

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF YPSILANTI
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, August 9, 2022
6:30 pm**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Bill Sinkule, Vice-Chair
Gloria Peterson - Board Liaison
Elizabeth El-Assadi
Larry Doe
Muddasar Tawakkul

STAFF AND CONSULTANTS

Jason Iacoangeli, Planning Director
Amy Steffens, Planning and Development Coordinator
Denny McLain, Township Attorney

i. CALL TO ORDER/ESTABLISH QUORUM

MOTION: Mr. Sinkule called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

ii. APPROVAL OF MAY 24, 2022, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Ms. Peterson **MOVED** to approve the previous Board Meeting Minutes. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Mr. Tawakkul and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

iii. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Mr. Doe **MOVED** to approve the agenda as presented. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Ms. El-Assadi and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

iv. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None to report.

v. OLD BUSINESS

None to report.

vi. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. PAINT CREEK CROSSING - PLANNED DEVELOPMENT – 1816-2130 WHITTAKER ROAD (PARCELS K-11-21-200-041, K-11-21-200-040, K-11-21,200-039, K-11-21-200-038, K-11-21-200-035, K-11-21-200-034) - TO CONSIDER A REVISION TO THE APPROVED SITE PLAN FOR THE PURPOSE OF CHANGING THE LANDSCAPING.

Mr. Iacoangeli addressed the Planning Commission and explained the amended landscape plan for the Paint Creek Crossing Plaza. The subject parcels about 21 acres and it's part of a planned development. It is a one storey shopping center (190,000 square feet). The original site plan was approved on May 28, 2002. Mr. Iacoangeli explained and summarized the reason for the amendment; In 2020, the 34 original trees were removed without a site plan or approval to deviate from the original site plan.

When the township contacted the shopping center once they were aware of the situation. The shopping center admitted that they had removed the trees and stated that they were unaware that they needed to amend a plan in order to do so. The township and the shopping center have been trying to work together to arrive at a solution. The township had to legally contact the property owner and compelled them to come to the table to discuss how this would be remedied.

What was agreed upon is the property owner would provide a landscape plan consistent with the requirement along with any other development outlining their new intention for the shopping center, and it was agreed that it would be reviewed and sent to the planning commission for their approval. The plan was reviewed by Carlisle Wortman Associates on behalf of the internal planning staff in order to be as objective as possible, and as far as looking at the plan and making sure that it complies with the township zoning ordinance.

Mr. Iacoangeli stated that the amended site plan and the review letter from Carlisle Wortman outlining their review is been presented before the Commission. Carlisle Wortman review states that Whittaker Road plannings which are north of the common drive, they're proposing a mix of honey locusts, deciduous trees of Cynthia's, the planning is to provide landscaping along the length of the corridor frontage. That was what was approved what's being proposed are hydrangeas, roses and Foxwoods clumped together in order to not provide landscaping along the corridor or frontage so what they mean by that is what was previously approved were deciduous trees and now they're asking to use hydrangeas, roses and boxwoods. Morgan Road behind the shopping center, the original approved plan was for a mix of evergreens and deciduous shrubs and the plan that they presented as supplements with additional spruce trees that was approved as a part of the original landscape plan and Carlisle Wortman

comment is that they are consistent with the approved landscape plan. Dean Dr, there is a mix of evergreen trees that are currently there and their new landscape plan is recommending supplementing those with additional spruce trees, and Carlisle Wortman comment is that they are consistent with the approved landscape plan.

Carlisle Wortman review:

- Roses are hardy and they should be replaced with a hardier species.
- Include deciduous trees along the Whittaker Road at a 40 ft interval along the street.
- Bradford Pears be switched out with an alternative species (Easter redbuds serviceberries Blackhall viburnums, wild plums, Ironwood Easter hop hornbeam, American hornbeam, Black Gum and yellow wood).

Mr. Iacoangeli informed the Commission that the packet includes the illustration along with aerial references.

The Commissioners discussed the purpose of the trees is to block the shopping center from the highway and they looked great during the flowering period. Mr. Iacoangeli explained that some of the retailers, including Mr. Grenadier (Owner/ Applicant:1816-2130 Whittaker Rd. Ypsilanti, MI 48197) had issues with the trees because it was blocking the view of their business from the street.

Mr. Grenadier explained to the Commission that there are still about 100 pear trees on the site and the trees were removed as a first step towards the major landscaping overhaul of the creek, the property was approximately 20 years old with overgrown trees and they were directly under the power wires. He stated that his goal is to beautify the property, so that the shoppers and stores would want to do business there. A complete redevelopment of the entire landscaping was created by the landscaper who gave the shopping center an unbelievable look.

Mr. Grenadier shared his concern whether the suggestions made by Carlisle Wortman are feasible to have trees grown under the power wires.

Ms. Peterson inquired with Mr. Grenadier about him not being satisfied with the recommendations made by Carlisle Wortman; Mr. Iacoangeli responded by stating that Carlisle Wortman did the review and has the count of tree stumps when they were cut down as a part of trying to arrive at the overall cost involved. Carlisle Wortman is aware of the power lines because they surveyed all the tree stumps to find out how many and how big they were at the time they were all cut down. The planning department became aware of this situation when calls were received from the township residents about the missing trees. The planning department is trying to arrive at an amicable solution that would work for the shopping center and the township. The townships' biggest concerns are that the hydrangeas are not equivalent of what was there before

with mature trees that were 15 or 20 feet tall. There have been back and forth discussions on what's to be planted (trees or shrubs) considering the power wires.

Mr. Doe inquired if there were pears trees on the island; Mr. Grenadier assured that there were pear trees on all the existing islands at the shopping center.

Mr. Grenadier was asked about the height of the trees that were removed, in reference to the bottom of the power line and if they were touching the line. He stated that if the tree doesn't get trimmed, they are safety concerns and if the property owners do not trim them, DTE would be doing the trimming and they have complete access to it.

Mr. Grenadier stated that the pavement at the shopping center has been replaced and 85% of the center is brand new. He also shared with the Commission that he was not aware about getting building permits in order to make changes to the landscape and the need to get an amendment to a site.

Ms. Peterson inquired with Mr. Iacoangeli if the site plan decision could be tabled, since Mr. Grenadier is not happy with Carlisle Wortman recommendations; Mr. Iacoangeli stated that Carlisle Wortman's opinion meets the landscape requirements. And there's some conditions in there that were offered. The opinion of the Planning Commission as a third party to determine what's appropriate would help in arriving to a solution.

The Commissioners discussed that the parties would need to negotiate and come to an agreement. There are rules and regulations in the township for every business and it's the Planning Commission job to enforce the rules. It was suggested to table the decision and ask the two parties to get together and come to a recommendation.

After much discussion the Planning Commission arrived with the following:

MOTION: Ms. El-Assadi **MOVED** to approve the landscaping revision to the approved site plan for a special site zone PD Plan development located at 1816-2130 Whittaker Road (PARCELS K-11-21-200-041, K-11-21-200-040, K-11-21,200-039, K-11-21-200-038, K-11-21-200-035, K-11-21-200-034) also known as Paint Creek Crossing with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall meet with the planning department to go over the recommendation of Carlisle Wortman.
2. To replace the roses with more hardy species.
3. Possibly replace the Bradford pears with other alternatives.
4. The placement of the trees at 120 as proposed by the applicant and include a few more along the length of Whittaker Road at 80-foot replacement as negotiated with the planning department and short enough to the power lines.

The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Mr. Tawakkul.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Tawakkul (Yes), Mr. Doe (Yes), Ms. Peterson (Yes), Mr. Sinkule (Yes), Ms. El-Assadi (Yes). **MOTION PASSED.**

B. ELECTION OF PLANNING COMMISSION OFFICERS

MOTION: Mr. Tawakkul **MOVED** to approve Chairman for the Planning Commission: Bill Sinkule, Vice- Chairman: Elizabeth El-Assadi and Secretary: Larry Doe. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Ms. Peterson.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Tawakkul (Yes), Mr. Doe (Yes), Ms. Peterson (Yes), Mr. Sinkule (Yes), Ms. El-Assadi (Yes). **MOTION PASSED.**

C. 2021 PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT TO THE BOARD – TO CONSIDER SUBMITTING TO THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES A 2021 PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 125.3819 OF THE MICHIGAN PLANNING ENABLING ACT, PA 33 OF 2008.

Mr. Iacoangeli informed the Commission that the Planning Department is gathering information for the report that requires information on the number of meetings and the items that had actions taken on, attendance records of the membership. This is required by the planning Enabling Act of this body Senator report yearly to the legislative body, explaining the action that it's taken, as well as its attendance and performance. Once the Planning Commission is satisfied with the report, a recommendation for the report to be forwarded to the township Board of Trustees at their next regular meeting for their consideration.

MOTION: Ms. El-Assadi **MOVED** to approve recommendation of the planning commission report to the township board. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Ms. Peterson.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Tawakkul (Yes), Mr. Doe (Yes), Ms. Peterson (Yes), Mr. Sinkule (Yes), Ms. El-Assadi (Yes). **MOTION PASSED.**

vii. -OPEN DISCUSSION FOR ISSUES NOT ON THE AGENDA

- A. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED - Michigan Association of planning.**
- B. PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS - None**
- C. MEMBERS OF THE AUDIENCE- None**

viii. **TOWNSHIP BOARD REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

None to Report

ix. **ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

Ms. El-Assadi stated that, at the last ZBA meeting they had a request for variance for having a recreational vehicle in the front yard.

x. **TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY REPORT**

None to Report

xi. **PLANNING DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Mr. Iacoangeli informed the Commission of the zoning ordinance amendments that need to be addressed. With the first year of the new zoning ordinance the planning department has come across inconsistencies and errors that need to be addressed and the plan to start drafting in August and September and bring a batch of amendments in October to be reviewed and then be recommended to the township Board of Trustees. There are map amendments to be reviewed. There are a lot of upcoming projects. There is a proposal for a new gas station at the corner of Hewan Ellsworth which is under review.

xii. **OTHER BUSINESS**

None to Report

xiii. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: Ms. Peterson **MOVED** to adjourn at 7:44 pm. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Mr. Doe and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

Respectfully Submitted by: Minutes Services