

JAMESTOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING  
APRIL 15, 2014  
7:00 PM

**UNAPPROVED  
MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER-

Chairperson Larabel called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

ROLL CALL -

Dykstra, Keppel, Larabel, Woltjer, Smith, and Tacoma were present.

Webster was absent with notice.

Also present was Planner Ransford.

INVOCATION -

Keppel gave the invocation.

APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 18, 2014 MINUTES -

Keppel had a question regarding the type of construction being used for Forest Grove Christian Reformed Church. Smith answered to his satisfaction.

Ransford recommended that the third page of the March 18, 2014 Minutes clarify that the 75' setback, stipulated in the motion to approve Richard Hoekstra's Special Use Request, was referencing the north property line only.

Dykstra made the motion and Smith supported that the March 18, 2014 Minutes be approved with this change.

**MOTION CARRIED - UNANIMOUSLY.**

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA -

Smith made the motion, supported by Keppel, that the Agenda for this meeting be approved.

**MOTION CARRIED - UNANIMOUSLY.**

GENERAL CITIZEN COMMENTS REGARDING NON-AGENDA ITEMS -

None.

NEW BUSINESS -

\*Site Plan - Final Site Condominium Plan - Greentree 2

Jim Keppel was asked to serve as chairperson because Chairperson Larabel is closely associated with this project.

Commissioners discussed details of this recommendation, including streets that are through streets, number of individual homes, when the project was due to be finished, as well as possible fire concerns. All questions were satisfactorily answered by either the commissioners themselves or by Brett Nicholson, of Pathfinder Engineering.

Tacoma made the motion and it was supported by Dykstra that the Greentree 2 Final Site Plan Condominium Plan be recommended for Board approval.

**MOTION CARRIED - UNANIMOUSLY.**

\*Public Hearings -

-Special Use Request – Craig Snoeyink of 2975 Greenly – requesting an accessory building larger than the maximum permitted pursuant to Section 3.2I

Ransford summarized the request as being a building of 1,584 square feet on a parcel that permits a maximum of 1,122 square feet for personal storage of vehicles. He mentioned that it is important to note that this parcel recently contained an accessory building of 1,184 square feet.

Smith made the motion and it was supported by Woltjer that the Public Hearing be opened.

**MOTION CARRIED – UNANIMOUSLY.**

Craig Snoeyink pointed out that that building that had been torn down had been dilapidated, and that the proposed structure was 404 square feet larger, would have steel siding and shingles to match the house as closely as possible and would be landscaped, as well.

As there were no other questions or comments regarding this Special Use Request. Smith made the motion, supported by Woltjer that the Public Hearing be closed.

**MOTION CARRIED – UNANIMOUSLY.**

Dykstra pointed out that there are many houses nearby the Snoeyink residence and asked if any of the neighbors are concerned.

Mr. Snoeyink replied that his closest neighbors were very much in favor of the change.

Tacoma inquired if there would be any change with Mr. Snoeyink's driveway.

Craig Snoeyink replied that if there was, it would not be a drastic change.

At this point there were no further questions.

Tacoma made the motion and Keppel supported to approve the Special Use Request by Craig Snoeyink, of 2975 Greenly Street, for an accessory building of 1,584 square feet.

**MOTION CARRIED- UNANIMOUSLY.**

-Zoning Ordinance (Text Amendment) Changes -

Dykstra made the motion and it was supported by Tacoma that the Public Hearing be opened.

**MOTION CARRIED – UNANIMOUSLY.**

There were no comments or questions by the residents present.

Dykstra made a motion, supported by Keppel to close the Public Hearing.

**MOTION CARRIED - UNANIMOUSLY.**

+ Section 13.2 – Permitted Uses, B/I Business and Industrial Zoning District-

Ransford briefly outlined the proposed language, remarking that the change seemed to be good, as it corrected an error.

Woltjer expressed concerns about changing the language, referencing the Zoning Book and Sections 13.3 and 13.4.

Ransford answered the Commissioner's questions and reiterated that the Zoning Board of Appeals had concluded that the current language is ambiguous.

Tacoma made the motion, supported by Dykstra, that the current language of Section 13.2 (Permitted Uses) in the Zoning Ordinance be amended, according to the recommended language received by the Planning Commission in the memorandum sent by Planner



Ransford on February 4, 2014.

**MOTION CARRIED – UNANIMOUSLY.**

+Section 22.9 - Limits of Power-

Commissioners discussed this proposed change very thoroughly, with Woltjer expressing great concern that the change in wording would open a door, asserting the current wording is there for a good reason, ensuring harmony between neighbors, that the change was like handing the Zoning Board of Appeals a blank check, and that the 50% limit provision was protection for the Township.

Larabel explained that two variances override this limit anyway, if a resident can prove hardship.

Keppel, who serves on the Zoning Board of Appeals, observed that this happened quite often.

Smith reflected that having the 50% limit was like having a tool in your toolbox - if you needed it, it was there. He also pointed out that each case coming to the ZBA needed to be treated entirely differently, therefore no precedent was set.

Ransford agreed, emphasizing that the Township's attorney's opinion meshed with this – that since each case was slightly different, therefore, no precedent is set.

At this time Dykstra made the motion, supported by Smith that the current language of Section 22.9 (Limits of Power) in the Zoning Ordinance be amended according to the recommended language received by the Planning Commission in the memorandum sent out by Planner Ransford on January 6, 2014.

**MOTION CARRIED -**

DYKSTRA, KEPPEL, LARABEL, SMITH, TACOMA: YEA  
WOLTJER: NAY

+Section 26.3A – Minimum Landscaping within Required Buffer Yards-

Commissioners consensus was that this recommended change had merit.

Smith made a motion, supported by Keppel that the current language of Section 26.3A (Minimum Landscaping within Required Buffer Yards) be amended according to the recommended language received by the Planning Commission in the memorandum sent out by Planner Ransford on January 6, 2014.

**MOTION CARRIED – UNANIMOUSLY**

**DISCUSSION ITEMS -**

**\*Home Occupation Language-**

Commissioners discussed the language in the Jamestown Township Zoning Ordinance, Section 3.4 – Home Occupations.

Jeremy Bodbyl, of 3940 Gordon Street, was present to answer questions regarding how the Ordinance affects the small engine repair business in his home.

The Commissioners brainstormed, working through possible solutions and the re-wording of the Ordinance for residents, like Mr. Bodbyl, who desire a small business in their home. Concerns highlighted included: impact on neighbors, differentiating between R-1, R-2, and AR property, size of acreage owned, flexibility, light, noise, increase in traffic, storage, retail sales, gauging size of needed equipment, special use permits, attached versus unattached garages, and square footage limits, taking into consideration what is standard in other Townships, such as Salem, Allendale, and Olive Townships.

Dykstra reflected that the Township had never been in the business of putting residents

out of business.

Commissioners again discussed maximum square footage for the home, as well as an accessory building, tentatively settling on 300 square feet and 500 square feet, respectively.

Smith mentioned that regulation #4 seemed unwieldy, and should be looked at, as well.

Larabel asked if there was enough information for Ransford to work on.

Planner Ransford replied that he would look at what was appropriate.

#### OLD BUSINESS -

None.

#### EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING AGENDA ITEMS ONLY -

None.

#### CORRESPONDENCE -

There was correspondence from Spring Meadows, part of which property is in bankruptcy proceedings. Kirk Scharphorn, Zoning Administrator, was not comfortable with the changes requested.

Larabel asserted that, historically, any major change must come back to the amendment process, or the Zoning Administration could be given carte blanche.

Smith suggested the possibility of changing the wording in Section 19.15.

#### PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENT -

None.

#### ADJOURNMENT -

Woltjer made a motion, supported by Dykstra that the meeting be adjourned.

**MOTION CARRIED - UNANIMOUSLY.**

TIME- 8:15 p.m.

#### MINUTES SUBMITTED BY -

Sandy VanAntwerp