

MINUTES
BIG RAPIDS CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION

Tuesday, February 13, 2024 --- 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, February 13, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Present: Zach Cook, Jerry Everett, Gordon Oliver, Jeff Oosterhouse and Amanda Wethington. Mark Sweppenheiser and Mary Davis were absent. The record shows there is a quorum. Also present: 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. Mr. Everett indicated that a conflict of interest existed with the ARC special use permit.

IV. MINUTES:

Mrs. Wethington asked the Commission members to review the minutes of the January 23, 2024 meeting. Mr. Cook made a motion to approve the January 23, 2024 minutes as submitted. Mr. Oliver supported the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously with five ayes.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Greg Jones, resides across the river from ARC property, cited the following negative factors: excessive noise, property values, adjacent zoning, safety, access, loss of tax revenue. Bill Schoenlein, property owner across river from the property pointed out several negative issues of the ARC application, asking the Planning Commission to deny the Special Use Permit. A spokesperson for the Indian Village association stated that they spend \$20-40k annually for road maintenance and repair and is concerned with the impact of additional traffic. ARC volunteer stated that she walks dogs regularly and they are not bothered by noisy vehicles or other loud noises and asked what would it be like if the ARC closed down. Jeff Mehl, nearby resident, said that everyone agrees the shelter is needed, but this is the wrong location in the Township. David Chipman, also a nearby resident, said he is concerned with protecting the value of his property.

VI. ACTION ON SUP23-008 ARC:

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. *PC response: disruption is possible*
- (2) The special use shall not diminish the value of the land, buildings or structures in the neighborhood. *PC response: could diminish land value*
- (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. *PC response: minimal traffic increase*
- (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. *PC response: no public water or sewer facilities available*
- (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. *PC response: noise may be objectionable*
- (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. *PC response: submitted plans did not include screening*
- (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. *PC response: unsure of intent and purpose*

After discussion, Mr. Oosterhouse made a motion to approve special use permit SUP23-008. Mr. Cook supported the motion. The motion failed with a three to one roll call vote with Mr. Cook, Mr. Oliver and Mrs. Wethington voting no and Mr. Oosterhouse voting yes.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Various nearby residents stated noise and disruption from the shelter's dogs as their main complaints. Cate Arroe asked how barking dogs could be louder than the concrete plant. Another resident opposed the application due to the loss of tax revenue due to a non-profit. Bill Schoenlein thanked the commission members for their due diligence in this matter.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT:

Mrs. Wethington adjourned the meeting at 7:35pm.

APPROVAL: Action taken at the regular meeting of March 12, 2024: Motion to approve the Planning Commission minutes of February 13, 2024 by: Mr. Oliver. Supported by: Mr. Everett. Motion carried with seven ayes.

Timothy Kleinheksel,
Timothy Kleinheksel, Recording Secretary
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March 12, 2024
Date Approved