

MINUTES
BIG RAPIDS CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION

Tuesday, October 10, 2023 --- 7:00 p.m.

Big Rapids Township Hall, 14230 Northland Drive, Big Rapids, MI 49307

I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 P.M.

Chairperson Amanda Wethington called the regular meeting of the Big Rapids Charter Township Planning Commission to order at the township hall on Tuesday, October 10, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Present: Carman Bean, Zach Cook, Mary Davis, Gordon Oliver, Jeff Oosterhouse, Mark Sweppenheiser and Amanda Wethington. The record shows there is a quorum. Also present: William Stanek, Supervisor and Timothy Kleinheksel, Zoning Administrator and Recording Secretary.

III. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:

Mrs. Wethington asked if any of the Commission members had known conflicts of interest with any of the items on the agenda for this meeting. Mrs. Wethington and Mr. Bean indicated that a conflict of interest existed with the WISE special use permit.

IV. MINUTES:

Mrs. Wethington asked the Commission members to review the minutes of the September 12, 2023 meeting. Mr. Bean made a motion to approve the September 12, 2023 minutes as submitted. Mr. Oliver supported the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously with seven ayes. Mrs. Wethington asked the Commission members to review the minutes of the September 19, 2023 meeting. Mr. Oosterhouse asked for the verbiage following the Jack Cooley question to be changed to "Mr. Sweppenheiser stated the SUP would stay with the property if sold." Mr. Bean made a motion to approve the September 19, 2023 minutes as amended. Mrs. Davis supported the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously with seven ayes.

V. PUBLIC HEARING SUP23-007 WISE:

Mrs. Wethington and Mr. Bean secluded themselves from the meeting. SUP23-007 is an application by WISE to operate a boarding house in the Agricultural zoning district at the existing property at 19199 14 Mile Road, Big Rapids Township Parcel # 5405-026-001-001 and a portion of 5405-026-001-002. Mr. Sweppenheiser opened the public hearing at 7:04 p.m. Ms. Jane Currie, WISE Executive Director, stated they are working in harmony with everyone involved and will be an asset to

the community. Mr. Sweppenheiser asked the Planning Commission members if they would like public comments to be limited to 3 minutes. Upon their request, Mr. Oosterhouse agreed to be the time keeper.

Mr. Sweppenheiser asked for public comment from anyone in favor of the project. Mr. John Lewis pointed out that the development across the street includes multi-family dwellings.

After asking for opposition comment and hearing none Mr. Sweppenheiser closed the public hearing at 7:07pm.

VI. ACTION ON SUP23-007 WISE:

The Commission members reviewed SUP23-007 with discussion including: how the request for a boarding house was a proper fit according to the zoning ordinance; review of the surrounding area that includes gravel pits, storage units, farming, college housing; agreeing that this request does not change the character of the neighborhood. Mr. Cook inquired about property taxes – Ms. Jessica Wilson, WISE finance director, stated that they are a non-profit organization and are exempt from property taxes.

The Commission members reviewed the following standards and requirements:

- (1) The nature, location, and size of the special use shall not change the essential character of the surrounding area, nor disrupt the orderly and proper development of the district as a whole. The use shall not be in conflict with or discourage the adjacent or neighboring lands or buildings.
- (2) The special use shall not diminish the value of the land, buildings or structures in the neighborhood.
- (3) The special use shall not increase traffic hazards or cause congestion on the public highways or streets of the area. Adequate access to the parcel shall be furnished.
- (4) The water supply and sewage disposal system shall be adequate for the proposed special use by conforming to State and County Health Department requirements, and the special use shall not over-burden any existing services or facilities.
- (5) Uses by special permit shall not be significantly more objectionable to nearby properties by reason of traffic, noise, vibrations, dust, fumes, odor, smoke, glare, lights, or disposal of waste than the operation of any principal permitted use, nor shall the special use increase hazards from fire or other dangers to either the property or adjacent property.
- (6) The Planning Commission may require that the premises be permanently screened from adjoining or contiguous properties by a wall, fence, plant screen and/or other approved enclosure when deemed necessary to buffer the surrounding uses from objectionable noise, light, etc., created by the special use.
- (7) The special use shall be consistent with the intent and purpose of this Ordinance and with the intent of the Land Use Plan for the Township. The special use shall be compatible with the natural environment and shall not be inimical to the public health, safety and general welfare.

Upon agreement that this request meets all of the requirements, Mrs. Davis made a motion to accept SUP23-007 request for Special Use Permit in the Agricultural zoning district. Mr. Oliver supported the motion. The motion passed four to one via roll call vote with Mr. Cook, Mrs. Davis, Mr. Oliver and Mr. Sweppenheiser voting yes and Mr. Oosterhouse voting no.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ms. Currie thanked the Commission for their due diligence in this matter.

IX. ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Oosterhouse made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Oliver supported the motion. The motion passed with five ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

APPROVAL: Action taken at the regular meeting of December 12, 2023: Motion to approve the Planning Commission minutes of October 10, 2023 by: Mr. Oliver. Supported by: Mrs. Davis. Motion carried with seven ayes.

Timothy Kleinheksel,
Timothy Kleinheksel, Recording Secretary
BIG RAPIDS CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION

December 12, 2023
Date Approved