

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF YPSILANTI
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, March 26, 2024
6:30 pm**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Bill Sinkule
Elizabeth El-Assadi
Gloria Peterson
Larry Doe
Bianca Tyson
Darryl Kirby
Caleb Copeland

STAFF AND CONSULTANTS

Fletcher Reyher, Planning and Development Coordinator
Megan Masson Minock - Carlisle Wortman
Dennis McLain – Township Attorney

- **CALL TO ORDER/ESTABLISH QUORUM**

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

- **APPROVAL OF MARCH 12, 2024, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

MOTION: Mr. Doe **MOVED** to approve the March 12, 2024, regular meeting minutes. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Ms. El-Assadi and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

- **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

- **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None to Report

- **OLD BUSINESS**

None to Report.

- **NEW BUSINESS**

PRELIMINARY SKETCH SITE PLAN – DR. PAWS VETERINARY CLINIC – 2789/2751 WASHTENAW AVENUE – PARCEL K-11-06-303-003 & 004 – TO CONSIDER THE PRELIMINARY SKETCH SITE PLAN APPLICATION OF MR. VANCE PALMER FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A VETERINARY CLINIC UTILIZING THE EXISTING BUILDING AND SITE. THE PROPOSED PROJECT WILL OCCUPY A 0.92-ACRE SITE ZONED RC, REGIONAL CORRIDOR WITH SITE TYPE B DESIGNATION.

Mr. Fletcher Reyher, Planning and Development Coordinator, presented to the Commission the receipt of a Preliminary Sketch Plan Application from Mr. Vance Palmer representing Dr. Paws requesting authorization for the use of the existing building located at 2789/2751 Washtenaw Avenue for a Veterinary Clinic. Dr. Paws provides animal health care, urgent care, and surgery for animals in the community.

The Charter Township of Ypsilanti 2040 Master Plan designates this site for Mixed Use Corridors, a designation intended to be developed transportation arteries, with a mixture of residential, commercial, office and employment use. Regional Mixed-Use Corridors areas are along the busiest corridors, which support a high volume of local and regional traffic. This area may include large national chains, regional retailers and auto oriented users that draw customers both regionally and locally.

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

This site has historically been used as a restaurant and most recently as an auto dealership. The rear of the lot has an impervious surface where the used cars were parked for sale. The adjacent uses surrounding the property: North is a restaurant (Zone: RC – Regional Corridor); South is vacant (Zone: NB – Neighborhood

Business); East is a restaurant (Zone: RC – Regional Corridor); West is a restaurant (Zone: RC – Regional Corridor).

The Planning Department reviewed the application, and as per the Township Zoning Ordinance, changes in use must undergo a site plan review. A change in use for a site that does not comply with current design standards (such as landscaping, signage, lighting, or drainage) requires a Sketch Plan Review / Planning Commission review.

Mr. Fletcher Reyher talked about the natural features of the parcel; The parcel is relatively flat. There are no wetlands or woodland on the subject property. The Regional Corridor Zoning District allows for veterinary clinics.

The applicant is not requesting to enlarge the building, all the work that would be done on the site would be done inside the building and the removal of impervious surface on the parking lot, a new dumpster enclosure, landscaping and the removal of a non-conforming sign.

Parking: The Planning Department underwent a parking calculation for the site. The applicant would provide 30 spaces, which meet the requirements of the zoning ordinance for professional offices of doctors, dentists or similar professions. As per the Zoning Ordinance, the applicant is required to have a minimum of 2 barrier-free parking spaces and one (1) bicycle rack.

Landscaping Requirements: the applicant complies with the township's landscaping requirements. They are providing trees for the street yard landscaping, shrubs. They would provide 9 trees for the parking lot perimeter; General landscaping would be provided with 20 trees and 40 shrubs; Parking lot with have 7 trees.

Dumpster Enclosure: The dumpster plans will need to be revised as the gate is constructed with wood. The applicant must revise the gate materials to use treated aluminum or metal. Wood is not a permitted material, and it does not comply with the Township Zoning Ordinance.

Exterior Lighting: The applicant will be utilizing the existing lighting on site. The Planning Department has requested that all lights be properly shielded to avoid projecting light onto neighboring properties.

Elevations: The applicant is not proposing major modifications to the building's elevations. The applicant is proposing to remove the existing ground sign and

replace it with a monumental sign, as well as repainting the brick facade. Permits will be required for installing new ground or wall signs.

Fencing: The applicant is proposing a chain-link fence around the back of the building for a dog run area. The applicant will need to obtain a variance through the Zoning Board of Appeals to have this proposed dog run.

Other Requirements: Mr. Fletcher Reyher informed the Planning Commission and the applicant to be aware of the Reimagine Washtenaw initiative for Washtenaw Avenue. A comprehensive study was conducted in 2013-2014 to determine future cross-sections for the corridor, accommodating full sidewalks and bike lanes. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is currently conducting a Planning and Environmental Linkages Study, to accommodate new bus lanes and new pedestrian infrastructure. The current stretch of Washtenaw Avenue that the applicants located on will require 108 feet of right of way. The applicant needs to be aware when installing signs/ landscape to accommodate this future right of way.

The Charter Township of Ypsilanti Planning Department finds this land use to be compatible with the Zoning District.

Recommendations: The Planning Department recommends approval of the Dr. Paws Veterinarian Clinic Preliminary Sketch Plan with the following conditions of approval as part of the final site plan:

- The applicant shall provide the required bicycle parking.
- The applicant shall ensure that all existing lights are appropriately shielded.
- The applicant shall restripe the parking lot.
- The applicant shall remove the existing non-conforming pole sign adjacent to Washtenaw Avenue.
- The applicant shall replace the proposed wooden trash enclosure gate with a gate made of treated aluminum or metal.
- The applicant shall consider the width of the future public access limits identified in the 2014 Reimagine Washtenaw Study, to accommodate future roadway reconstruction.
- The applicant shall obtain all applicable internal and outside agency permits prior to construction.
- The applicant shall obtain a variance for the proposed dog run.
- The applicant shall address all outstanding comments from reviewing agencies prior to Final Site Plan approval.

- Any other conditions based upon Planning Commission discussion.

Reviews of different departments:

- **OHM:** OHM recommended approval with a list of conditions
- **Fire Department:** Fire Marshal issued an approval with no conditions

The Commissioner inquired about the concrete area at the back of the parcel: Mr. Fletcher Reyher stated that the site has an excess of impervious surface, and a vet clinic has no need to have many parking spaces. The applicant has proposed removing some of the impervious surface, which will help with stormwater runoff and look more appealing for residents and customers visiting their establishment.

Mr. Fletcher Reyher informed the Planning Commission that the sidewalk is in good condition, since it is outside of the proposed future right of way, which is 54 feet from the centerline. If there are changes of the right of way in the future, the applicant may need to consider moving the sidewalk closer to the building.

Ms. Debbie Honai (Gazall Lewis Architect), Doctor Eastman, Akona and Vance Palmer were present to answer the Planning Commission:

The Commissioner inquired if the business was brand new or currently practicing somewhere else; The applicant stated that they currently practice at another location.

The Commissioner inquired about surgeries; Dr. Eastman/ Akona stated that they can handle most soft tissue surgeries, spaying and neutering. Currently they won't be handling orthopedic surgery.

Ms. Debbie Honai informed the Planning Commission that no pets would be spending the night at the clinic. There is no need for a kennel or cages. The only time the area will be used is when the dogs need to relieve themselves in that secluded area. Dogs will be on leash and no dog will be out there for an extended time.

MOTION: Mr. Copeland MOVED to approve the preliminary sketch site plan of Dr. Paws Veterinary Clinic to permit the establishment of a veterinary clinic utilizing the existing building and site for a 0.92-acre site zoned RC, Regional Corridor with a Site Type B Designation, located at 2789/2751 Washtenaw Avenue, Ypsilanti, MI 48197, Parcel K-11-06-303-003 & 004, 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 provide the required bicycle parking.
- The applicant shall ensure that all existing lights are appropriately shielded.
- The applicant shall restripe the parking lot.
- The applicant shall remove the existing non-conforming pole sign adjacent to Washtenaw Avenue.
- The applicant shall consider the width of the future public access limits identified in the 2014 Reimagine Washtenaw Study, to accommodate future roadway reconstruction.
- The applicant shall replace the proposed wooden trash enclosure gate with a gate made of treated aluminum or metal.
- Any other conditions based upon Planning Commission discussion.

The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Ms. El-Assadi

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Copeland (Yes); Mr. Doe (Yes); Ms. Peterson (Yes); Mr. Sinkule (Yes); Ms. El-Assadi (Yes); Ms. Tyson (Yes); Mr. Kirby (Yes);

MOTION PASSED.

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

- a. **Correspondence received**

None to Report.

- 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**

None to Report.

- **OTHER BUSINESS**

None to Report.

- **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: Ms. El-Assadi **MOVED** to adjourn at 6:50 pm. **The MOTION** was **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

Respectively Submitted by Minutes Services.