
PITTSFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Members Present: Edward Resha, Christina Lirones, Russell Banush, Julie Griess, Wilma Luna, David Shepps.

Members Absent: Dennis Ward.

Others Present: Andrea Urda Thompson, Robert Spencer, Ann Stevens, Marty Merk, Greg Elliott, Tom Covert, Norman Hyman, Associate Planner Paul Montagno, and Recording Secretary Laura Ford.

1.0 Call Meeting to Order at 7:30 p.m. / Determination of a Quorum.

Chairperson Lirones called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. A quorum was present.

2.0 Pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson Lirones led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3.0 Approval of Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Banush, supported by Commissioner Resha, to move Item 8.1 of New Business to follow Item 6.1 of the Public Hearing.

MOTION CARRIED

4.0 Items from the Floor

None.

5.0 Special Order of Business

5.1 Workshop on the Update to the Comprehensive Plan-Section 23

Chairperson Lirones stated that the Township sent out a letter to the surrounding municipalities of their intent to revise the Comprehensive Plan. She said that the Township did welcome comments from the other municipalities'.

Associate Planner Paul Montagno stated that this parcel straddles two (2) future land use designations. He said that the Commission scheduled a workshop to change the parcel from the Michigan Avenue/US 23 planned development area to moderate density, so that a single parcel of land would not contain two (2) separate future land use classifications. He said that the future land use designation for the parcel, excluding the 15.34 acres, is moderate density suburban residential. He said that the future land use for the 15.34 acres is the Michigan Avenue/US 23 planned development area. He said that if the change was completed the future land use would be consistent with the balance of the parcels to the north.

Chairperson Lirones stated that the Commission felt that it would be consistent to amend this in the Comprehensive Plan and consider the rezoning to R-1B. She said that the area does not have frontage onto Michigan Avenue, and there should be no adverse impacts on the traffic. She said that the use would not change the area dramatically. She discussed the process of amending the Comprehensive Plan.

Motion by Commissioner Resha, supported by Commissioner Banush, to direct staff to write a resolution requesting that the Township Board approve the distribution of the proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan.

ROLL CALL:

YES: RESHA, LUNA, LIRONES, BANUSH, GRIESS, SHEPPS.
NO: NONE
ABSENT: WARD
ABSTAIN: NONE

MOTION CARRIED

6.0 Public Hearings

6.1 Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan
[pertaining to 2488 Golfside Road, NE ¼ Section 1]

Chairperson Lirones stated that the final step of the process was to have a public hearing and a resolution of approval. She said that this parcel is approximately four (4) acres on Golfside Road.

Chairperson Lirones opened the public hearing.

There were no comments.

Motion by Commissioner Banush, supported by Commissioner Luna, to close the public hearing.

MOTION CARRIED

Item 8.1 of New Business moved to follow Item 6.1.

Planner Montagno stated that Ypsilanti Township did not have any issues with the proposed change. He added that the County Planning Commission endorsed the change.

Chairperson Lirones asked if there were any other comments or recommendations offered from the surrounding municipalities.

Planner Montagno replied no.

Chairperson Lirones mentioned that the Washtenaw County Department of Parks and Recreation encouraged the preservation of the existing natural features.

Motion by Commissioner Banush, supported by Commissioner Resha, to adopt the resolution of approval for the amendment to the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land use Map in Section 1. (Attachment #1)

ROLL CALL:

YES: RESHA, LUNA, LIRONES, BANUSH, GRIESS, SHEPPS.
NO: NONE
ABSENT: WARD
ABSTAIN: NONE

MOTION CARRIED

7.0 Old Business

7.1 RZ 04-18 Rosewood Meadows

[submitted to rezone from PUD (Planned Unit Development) and R-1B (Single-Family Suburban Residential) to PUD (Planned Unit Development)]

Chairperson Lirones stated that the Commission held a public hearing at their previous meeting (February 17, 2005). She said that the Commission directed staff to draft a resolution of denial to Planned Unit Development (PUD). She said that the Commission voted to maintain the R-1B zoning for the entire property, including the fragment of land which was previously zoned PUD.

Gregory Elliott, attorney representing the applicant, stated that they object to the Planning Commission's decision that was based on a report they (the applicant) had not seen until that meeting (of February 17, 2005). He said that the Township has had this petition since October of 2004. He asked that the Commission review their response in their letter.

Chairperson Lirones reviewed a portion of the letter from the applicant. She said that the conjoined units were not consistent with the adopted plan.

Commissioner Griess stated that there was public comment from the residents that agreed with this point of view. She added that the residents wanted homes on specific lots.

Chairperson Lirones stated that there were public comments in support of the R-1B zoning. She referred to another project in the area that considered condominiums, although the Commission did not support this and the applicant has since resubmitted a new proposal.

Mr. Elliott discussed the dwelling units per acre. He said that this project could only be done in an area that is designated like this area. He added that they feel this is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Chairperson Lirones stated that the Township could consider a PUD if the Township has something to gain from a particular clustering of units. She said that the PUD zoning is not a category by right; it is a designation that the Township chooses to use if there is a significant benefit.

Mr. Elliott stated that there would be sixteen (16) acres of open space preserved in a unified fashion because of the clustering. He said that most of the public comments were regarding the storm water drainage. He said that their plan is the best suited to address the storm drainage issues. He said that they would achieve the sanitary sewer flows because the clustering of the development would be to the north. He said that the plan provides for moderately priced housing. He added that this development would be a good way for the Township to achieve diversity in housing. He said that these units would be starter homes that help people build equity. He mentioned that this is an advantage to the Township. He said that this development would generate less traffic, not more, than single-family homes on lots.

Commissioner Griess stated that just because the area is designated for 2.5 dwelling units per acre, not every site has to have that many homes. She said that if there is something that does not allow the correct drainage with that many homes, there could be fewer homes. She said that this is the maximum density of homes.

Commissioner Resha stated that there are several areas in Mr. Elliott's letter that have quoted the Master Plan, and he would like to review the letter and the Master Plan before he takes action on this petition.

Motion by Commissioner Resha, supported by Commissioner Banush, to postpone action on RZ 04-18 Rosewood Meadows until the Planning Commission can review the petitioner's letter and the Master Plan.

MOTION CARRIED

Chairperson Lirones and Commissioner Shepps opposed the motion.

8.0 New Business

8.1 Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan [pertaining to 2488 Golfside Road, NE ¼ Section 1]

Item 8.1 moved to follow Item 6.1 of the Public Hearing.

8.2 CSPA 05-02 Carriage Hills [submitted for preliminary site plan]

Planner Montagno reviewed his report. He said that this is the Zahn property rezoning which was rezoned in 2005 (January 13, 2005). He said that this is located on Ann Arbor-Saline Road. He said that the use proposed is a low density multiple family housing, and the site is zoned R-2B. He said that the lot area, lot width, and building height are acceptable. He said that the floor area ratio is acceptable. He said that there are issues with the calculations of the lot coverage and net lot coverage. He mentioned that the setbacks are acceptable. He said that one hundred and forty-four (144) parking spaces are required. He said that the applicant is proposing seventy-two (72) garage spaces, seventy-two (72) driveway spaces, and twenty-six (26) guest parking spaces. He said that one hundred and sixty-six (166) parking spaces are proposed. He said that the applicant has indicated that there are no wetlands on the site. He said that during the rezoning process the residents expressed their concerns about the wet conditions on the

site. He said that he visited the site and there are drainage issues that could be resolved. He said that the proposed access management meets the Township's standards.

Planner Montagno stated that the applicant proposed a five (5) foot sidewalk along Ann Arbor-Saline Road with connections to the interior sidewalk. He mentioned that there were three (3) parking spaces in the parking bay west of building 8 that should be relocated, because there is a possibility that vehicles could interfere with the vehicles entering the site from Ann Arbor-Saline Road. He said that the applicant proposed a future private drive to the south property line, for a future connection to a possible future public street from Ann Arbor-Saline Road into this property. He said that the intersection for this drive is only one hundred and sixty (160) feet from the centerline of Ann Arbor-Saline Road, and this is too close. He discussed the possible woodland on the site, and stated that there is not a continuous canopy of trees on the site.

Chairperson Lirones stated that the Township should have their wetland consultant visit the site.

Planner Montagno reviewed the Township Engineering report. He stated that a storm drain narrative, and an area wide drainage map showing the sub areas needed to be submitted. He said that the wetlands must be delineated. He said that the proposed drive is in the buffer of pond 2, and this should be corrected.

The Commissioners and staff discussed the proposed sidewalks.

Tom Covert, Atwell-Hicks, discussed the sidewalk along Ann Arbor-Saline Road and the continuous pathway within the site. He said that open areas are provided in the rear of the buildings where the site is adjacent to the Oak Meadows development. He showed a preservation area between two (2) buildings on the site. He said that there would be twelve (12) buildings with seventy-two (72) units and two (2) detention basins. He said that the Oak Meadows residents had concerns about the buck thorn, drainage, and traffic issues. He added that they met with the Oak Meadows Association Board and showed them the drawings for the site.

The Commissioners agreed that they would like to see the Buck Thorn removed.

Mr. Covert stated that they have studied the traffic projections. He said that there would be approximately four hundred and eighty-five (485) trips per day.

The Commissioners and Mr. Covert discussed the traffic counts, and the Commissioners requested that a traffic impact study be completed.

Mr. Covert discussed the wet conditions on the site. He stated that the water from the Heritage Falls development was running unrestricted onto their site. He said that they are utilizing the WCDC standards and with the preliminary grading, they would be removing 2/3 of their onsite contribution of the wet area. He said that they would be collecting the water and sending it to the ponds.

Chairperson Lirones asked if the ponds abut residences to the south.

Mr. Covert stated that there are not residences to the south. He referred to a letter they submitted indicating their stand point regarding the wetland. Planner Montagno stated that if there were any wetlands they are very small and not substantial.

Marty Merk, Sutton Development Co., stated that he would provide photographs of one of their similar developments in Chelsea.

Motion by Commissioner Banush, supported by Commissioner Luna, to postpone action on CSPA 05-02 Carriage Hills, and direct the applicant to address all of the deficiencies listed in:

- 1. The Township Engineer's report dated February 22, 2005.**
- 2. The Township Planner's report dated February 21, 2005.**
- 3. The Zoning report dated February 25, 2005.**
- 4. Perform a traffic impact study and take into account the Maple Road and Oak Valley intersections.**
- 5. Address other issues discussed with the Planning Commission this evening.**

MOTION CARRIED

8.3 RZ 04-20 Michigan Avenue/Moon Road Associates [submitted to rezone AG to PUD]

Chairperson Lirones stated that the Commission reviewed a submittal at their previous meeting of January 13, 2005. She added that the Commission felt there was a large amount of commercial use, and the applicant has resubmitted revisions.

Planner Montagno reviewed Planner Schmult's report. He stated that a revised area plan was submitted. He said that the commercial floor area was reduced to 17,300 square feet from 19,100 square feet, and the office floor area was increased to 7,500 square feet from 7,250 square feet. He said that the parking spaces were reduced to one hundred thirty-seven (137) square feet. He added that the parking spaces were increased to ten (10) foot spaces. He said that the parallel driveway to Moon Road is behind the required setback. He mentioned that a left center turn lane was added in the driveway opening. He said that sidewalks are proposed along both street frontages. He said that the driveway is still proposed on Michigan Avenue, although the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has said that they would not allow this. He said that the parking spaces along Michigan Avenue are still twenty (20) feet long and overhang the required setback line. He said that the utilities are still located in the landscape islands. He said that the commercial floor area is 49.7% and the office floor area is 21.6%. He added that the development is still a commercial center with office being a secondary component.

Chairperson Lirones referenced Planner Schmult's report, which stated that the Comprehensive Plan policy is still valid. She said that the Planning Commission discussed changing this use in their review of the plan on September 16, 2004. She said that the office use is still appropriate for this parcel.

Norman Hyman, representing the developer, stated that they have completed a traffic study, which might persuade MDOT to allow a right in right out only access onto Michigan Avenue. He said that the Washtenaw Christian Academy has tried to market the property without success. He said that the property is in the Master Plan for office, although it does recognize the possibility for a mix of office with some commercial.

Chairperson Lirones stated that the 1995 Comprehensive Plan showed a small area of commercial on the corner of the property, although this was not for the whole five (5) acres.

Mr. Hyman stated that the commercial use is only 49.7%. He said that the building area has been reduced because of this. He said that the percentage of the commercial use is less than 50%. He said that the daycare center is not commercial nor office. He said that he hopes that the daycare component would meet the requirements of the office use. He said that their brokers have stated that the office use on this property is not viable. He said that the proposed development is of a high quality and it is an attractive development. He added that this is an opportunity that the Township would not have again. He said that the development would be a very low impact retail development of a neighborhood nature. He handed a list of the proposed retail uses that could be located in the area based on their market study, to the Commissioner's.

Chairperson Lirones stated that the Commission discussed viewing the daycare use as neutral use but not as an office use.

The Commissioner's and Mr. Hyman discussed the square footage of the proposed uses of the building.

Chairperson Lirones stated that the school designation behind the site is why the Commission was considering an office use for the site. She said that if the Commission would like to consider a retail project on the site, then they would have to amend the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Hyman stated that there is enough flexibility in the Master Plan that this could fit in the perimeters of the plan. He said that the plan envisions a mix of office use with some commercial use.

Chairperson Lirones stated that the plan envisions an office use, although it allows for the potential of a small amount of commercial use.

Planner Montagno stated that when office uses include a commercial component it is typically supporting businesses for offices such as copy centers or coffee shops, etc.

Chairperson Lirones referred to the intersection of Industrial and Michigan Avenue towards Saline.

Commissioner Banush stated that this could invite other developments to do the same along Michigan Avenue, and it could set a precedent. He said that this could allow a commercial strip along Michigan Avenue, and the Commission does not want that.

Mr. Hyman stated that this development would not set a precedent for commercial uses because this is a mixed use and a PUD.

The Commissioner's and Mr. Hyman discussed the surrounding commercial uses and the proposed site.

Chairperson Lirones stated that she would like to wait and see how the proposed developments in the area progress.

Commissioner Banush asked how many petitions the Township has received for office developments.

Chairperson Lirones replied Golfside Road, Park Place for Business Units 3 and 4, Sweetwater, etc.

Commissioner Banush stated that the office use is not unreasonable.

Commissioner Griess stated that if the Commission revisited the Master Plan the resident's could give their comments. She said that if the designation was going to be changed the Commission should hear from the resident's.

Chairperson Lirones stated that the Washtenaw Christian Academy is a great community neighbor. She said that the property has been split from the Washtenaw Christian Academy and the agricultural zoning cannot be seen as a reasonable zoning. She added that the Commission has to apply a reasonable zoning, and the plan calls for an office designation.

Commissioner Shepps discussed the earlier amendment (Item 5.1) to the Comprehensive Plan and stated that if a condition was made to have that area revised, the same could be made for this property. He stated that the proposed daycare center might be something that the public welcomes. He said that the Commission should hear from the surrounding residents. He added that the daycare center could find public support.

Chairperson Lirones stated that the earlier amendment was regarding 15.34 acres that would not have any impact on the roadways. She said that the Commission reviewed the Comprehensive Plan in 2002 and at their annual reviews, they reaffirmed the plan for office use for this property.

The Commissioner's and the applicant discussed the Comprehensive Plan and the procedure for amending the Comprehensive Plan.

Brad Moore, Architect, stated that they are proposing a unique concept of mixed uses of a high quality. He said that the proposed businesses are small in nature and proprietors in the community usually run the stores. He said that the Township would receive a lot of support from the parents at the school.

Commissioner Resha reviewed the Comprehensive Plan pertaining to this area.

Mr. Hyman stated that the commercial component is 49.7% of the building area of the proposed development. He said that this fits within the perimeters of the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Banush stated that the office area is only 26.1%.

Mr. Hyman stated that it focuses on a small amount of commercial, and 17,000 square feet is a small amount of commercial.

Motion by Commissioner Luna, supported by Commissioner Banush, to postpone action and direct staff to write a resolution recommending denial for RZ 04-20 Michigan Avenue/Moon Road Associates, and recommend a rezoning of the subject property to Office (O-1).

ROLL CALL:

YES: LUNA, LIRONES, BANUSH, GRIESS
NO: SHEPPS, RESHA
ABSENT: WARD
ABSTAIN: NONE

MOTION CARRIED

8.4 CSPA 04-26 Michigan Avenue/Moon Road Associates
[discussion only]

Item 8.4 was combined with Item 8.3.

9.0 Planner's Report

Planner Montagno stated that the Township has a new Assistant Planner, Suzanne McCoy.

10.0 Chairperson's Report

None.

11.0 Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Resha stated that he passed out information for the Commissioner's regarding the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that he reviewed the Comprehensive Plan very thoroughly. He discussed how the zoning is being interpreted by the Commission.

The Commissioner's and staff discussed the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance.

12.0 Approval of Prior Minutes

None.

13.0 Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Banush, supported by Commissioner Luna, to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION CARRIED

Chairperson Lirones adjourned the meeting at 10:19 p.m.

s/Julie Griess, Secretary

March 17, 2005

(Attachment #1)

**RESOLUTION TO AMEND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
PITTSFIELD CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
March 3, 2005**

WHEREAS, The Pittsfield Charter Township Planning Commission has a strong interest in planning the future of Pittsfield Township, and

WHEREAS, The Planning Commission discussed the proposed change at its annual review of the Comprehensive Plan on September 16, 2004, held a workshop on this matter on November 4, 2004, and held a public hearing on this matter on March 3, 2005; and

WHEREAS, The Township has an obligation to provide the current and future citizens of Pittsfield Township with a Comprehensive Plan that balances the needs of its residents and future residents while protecting the natural and built environment, and

WHEREAS, The Pittsfield Township Planning Commission, as authorized by the Township Board of Trustees, distributed a draft of the proposed changes to the Future Land Use Plan to all parties as required under Section 7a. (2) of the public Act 168 of 1959 as amended in January of 2002, and received no unfavorable comments; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission made the following findings on this matter:

1. The proposed change is consistent with the Plan's Land Use Policy Vision A Statement.

Vision A: Pittsfield Township will offer diverse land uses arranged in a distinct and logical pattern taking into consideration existing uses, public needs and services, environmental conditions and the capacity of transportation, utilities and community facilities.

(Chapter 2, p. 14)

- A. The property does not have Washtenaw Avenue frontage and the properties between it and Washtenaw are all developed, therefore the existing properties make a more logical boundary for the local commercial area.
 - B. This site contains substantial woodlands and wetlands. If the property is rezoned to Office rather than Local Commercial the maximum net lot coverage is 10% less, thus more natural features on this site could be saved.
 - C. Office uses are typically considered medium intensity uses and work well as an acceptable transition between higher intensity commercial and lower intensity residential uses.
 - D. Office uses do not conflict with the retail, office, and multi-family residential uses along the Golfside corridor in Pittsfield Township or neighboring Ypsilanti Township.
 - E. This area is adequately served by transportation facilities. Office uses are less intense than commercial uses and thus will have less of an impact on the capacity on Golfside Road and Washtenaw Avenue. Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA) bus routes are located on Golfside Road and Washtenaw Avenue to serve the property.
 - F. The area is served by public water and sanitary sewer and Township Public Safety services.
2. The proposed change is consistent with the Plan's Land Use Policy Vision B Statement.

Pittsfield Township will have viable residential neighborhoods that offer a variety of housing options for a high quality-of-life.

(Chapter 2, p. 16)

- A. Office uses will help to protect and stabilize the residential properties by providing a buffer between the residential uses and commercial uses.

- B. Office use of the property provides for a viable reuse of the landmark residential home on the site.
3. The proposed change is consistent with the Plan's Land Use Policy Vision C Statement.

Pittsfield Township will provide business development areas that create a stable economic tax base and quality shopping and service uses for residents.

(Chapter 2, p.17)

- A. The designation provides for the expansion of business in the Township.
- B. The office designation would provide a location for medical and service offices to provide services for the community.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Pittsfield Charter Township Planning Commission approves the proposed changes to the Future Land Use Map of the Township's adopted Comprehensive Plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Planning Commission transmits a copy of this resolution to the Township Board for review and approval of the proposed changes to the Future Land Use Map of the Township's adopted Comprehensive Plan.