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**PITTSFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

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**Members Present:** Dennis Ward, Richard Plisko, Wilma Luna, Christina Lirones, Stuart Dowty, John Norton, Maria Constant.

**Members Absent:** None.

**Others Present:** Ann Stevens, Robb Burroughs, Sharon Abel, Zella Polliey, Joe Dwyer, Alayna Stagg, Kathie Mahn, Planning Director Bruce E. Fowler, Senior 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 7:30 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 Ward, supported by Commissioner Dowty, to move Item 7.1 to follow Item 5.1, and Item 7.2 to follow Item 5.2.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**4.0 Items from the Floor**

None.

**5.0 Public Hearings**

**5.1 WP 07-02 Pittsfield Preserve Wetland Restoration**  
[submitted for a wetland permit]

Senior Planner Paul Montagno reviewed the wetland consultant's report. He said that this is an application to complete wetland restoration at the Pittsfield Preserve. He said that there would be five (5) basin areas and they would plug existing ditch areas to create flooding conditions with variable water levels in each basin. He said that 1,012 cubic yards of fill would be used to create the ditch plugs and the berms. He said that they would be restoring the hydrology and increasing the wildlife habitat. He said that they would restore hydrology first and then determine what plant species would be appropriate. He said that there would be a period of monitoring to ensure vegetation establishment and proper hydrology. He said that they would monitor it closely to make sure there is no tree mortality from excess flooding. He said that the applicant would work with ECT to establish a monitoring plan. He said that they would see where the water level is and make sure the roots of the trees are not being inundated.

Jan BenDor, Deputy Clerk, stated that the permit is for the restoration, not the alteration, of the wetland. She said that the Township purchased the preserve in 2002. She said that the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) and Park Commission have employed naturalists to study the area and make recommendations. She said that habitat improvements were recommended. She said that in 2004 they had a Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) grant to write a stewardship plan for the preserve. She said that they recommended that they connect the isolated habitat areas. She said that they are establishing more upland areas. She said that they surveyed the animals of the preserve, and currently there are six (6) species of frogs, three (3) species of snakes, and three (3) species of turtles. She said that the herpetologist recommended diversifying the species. She said that the animals need corridors to get around. She showed how far an American toad would travel in its life cycle. She said that they could improve the environment for more species such as blue racer snakes and turtles. She said that if they increased the diversity of these animals they will increase the diversity overall. She said that the herpetologist made very similar recommendations.

Ms. BenDor continued and stated that she talked to people at the DNR about seeking to implement the plans and they spread the word and she received a call from the US Fish and Wildlife office. She said that they were very interested in helping the Township. She said that they put together Phase 1 of the project. She said that there are five (5) small wetland basins in an area that could have been wetlands before it was drained for the farm field. She said that they would seed the vegetative buffer, and mow the berms, which creates an opportunity for the trails. She said that there would be ten (10) acres of restored wetlands and thirty-seven (37) acres of upland prairie. She said that there would be new park trails for people to access this area. She mentioned shrinking the farm field and said that the farmer who farms the fields in the Pittsfield Preserve agreed with the plan. She said that the timeline is May or June (2007) for construction. She said that they would stake the planning areas and assess the weed situation. She added that Phase 2 would be in the fall and they would build hibernacula areas for herpetiles and install nesting boxes and wildlife viewing facilities. She said that they would continue the trail design for the public access to the park. She said that Ducks Unlimited would help assess the feasibility of a wetland bank.

Commissioner Dowty asked Ms. BenDor to describe a wetland bank.

Ms. BenDor stated that when there is an overwhelming need to affect a wetland the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and the Township would require mitigation. She said that a wetland bank exists as a better way to mitigate. She said that it is created as a functioning wetland before the other wetland is changed. She said that the exchange has to take place within the same watershed, and this location has two watersheds around it.

Chairperson Lirones stated that usually with a wetland permit people have to replace or mitigate a wetland. She said that this situation is unique because they are not looking at filling or mitigating a wetland. She said that the Township typically does not want to utilize wetland banking on most sites to ensure that the habitat would not be destroyed onsite. She said that there is a site on State Road with so much occupied by wetland that for the owner to utilize the property he would have to look offsite to mitigate and fill the wetland. She said that in some cases it is better.

Chairperson Lirones opened the public hearing.

There were no comments.

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

**MOTION CARRIED**

Item 7.1 of New Business moved to follow Item 5.1 of the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Ward thanked Mrs. BenDor for coming in. He said that it is great to see this moving along. He said that Mrs. BenDor has done a lot of work in the NRC in doing things for the Pittsfield Preserve.

Chairperson Lirones stated that they have been looking at this since the purchase of the preserve. She said that she does not want to see the wooded areas inundated. She said that it would not be used as in subdivisions where the area is flooded and the trees die, it will be monitored.

Planner Montagno stated that if they see something not working appropriately the levels of water can be adjusted.

**Motion by Commissioner Ward, supported by Commissioner Luna, to direct staff to work with the Township's Wetland Consultant to develop a monitoring plan designed to ensure longevity of existing trees within the forested area and the development of appropriate wetland plant species prior to issuance of a Wetland Use Permit by the Ordinance Enforcement Officer.**

**ROLL CALL:**

**YES: WARD, PLISKO, LUNA, LIRONES, DOWTY, NORTON, CONSTANT.**

**NO: NONE**

**ABSENT: NONE**

**ABSTAIN: NONE**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**5.2 CUP 07-06 Michigan/State Shopping Center – Drive-Through**  
[submitted for conditional use permit]

Planning Director Bruce E. Fowler reviewed the conditional use permit report. He said that this permit is for a drive-through ATM facility. He listed the neighboring uses. He said that the site is undeveloped and zoned C2 (General Commercial). He said that drive-through facilities are permitted with a CUP. He said that they would be constructing a general retail building with a coffee shop and a drive-through. He said that fifty-five (55) parking spaces are needed and proposed. He reviewed the findings that the Commission would need to consider. He reviewed the criteria for C-2 development.

Chairperson Lirones asked if they had a sketch of the ATM.

Ann Stevens, Atwell-Hicks, replied no.

Joe Dwyer, developer, stated that this would be a Chase drive-through ATM. He said that it would be four (4) to five (5) feet high and six (6) to eight (8) feet long. He said that they have not settled on a rendering.

Commissioner Ward stated that he does not want to see a blue panel top-lit Chase ATM that would stand out in this nice area.

Mr. Dwyer stated that the design of the ATM would be in compliance with the rest of the strip mall. He added that it would not look like it does not fit onsite.

Planner Montagno stated that there is typically a rendering of everything onsite. He said that a freestanding ATM is usually in conjunction with a bank, and it does not need its own sign. He said that this might be an issue on this site.

Chairperson Lirones stated that this ATM is integral to the building. She said that the Commission needs to see a sketch of the ATM by the next meeting.

Mr. Dwyer stated that they reserved a space on the shopping center sign for the ATM, next to the retail business names.

Commissioner Ward stated that typically ATM's are serviced from the rear of the machine. He asked if there are safety issues with respect to the other drive-throughs.

Mr. Dwyer stated that there should be plenty of space.

Ms. Stevens stated that there are three (3) lanes available to serve both drive-through facilities.

Chairperson Lirones opened the public hearing.

There were no comments.

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

## **MOTION CARRIED**

Item 7.2 of New Business moved to follow Item 5.2 of the Public Hearing.

Chairperson Lirones stated that staff has worked extensively with the applicant on this.

Commissioner Norton asked how the Commission would approve the CUP without seeing a drawing.

Chairperson Lirones stated that the Commission usually directs staff to draft a resolution of approval for the CUP.

**Motion by Commissioner Ward, supported by Commissioner Luna, to direct staff to draft a resolution of approval for CUP 07-06 Michigan/State Shopping Center – Drive-Through ATM, provided the applicant submits satisfactory ATM elevation drawings for approval.**

## **MOTION CARRIED**

### **6.0 Old Business**

#### **6.1 CSPA 07-03 Michigan/State Shopping Center (formerly CSPA 05-10)** [submitted for combined preliminary and final site plan]

Chairperson Lirones stated that the Commission previously gave preliminary approval for a retail strip mall with a very different look to it. She said that the submittal has completely changed and now there are fewer users on the site.

Director Fowler reviewed Planner Schmult's report. He stated that the changes from this plan to the last plan is the addition of the ATM, increase in floor area by 1,000 square feet, one retail space and one restaurant space, reduction in the number of parking spaces, realignment of the building to be parallel to the side lot lines, elimination of the retaining wall on the east side of the site, and addition of a receiving area on the south side of the building. He said that the drive-through ATM would be located on the east edge of the site. He said that this location eliminates the traffic circulation problems that were mentioned in the previous reports. He said that the plan proposes a receiving area for the retail space. He said that previously a WB-50 truck would have blocked the receiving lanes. He reviewed the zoning review. He said that the floor area ratio, net lot coverage and setbacks are acceptable. He said that a fifteen (15) foot transition strip is proposed on the south side of the property, and a twenty (20) foot transition strip is required along the street right-of-way line. He said that there would be a self-service fast food restaurant and if the restaurant changed or expanded additional parking would be required.

Commissioner Dowty asked about a procedure to catch this if it happened.

Director Fowler stated that they would need a building permit for the interior changes and also a zoning compliance.

Commissioner Dowty asked if they could change the inside and have it become a full service restaurant without the Township knowing.

Director Fowler stated that this would be difficult and they would have to close down the drive-through facility. He said that if they were expanding the floor area they would be taking out the dividing wall to the retail area. He added that this is a very unlikely situation. He said that the driveway entrance would service as access to both sites. He said that there is potential connection access to the sites to the east and the west. He reviewed the engineering report. He said that there are certain items that should be changed on the plan. He said that the drive-up window for the restaurant is still intact but one minor change is needed to the conditions of approval. He said that the condition was to maintain compliance with CSPA 05-10 and this needs to be amended to CSPA 07-03.

Chairperson Lirones asked if the receiving area is for smaller vehicles and not a WB-50 truck.

Director Fowler stated that this would be for smaller vehicles and it is not large enough for a bigger truck. He said that customers would use the front parking and employees and overflow parking would be in the rear of the site.

Commissioner Ward stated that the plan proposes filling the rear portion of the site by twelve (12) feet.

Planner Montagno stated that this site and the neighboring site (Saline Tractor) drop off severely from Michigan Avenue toward a wetland area adjacent to these properties to the south. He said that there was an issue with the preliminary site plan where they had a fourteen (14) foot retaining wall, and that has now been eliminated. He said that instead of having two (2) side-by-side retaining walls on adjacent sites it would taper into the other.

Chairperson Lirones asked about the wetland area.

Planner Montagno stated that the wetland is offsite and any fill would be onsite.

Commissioner Ward asked if there would be issues with the storm drainage affecting the wetland or anything below there.

Chairperson Lirones stated that this goes through a pond that is jointly owned with the LaSalle Bank property. She said that the WCDC did not want to make this into a district. She asked if the lighting is acceptable.

Director Fowler replied yes.

Chairperson Lirones stated that thirty-five (35) trees are required and proposed. She asked about the proposed ornamental trees and the trees located in the front of the building.

Ms. Stevens discussed the location of the ornamental trees in the planter boxes. She said that previous engineering comments mentioned concerns about the planter boxes with the two (2) foot overhang and this potentially causing a car to hit the planters. She said that they used a tree grade for greater pedestrian ability.

Chairperson Lirones asked about the types of trees.

Ms. Stevens stated that there are medium growing crab apple trees.

The Commission and the applicant discussed the proposed trees and the types of trees.

Chairperson Lirones stated that the elevations have changed so much from the previous submittals.

Commissioner Ward stated that the plan looks good and it is a very interesting design.

Chairperson Lirones stated that the applicant should work with staff to place more landscaping onsite.

Robb Burroughs, Hobbs and Black, showed elevations of the proposed building. He said that two (2) tenants are defined. He said that there are metal canopy structures over the entrances. He said that there would be brick masonry across the building and they are using two (2) different brick colors.

Chairperson Lirones stated that she liked the elevations. She asked about the aluminum brushed metal portions.

Mr. Burroughs stated that the piers were proposed to be insulated metal panel although this might not hold up over time. He said that they would like to use concrete block because it would last longer.

Commissioner Norton asked what material the curves are made of.

Mr. Burroughs stated that this is a metal structure and a metal roof that it sits on. He said that this is prefinished aluminum.

Chairperson Lirones stated that they should make sure the lighting is down directed because there are homes in this area. She asked about the landscaping in the rear of the building.

Mr. Burroughs stated that they are landscaping extensively in the rear of the building.

Ms. Stevens stated that the shrubs along the south property line would be arbor vitae and this is a continuation of the plantings at the LaSalle Bank site. She said that the higher trees would block the area. She said that the lighting is down directed on the building and in the parking lot.

Chairperson Lirones asked if the units on the roof are screened.

Mr. Burroughs replied yes.

Commissioner Ward asked if there are any issues with high force winds damaging the curved metal roof with an in-rush of air.

Mr. Burroughs stated that this would be designed to meet the building code. He said that he would raise this question to their structural engineer. He said that they would provide gaps in the roof structure to allow it to breathe.

Commissioner Ward stated that the weak point would be at the attachment points.

Chairperson Lirones asked if there are gutters all the way around the building.

Mr. Burroughs stated that there are pitches in the front and to the back and this will pitch to the backside of the building. He added that these would be painted to match the materials of the building.

Chairperson Lirones stated that this is a unique addition to the area. She asked who the proposed tenants are.

Mr. Dwyer stated Murray's Auto and Dunkin Donuts.

Chairperson Lirones asked that they limit the number of logos on the buildings.

Mr. Dwyer stated that he would talk to the proposed tenants about the logos. He asked if the Commission wanted the same landscaping as the LaSalle Bank site.

Chairperson Lirones replied yes. She asked about possible oil leakage from cars at Murray's Auto.

Ms. Stevens stated that they would talk to Murray's Auto. She said that they could install a strip of five (5) foot wide concrete and then switch to asphalt.

**Motion by Commissioner Ward, supported by Commissioner Plisko, to approve CSPA 07-03, Michigan/State Shopping Center, with the condition that the applicant submits 4 sets of final site plans to the Township for administrative review that:**

- 1. Addresses all outstanding comments on the Township Engineer's review dated April 13, 2007.**
- 2. Addresses all outstanding items in the Zoning Review dated April 12, 2007.**
- 3. Revise landscaping and tree diversity and add additional landscaping in the front yard as discussed by the Planning Commission at the meeting of April 19, 2007.**
- 4. Provide an adequate water management system for the metal canopy.**
- 5. Direct the applicant to postpone submittal of site plan for administrative approval until after the ATM elevations are approved by the Planning Commission.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Motion by Commissioner Ward, supported by Commissioner Luna, to approve a revision of condition #1 of the Findings of Required Standards and Resolution of Approval, C.U.P. #05-10 Michigan-State LLC, dated April 6, 2006, to require compliance with CSPA 07-03.**

**ROLL CALL:**

**YES: WARD, PLISKO, LUNA, LIRONES, DOWTY, NORTON,  
CONSTANT.**

**NO: NONE**

**ABSENT: NONE**

**ABSTAIN: NONE**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**7.0 New Business**

**7.1 WP 07-02 Pittsfield Preserve Wetland Restoration**  
[submitted for a wetland permit]

Item 7.1 moved to follow Item 5.1 of the Public Hearing.

**7.2 CUP 07-06 Michigan/State Shopping Center – Drive-Through**  
[submitted for conditional use permit]

Item 7.2 moved to follow Item 5.2 of the Public Hearing.

**8.0 Planner's Report**

Director Fowler introduced the two ZBA members, Kathie Mahn and Alayna Stagg, in the audience and planning intern Ian Brand.

Director Fowler stated that the access management plan for Washtenaw Avenue would be started this month. He said that it would be delayed and it is scheduled to go before the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) board on May 1<sup>st</sup>. He stated that Planner Montagno would be attending a SEMCOG workshop on building vibrant communities. He mentioned that he and Planner Montagno are certified AICP planners and that next year they would be required to take thirty-two (32) credits of continuing education over a two-year period. He mentioned that yesterday was his two (2) year anniversary with the Township.

**9.0 Chairperson's Report**

None.

**10.0 Commissioner's Report**

None.

**11.0 Approval of Prior Minutes**

**11.1 Minutes of April 5, 2007**

**Motion by Commissioner Ward, supported by Commissioner Luna, to approve the minutes, as corrected.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**12.0 Adjournment**

**Motion by Commissioner Luna, supported by Commissioner Ward, to adjourn the meeting.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

Chairperson Lirones adjourned the meeting at 9:09 p.m.

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**s/Wilma Luna, Secretary**

**May 3, 2007**