

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF YPSILANTI  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
Tuesday, December 12, 2023  
6:30 pm**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Bill Sinkule, Chair  
Gloria Peterson  
Larry Doe  
Caleb Copeland

**STAFF AND CONSULTANTS**

Fletcher Reyher, Planning and Development Coordinator

- **CALL TO ORDER/ESTABLISH QUORUM**

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

- **APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 14, 2023, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Ms. Peterson **MOVED** to approve the November 14, 2023, regular meeting minutes. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Mr. Doe and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

- **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Sinkule shared with the Commission the request for taking Deal Point off the agenda; Deal Point Merrill has requested not to be under consideration on December 12, 2023, and they will present themselves in January 2024.

**MOTION:** Mr. Doe **MOVED** to approve the modified agenda. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Ms. Peterson and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

- **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None

- **OLD BUSINESS**

None

- **NEW BUSINESS**

**PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN – VISIBLE LEARNING CENTER – 1189 E. MICHIGAN AVENUE – PARCEL K-11-10-106-018** – TO CONSIDER THE PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN APPLICATION OF THE VISIBLE LEARNING CENTER TO PERMIT THE CONSTRUCTION OF A DRIVEWAY OFF OF EAST MICHIGAN AVENUE AND TO IMPROVE EXISTING PARKING AREAS FOR A 2.28 ACRE SITE ZONED RC – REGIONAL CORRIDOR WITH A SITE TYPE B DESIGNATION.

Mr. Fletcher Reyher, Planning and Development Coordinator, presented to the Commission a Preliminary Site Plan Application from the Visible Learning Center (child daycare facility) located at 1189 Michigan Avenue. The Visible Learning Center is proposing a new driveway access off East Michigan Avenue and modifying their current parking on the site. The site is currently zoned RC, Regional Corridor (Site Type B Designation), which follows the Master Plan designation that allows the site for mixed-use developments.

Mr. Fletcher Reyher presented the Commission with an aerial view of the property in discussion.

Mr. Fletcher Reyher informed the Commission that the site is a through lot with frontage on both East Cross Street and East Michigan Avenue. Currently, the daycare is sharing a driveway with the pharmacy next door, which has confused parents dropping kids off for daycare services. This new parking proposal would give the Visible Learning Center their driveway, and they would cease using the shared driveway with the pharmacy next door. The adjacent property to the Visible Learning Center; North (residential uses); South (vacant); East and West (residential/commercial use).

**Parking:** According to the Township Zoning Ordinance, a daycare facility would require 15 parking spaces. The applicant is proposing 21 spaces, including a loading space and a bicycle parking space, which the Township Zoning Ordinance requires.

**Sidewalk:** The applicant would be providing bicycle parking and pedestrian sidewalk accommodations linking East Michigan Avenue to the site.

**Landscaping:** The applicant would meet all the standards and they will be removing ten trees from the site to pave the new driveway and shed entrance. The applicant will be adding ten trees and 35 new shrubs around the property lines. The proposed driveway is required, as the current configuration is causing confusion among people utilizing the daycare center and people using the commercial use next door.

**Trash Receptacles:** The applicant would be providing trash and recycling receptacles as required by the Township Zoning Ordinance.

**Exterior Lighting:** The applicant proposes to modify their existing lighting on site. Mr. Fletcher Reyher informed the Commission of the two existing light poles in the grass field on the

northern side of the property adjacent to Cross Street. The poles are non-operational and serve no purpose to the functioning of the site. Mr. Fletcher Reyher requested the Commission to have the light poles removed.

Mr. Fletcher Reyher shared with the Commission that the Township Planning Department strongly encourages this development as it will increase pedestrian safety and decrease traffic conflicts in the area.

Mr. Copeland inquired why a driveway was not established earlier on Michigan Avenue; Mr. Fletcher Reyher stated that the planning department went back and looked at the archives for the site looks and it showed that the building has been there for a long time. The Planning Commission granted the Visible Learning Center a shared driveway with the adjoining property. There may have been a financial consideration at that time.

**Reviews of different departments:**

- **OHM:** Recommended approval for this stage of the review process.
- **Fire Department:** Fire Marshal recommended approval for this stage.
- **YCUA:** Scott Westover had no concerns, as no utilities are included.
- **Washtenaw Water Resource:** The applicant has been working with the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commission, and they have recommended approval at this stage.

Mr. Fletcher Reyher shared with the Commission that the Township Planning Department and OHM had requested the applicant to consider having an entrance at Cross Street instead of East Michigan Avenue as it's a lower speed, less traffic and has better pedestrian amenities. The applicant wanted to keep their East Michigan Avenue address and believes that the current arrangement would work better for them.

Mr. Fletcher Reyher stated that the planning Department had raised the concern since Michigan Avenue is quite dangerous for pedestrians since the township continues to work with property owners on repairing sidewalks and adding new ones.

Mr. Fletcher Reyher informed the Commission that the applicant plans on blocking the drive completely with a fence separating the two uses so there will be no more sharing between the two properties.

Mr. Fletcher Reyher informed the Commission that the applicant (Visible Learning Center) was not present at the meeting.

**MOTION:** Mr. Copeland **MOVED** to approve the e Preliminary Site Plan of The Visible Learning Center to permit the construction of a new driveway entrance off East Michigan Avenue and associated parking lot improvements for a 2.28-acre site zoned RC – Regional Corridor with a Site Type B Designation, located at 1189 E. Michigan Avenue, Ypsilanti, MI 48198, Parcel, K-11-10-106-018, with the following conditions:

- The applicant shall address all outstanding comments from reviewing agencies prior to Final Site Plan approval.
- The applicant shall obtain all applicable internal and outside agency permits prior to construction.
- The applicant shall remove the inoperable light poles in the grass field on the northern side of the property adjacent to Cross Street.
- The applicant shall provide the Planning Department with fence plans that meet the Township Zoning Ordinance requirements for the existing entrance closure.
- Any other conditions based upon Planning Commission Discussion.

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

**Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Copeland (Yes); Mr. Doe (Yes); Ms. Peterson (Yes); Mr. Sinkule (Yes).

**MOTION PASSED.**

- **ADOPTION OF REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING DATES FOR THE 2024 CALENDAR YEAR**

Mr. Fletcher Reyher, Planning and Development Coordinator, presented to the Commission the proposed calendar for the regular meetings in 2024. Mr. Fletcher Reyher stated that he and Jason Iacoangeli had put the calendar together and made sure that the dates presented did not conflict with any national holidays or any closures of the township Hall.

Mr. Fletcher Reyher requested the Commission to adapt the schedule for the 2024 calendar year.

**MOTION:** Ms. Peterson **MOVED** to adopt the proposed regular meeting schedule for the 2024 calendar year. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Mr. Doe.

**Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Copeland (Yes); Mr. Doe (Yes); Ms. Peterson (Yes); Mr. Sinkule (Yes).

**MOTION PASSED.**

- **OPEN DISCUSSIONS FOR ISSUES NOT ON AGENDA**

- a. **Correspondence received**

Mr. Fletcher Reyher informed the Commission that the Charter Township of Superior is planning to update its master plan and has informed the township of that decision. The letter is attached to the board. packet

**b. Planning Commission members**

None to Report.

**c. Members of the audience**

None to Report.

• **TOWNSHIP BOARD REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

None to Report.

• **ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

None to Report.

• **TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY REPORT**

None to Report.

• **PLANNING DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Mr. Fletcher Reyher informed the Commission that the Childrens Healing Center is making progress on the site. The shell of the building is standing, and there are discussions on paving the driveway before the snow falls. The roundhouse party store is making progress.

• **OTHER BUSINESS**

None to Report.

• **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Mr. Doe **MOVED** to adjourn at 6:46 pm. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Ms. Peterson and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

-----

Respectively Submitted by Minutes Services.