account topography, size of the property, the uses on adjoining property and the relationship and size of buildings to the site. The site will be developed so as not to impede the normal and orderly development or improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in this ordinance.
  - B. Safe, convenient, uncontested, and well defined vehicular and pedestrian circulation is provided for ingress/egress points and within the site. Drives, streets and other circulation routes are designed to promote safe and efficient traffic operations within the site and at ingress/egress points.
  - C. The arrangement of public or private vehicular and pedestrian connections to existing or planned streets in the area are planned to provide a safe and efficient circulation system for traffic within the Township.
  - D. Removal or alterations of significant natural features are restricted to those areas which are reasonably necessary to develop the site in accordance with the requirements of this Ordinance. The Planning Commission has required that landscaping, buffers, and/or greenbelts be preserved and/or provided to ensure that proposed uses will be adequately buffered from one another and from surrounding public and private property.
  - E. Areas of natural drainage such as swales, wetlands, ponds, or swamps are protected and preserved insofar as practical in their natural state to provide areas for natural habitat, preserve drainage patterns and maintain the natural characteristics of the land.
  - F. The site plan provides reasonable visual and sound privacy for all dwelling units located therein and adjacent thereto. Fences, walls, barriers, and/or landscaping shall be used, as appropriate, to accomplish these purposes.
  - G. All buildings and groups of buildings are arranged so as to permit necessary emergency vehicle access as requested by the Fire/Rescue Department.
  - H. All streets and driveways are developed in accordance with the Township Subdivision Control Ordinance, the Ottawa County Road Commission and/or Michigan Department of Transportation specifications, as appropriate, unless developed as a private road in accordance with the requirements for private roads in the codified ordinances of the Township.
  - I. Sidewalks or pathways shall be deemed to be required along all public and private roadways unless the applicant provides compelling evidence, in the opinion of the Planning Commission, that they are not necessary for pedestrian access or safety.
  - J. Appropriate measures have been taken to ensure that removal of surface waters will not adversely affect neighboring properties or the public storm drainage system. Provisions have been made to accommodate storm water, prevent erosion and the formation of dust.
  - K. Exterior lighting is arranged so that it is deflected away from adjacent properties and so it does not interfere with the vision of motorists along adjacent streets. Lighting is minimized to reduce light pollution and preserve the rural character of the Township.
  - L. All loading and unloading areas and outside storage areas, including areas for the storage of trash, which face or are visible from residential districts or public streets, are screened.
  - M. Entrances and exits are provided at appropriate locations so as to maximize the convenience and safety for persons entering or leaving the site.
  - N. The site plans conform to all applicable requirements of County, State, Federal, and Township statutes and ordinances.
  - O. As appropriate, fencing has been required by the Planning Commission around the boundaries of the development to minimize or prevent trespassing or other adverse effects on adjacent lands.
  - P. The general purposes and spirit of this Ordinance and the Master Plan of the Township are maintained.

## IX. NEW BUSINESS

### A. Pre-Application – Salvage Car Dealership

Fedewa provided an overview through a memorandum dated April 16th.

The applicant, Ben Sapak was present to provide information:

- Proposed business, “Freedom Auto” would act as a warehouse for vehicles with a salvage title.
  - Cars would be bought and cleaned so they can be evaluated for sale.
  - Would not be performing any repair work on site, rather any work would be performed off site at a licensed facility.
  - Sapak prefers to store cars inside the facility for security reasons. This would not be a business that would rely on visibility from the public as most buyers would look online and visit the site for a specific vehicle.
- Business would use approximately 5000 sqft of the existing building, which is capable of holding up to 10 vehicles at a time. Sapak does not expect it would be typical to have 10 vehicles.
- Clarified that these vehicles are not necessarily a solution for lower income individuals.

The Planning Commission noted the following points of discussion:

- Inquired about typical customer.
- Asked if cars with a salvage title can be insured.
  - Sapak confirmed salvage vehicles can still be insured.
- Supportive of business concept.

### B. Pre-Application – Eastbrook Homes

**Motion** by Wagenmaker, to table the pre-application discussion due to lack of information. **Having no support, the motion dies.**

Fedewa provided an overview through a memorandum dated April 16th.

A team representing Eastbrook Homes was present to provide information. This consisted of Michael McGraw and Brian Papke from Eastbrook Homes and John Tenpas, the project engineer. Ryan Kilpatrick of Housing Next was also present.

- Was approached by current property owner to sell as a 40-acre developable parcel. Land is currently a blueberry field.
- Unique opportunity due to location being both close to amenities and City of Grand Haven housing development to the south, manufactured home park to the west, and industrial to the south and west as well.

- High water table. Slab on grade anticipated. Have met with Ottawa County Water Resource Commissioner on sustainable concepts to manage the stormwater. Including keeping the drain open and incorporating it into the design of the development.
- Utilities are complicated and expensive. May pursue alternative sources through the Ottawa County Land Bank to assist with the cost of installation. Doing so, would require public benefits to the community, which would likely include a percentage being set aside for buyers in the 80% AMI, as well as a sanitary sewer design that could allow future expansions toward the northeast quadrant on private septic systems.
- Site has been designed to provide a variety of home types at varying price points. Attached townhomes would provide the most affordable option, but the site would also contain single family homes.
- The proposed Accessory Dwelling Units offer a range of uses—a long-term rental, office, teaching-at-home area, room for aging family members, etc.
- Noted that smaller lot widths allow sale prices to be lower.
- Kilpatrick noted NW Ottawa County needs more than 500 new housing units under \$250K, so far there have only been 32 units built in the past 3 years.
  - Millennials account for 35% of people in the market looking to buy a home.

The Planning Commission noted the following points of discussion:

- Concerns over the proposed density, desire to see a parallel plan created.
- Attorney Bultje provided clarification on rezoning and density. Noting the PUD Chapter enables the Planning Commission to set a higher density if requested by the applicant, and upon consideration of the stated guidelines.
- Worried the increase in traffic would negatively impact the area and neighboring property owners. Particularly those streets that currently dead-end into the site and may become a thoroughfare. Traffic impact studies will be needed.
- The Planning Commission was split over the location of the development. While the above concerns were noted, there was also support for the development at the proposed site.
  - The nearby amenities and easy access to work and school makes the location desirable.
  - While dense, the site plan appears to be very efficient.
- Inquired about similar communities in the state. The developer will provide the information for site visits to gain better perspective of scale and density.
- Concerns were raised on the roads and access for emergency vehicles.
- Parking for guests needs to be considered.

- Concerns over lighting and snow storage on site. Future plans will need to include a photometric plan along with one plan delineating the appropriate snow storage areas.
- It was recommended a second pre-application meeting occur after the Commissioners have an opportunity to visit similar developments and when the team has reassessed the density.

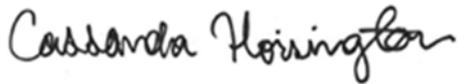
X. REPORTS

- A. Attorney's Report – none
- B. Staff Report – none
- C. Commissioner Comments – none

XI. EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

XII. ADJOURNMENT

**Without objection**, the meeting adjourned at 10:02 pm.



**Cassandra Hoisington**  
Acting Recording Secretary