

**MINUTES OF THE GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON  
JUNE 30, 2016  
AT THE GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP OFFICES  
8555 KALAMAZOO AVENUE SE • CALEDONIA, MICHIGAN 49316**

**I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairman DeWard. A quorum was present.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Robert DeWard, Connie Giarmo, Tim Haagsma, Ronnie Rober, Lani Thomas, Louis Waayenberg

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Brad Burns (with notice)

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mark Sisson, Township Planner / Zoning Administrator,  
Matt McKernan, Assistant Planner

**II. CONSIDERATION OF MEETING AGENDA**

No changes

**III. CONSIDERATION OF MEETING MINUTES**

June 9, 2016 – Special Meeting Minutes

Assistant Planner McKernan stated that there were two alterations to the draft meeting minutes for the June 9 Special Meeting. On page 2, paragraph 4 the word one was changed to once. On page 3, Ronnie Rober was added to the list of Aye votes.

**Motion:** By Member Giarmo supported by Member Rober to approve the minutes with changes referenced by Assistant Planner McKernan for the June 9, 2016 Special Meeting.

**Discussion:** None

**Ayes:** Robert DeWard, Connie Giarmo, Tim Haagsma, Ronnie Rober,  
Lani Thomas, Louis Waayenberg

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion:** Passed

**IV. INQUIRY OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

None

**VI. New Business**

**1. Advertised Public Hearings**

**a. 524 Fendale- Special Use Permit- Accessory Building**

Chair DeWard asked the applicant, John Wierda of 524 Fendale SE to explain the current configuration of his property and what the intended use of the detached accessory building would be. Wierda responded that he intended to use the building as storage for two classic cars that he owned. The building would be used for storage only. A one stall wide door will be added on the rear wall of his existing two stall garage to access the new detached accessory building in his rear yard.

Upon questioning by the chair, Wierda responded that he had not been approached by any neighbors about the request and that he believed this was because his request was common in his neighborhood, with at least 3 neighbors having rear yard accessory buildings of equal size.

Member Giarmo asked if there is to be lighting on the exterior of the building. Wierda responded that he didn't intend to install exterior lighting, but would follow any conditions the Planning Commission imposed if he decided to install them in the future.

Chair DeWard asked for clarification on exterior materials to be used on the building. Wierda stated that aluminum siding is on the house, but it was difficult to find. Wierda stated that he planned on finding a material and style that would be complementary to his home and neighboring houses. Planner Sisson expressed support of the applicant's plan for the exterior of the accessory building to complement the existing house and neighboring homes.

Chair DeWard opened and closed the Public Hearing at 7:12.

**Motion:** By Member Giarmo supported by Member Rober to approve the request with the conditions stated in the Staff Report:

1. That the building is used for customary passenger vehicle and residential storage purposes, and not for business related use.
2. That the exterior materials utilized are consistent with the siding and roofing materials used on dwellings nearby.
3. That now or in the future, no exterior yard lights are to be attached to the structure that would cause glare in the rear yards or windows of adjacent lots.
4. That the floor elevation of the building, site grading, and roof drainage be handled with consideration of avoiding excessive drainage on adjacent properties.

**Discussion:** None

**Ayes:** Robert DeWard, Connie Giarmo, Tim Haagsma, Lani Thomas, Louis Waayenberg, Ronnie Rober

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion:** Passed

**VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

## VIII. GENERAL DISCUSSION

Planner Sisson gave an update on several projects in the Planning Department:

### 1. Harmon Farms:

Sisson informed the Planning Commission that when Harmon Farms returns for Final Preliminary Plat Approval, it is likely that the plan will no longer feature a connection to the park. Planning Commission members expressed disappointment as an integrated trail and park system is an important goal of the Township.

### 2. 2945 68<sup>th</sup> Street:

Staff is expecting an application before the July 1 deadline, for a Site Condominium development on the vacant lot to the east of Leisure Creek. The developers have met with the Leisure Creek Home Owners Association to discuss the development. Member Haagsma stated that there has been contact with the Kent County Road Commission about the development and that the Road Commission would like to see an additional egress point for the development. Planner Sisson stated that site condominium developments and platted subdivisions impact surrounding areas in similar ways and should be subjected to the same level of scrutiny. As a result, a public hearing will be held.

### 3. Parks & Recreation Plan Survey

A link to the Parks and Recreation survey on the website beginning July 1. Township Residents will be alerted to the survey by an attachment sent out with their tax bills.

### 4. Weathervane Phase 4

Staff has received an application for approval of a new phase of Cooks Crossing. The request will be heard at the July 11 Township Board meeting.

### 5. Master Plan Updates

Staff had received an email about a possible development on the southeast corner of 84<sup>th</sup> Street and Kalamazoo Avenue. Sisson stated that he didn't expect that the Planning Commission would see a formal on the development until the fall.

Sisson stated that one of the weak points of the 84<sup>th</sup> Street and Kalamazoo Avenue Subarea plan was that it failed to address concerns about the provision of utilities to the Subarea and beyond. Current utilities plans show infrastructure that would only support low-density development, if more expansive utilities are run to the site, it may be difficult to prevent further development to the South.

Planner Sisson suggested the need for additional updates the Township Master Plan to address these issues. He envisioned that the Master Plan would consolidate the Dutton, 100th Street, and 84<sup>th</sup> Street/Kalamazoo Avenue subarea plans into one document. The Planning Department will be working on updating the Township Parks & Recreation and Non-Motorized Transportation Plans this summer and on gathering demographic data for the Master Plan update. The Planning Department could reduce the cost of the update by doing the majority of data collection and research prior to the hiring of a consultant. The Master Plan update could be completed in the summer of 2018.

Member Giarmo asked if the opening of the Switch Data center might necessitate a revision to the Dutton Subarea plan sooner than 2018. Planner Sisson stated that he believes that the Township can accommodate any immediate development related to the Switch Data center with small zoning changes. Immediate changes to the Master Plan will most likely not be necessary. Completion of the Master Plan in 2018 allows time to monitor and better define what Switch impact development instead of relying on speculation and generalized projections. Sisson stated that the Dutton Plan still functions well and that a more pressing planning need is the East Paris Avenue and 60<sup>th</sup> Street area. It may be necessary to consider appropriate uses in this area, with mixed-use being a priority. Another area of concern are the properties owned by Steelcase, south of M-6. They are currently zoned PUD, which may make redevelopment process cumbersome for developers. An inventory of housing stock near Switch will also be necessary to determine how much new housing Gaines will need to provide.

**6. Switch Data Center**

Planner Sisson gave an update on the Renaissance Zone application for the Switch Data Center.

Member Haagsma stated that there are issues to work out with the County, but he believes the agreement will be approved by the Township Board.

**7. Everett's Landscaping**

Sisson noted that he had not had any contact with representatives from Everett's since the preliminary meeting to discuss their plans for a new facility at 420 84<sup>th</sup> St. He was unsure if Everett's planned to move forward with their proposal.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:** By Member Haagmsa supported by Member Waayenberg to adjourn the meeting.

**Discussion:** None

**Ayes:** Robert DeWard, Connie Giarmo, Tim Haagsma, Ronnie Rober, Lani Thomas, Louis Waayenberg

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion:** Passed

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 P.M.

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the above is a true copy of the minutes from the June 30, 2016 Regular Meeting of the Gaines Charter Township Planning Commission held at the time and place mentioned above pursuant to the required statutory procedures.

Respectfully submitted,



Lani Thomas, Secretary  
Gaines Charter Township  
Planning Commission

Dated: August 25, 2016