

**MINUTES OF THE GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON  
DECEMBER 21, 2017  
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 7:00 p.m. by Chair Giarmo. A quorum was present.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Brad Burns, Connie Giarmo, Tim Haagsma, Ronnie Rober, Lani Thomas,

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Talimma Billips (with notice) and Louis Waayenberg (with notice)

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mark Sisson, AICP; Township Planner  
Matt McKernan, Assistant Planner

**II. CONSIDERATION OF MEETING AGENDA**

No Changes

**III. CONSIDERATION OF MEETING MINUTES**

November 16, 2017 – Regular Meeting Minutes

**Motion:** By Member Haagsma supported by Member Rober to approve the minutes for the November 16, 2017 Planning Commission Regular Meeting.

**Discussion:** None

**Ayes:** Burns, Giarmo, Haagsma, Thomas, Rober

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion:** Passed

**IV. INQUIRY OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Member Rober explained that she lived in the Crystal Springs neighborhood, but her home was not located near the proposed development. Rober stated that she would be able to remain impartial when evaluating this request.

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

None

**VI. New Business**

**1. Advertised Public Hearings**

**a. Stonewater-Crystal Springs PUD**

*The applicants request zoning approval of a 7.2 acre PUD extending approximately 750 feet north of Crystal Springs Drive SE on Kalamazoo Ave SE. Proposed are a credit union, a medical office and a retail/ service building. A three acre back lot is also included and planned to support professional offices or similar low impact non-retail uses. The request will rezone part of the existing Crystal Springs PUD and part of parcel 41-22-09-151-006 from RL -10 Residential and create a new commercial PUD.*

Planner Sisson gave an overview of the request. The 7.2 acre site on the east side of Kalamazoo Avenue had originally been planned as the location of the club house for the Crystal Springs golf course. The Crystal Springs PUD was subsequently amended in 2008 to allow the clubhouse to be built on the west side of Kalamazoo Avenue. No indication was given as to what types of uses would now be allowed on the east side of the street. The north one acre of the 7.2 acre development site was left out of the Crystal Springs PUD, and is currently zoned RL-10. The developer would now like to incorporate this area into the PUD and create 3 commercial lots along Kalamazoo Avenue with a fourth parcel fronting Crystal Springs Boulevard to the rear. Staff has determined that most logical way of facilitating this request is to rezone the entire 7.2 acre site into a new PUD called the Stonewater-Crystal Springs PUD. This will greatly simplify the administration of zoning for the development. There are specific uses proposed for the three lots along Kalamazoo Avenue; a multi-tenant retail building to the north, a three-suite medical office facility in the center, and a credit union on the south parcel. The fourth parcel (Parcel D) lacks a definite proposed use, with office-service and lighter commercial options being discussed. The PUD plan lacks a detailed plans for elements such as landscaping and lighting. The Planning Commission should require the applicants to install a landscaped berm along the east side of Parcel D.

**Doug Stalsonburg, Exxel Engineering**

Stalsonburg presented an on behalf of First Companies. The plan has been updated to address the issues raised by the Planning Commission during preliminary discussions that took place at the November meeting. A connection to the existing golf cart path has been added along the east side of Parcel D along with a 15 foot wide buffer strip of staggered pine trees. The three proposed building sites along Kalamazoo Avenue have letters of intent to proceed when the PUD rezoning is finalized. There are no definite plans for Parcel D yet. The site plan contains a list of possible low-intensity uses for Parcel D that won't conflict with the existing businesses on the west side of Kalamazoo Avenue. The development will have two entrances along Kalamazoo Avenue and an access road that connects to an existing curb cut on Crystal Springs Boulevard. All stormwater on the property will drain toward the pond on the north side of the property. This will require an easement over a portion of the Crystal Springs golf course property.

Chair Giarmo entered Patricia Spalding's letter into the record and opened the public hearing at 7:20 pm

**Patricia Spalding, 1709 Fountainview Court**

Spalding's home is adjacent to Parcel D. Spalding was aware that this area could be developed when she built her home but she was not concerned because it was originally supposed to be the club house for the golf course. Spalding doesn't feel that commercial uses are appropriate for this location. She would like to see the installation of a fence in addition to the landscaped berm. Minimalizing light pollution will be very important for this property. The developer should be required to clean up the ravine that runs along the east side of the Parcel D. Uses that will encourage traffic to cut through Crystal Springs from 68<sup>th</sup> Street should be discouraged.

**Jon McKenzie 1820 Spring Meadow.**

McKenzie stated that there are already issues with motorists driving the wrong direction down one-way portions of Crystal Springs Boulevard. The addition of commercial and office-service uses to the area could exacerbate this problem. McKenzie agreed with Spalding about the condition of the ravine along the east side of the rear parcel. McKenzie asked Planner Sisson about height restrictions for the buildings and requested an explanation of the approval process for the PUD. Sisson explained that the

buildings would follow the general Township standards for building height unless alternative guidelines were specifically authorized by the Planning Commission. Sisson explained that the next step in the approval process would be for the Planning Commission to approve a resolution recommending approval or denial of the PUD to the Township Board. If the Township Board ultimately approves the PUD rezoning, each individual building within the development will require site plan review.

Chair Giarmo closed the public hearing at 7:27 pm.

Stalsonburg explained that plans for the stormwater runoff have been reviewed by the Kent County Drain Commission. It will be the responsibility of the property owner to maintain the ravine, but the Drain Commission has the authority to intervene if it begins to interfere with other drains. Stalsonburg has inspected the ravine and found that while it is currently functional, he agrees with the neighbors that some of the vegetation should be trimmed for aesthetic purposes. The specifics of site lighting will be addressed during the site plan reviews for the individual building sites. The site lighting will be very similar to what is seen on the west side of Kalamazoo Avenue. There hasn't been consideration for building a fence along the east property line of the rear parcel, but they would look into it. Stalsonburg would like to see the buffer of pine trees planted as soon as the PUD rezoning is approved so they have more time to mature before anything is built there. It is possible that they could be also planted within a small berm to better block the view of the development from the view of residents of Crystal Springs. The architecture of the buildings will be similar to what is found in the plaza on the west side of Kalamazoo.

Planner Sisson explained that the potential uses for the PUD would be based off the permitted uses for the C-1 Neighborhood Commercial zoning district. Sisson gave the Planning Commission a summary of the uses that are permitted with the C-1 district.

Chair Giarmo opened the discussion for comments from the Planning Commission. The Planning commission stated a preference that parking for Parcel D be located on the north and west sides of the site with the east side being reserved as green space. It was requested that the applicant reevaluate the location of the golf cart path on Parcel D. The Planning Commission expressed reservations about approving the PUD until the applicant provides a more definite list of what types of uses would be allowed on Parcel D. Retail operations were strongly discouraged. The Planning Commission also asked the applicants to respond to the comments in the staff report relating to an overabundance of proposed parking for the three parcels along Kalamazoo Avenue.

Stalsonburg explained that it was difficult to provide a list of every possible use that might be anticipated for Parcel D because they can't really begin to market the site until the PUD is approved. Stalsonburg stated that the applicants would create a more detailed list of potential uses for the site to better address the Planning Commission's concerns. Parcel D would not be very marketable as a retail space due to its lack of visibility from Kalamazoo Avenue. Office/service uses were much more likely for Parcel D. The parking calculations shown on the PUD plan are based on the demonstrated needs of the potential developers of these sites. Documentation will be provided during the site plan reviews for the individual properties to demonstrate a need for the number of parking spaces shown. The individual buildings will have a similar look to what was approved on the west side of Kalamazoo Avenue.

**Motion:** By Member Haagsma supported by Member Rober to postpone a decision on the request until the applicant provides a more definite list of proposed uses for Parcel D, renderings reflecting what future buildings will look like, and more defined plans for a berm/buffer along the east side of Parcel D.

**Discussion:** None

**Ayes:** Burns, Giarmo, Haagsma, Thomas, Rober

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion:** Passed

## VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### 1. Site Plan Review

#### a. Hash Tag Acres Tentative Preliminary Plat (RL-10)

*Discussion pertaining to the tentative preliminary plat of Hash Tag Acres, a 27 lot single-family platted subdivision.*

**Motion:** By Member Haagsma supported by Member Rober to deny the request for Tentative Preliminary Plat Approval due to the fact the applicant failed to return with updated plans that addressed concerns pertaining to stormwater detention, wetland delineation, and the availability and design of utilities for the site. Future attempts to develop the property will require a new application.

**Discussion:** None

**Ayes:** Burns, Giarmo, Haagsma, Thomas, Rober

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion:** Passed

***Clarification: The Planning Commission should have been instructed to recommend denial to the Township Board. The recommendation to deny the request for Tentative Preliminary Plat approval for Hash Tag Acres will be heard by the Township Board on January 8, 2018.***

## VIII. GENERAL DISCUSSION

### 1. Master Plan Update

Planner Sisson asked the Planning Commission to read and evaluate the Goals & Objectives section of the 2002 Master Plan. Public input will be an important component of generating updated goals and objectives.

### 2. Zoning Ordinance Amendments for Private Roads & Mobile Homes

Planner Sisson explained that the Dutton Fire Department has retained a fire inspector to address fire code compliance issues. The Township had previously operated under the international fire code, but that lapsed sometime around 2008. The Township has the option to readopt the complete international fire code as written, but this would have the unwanted effect of making the Fire Department the lead agency for evaluating private roads and residential developments. Instead the Township will adopt the international fire code without the sections pertaining to private roads. This will necessitate the Township

creating a set of private road standards. The Planning Department has been working with the Township Engineer and the Dutton and Cutlerville Fire Departments to create workable standards.

Sisson presented a draft version of the private roads ordinance to the Planning Commission. There will be a distinction between private driveways (2 or less homes) and private roads. The Township Engineer has suggested that a section be added that requires that private roads in plats and site condos meet the standards of the Kent County Road Commission. The Township will likely require that a licensed engineer design the roads and certify them after they are completed. The ordinance will require roads to be completed before building permits will be issued.

Sisson transitioned to discussion pertaining to mobile homes. The Township, unlike most other communities, lacks standards for mobile homes outside of mobile home parks. Sisson presented a draft version of an ordinance amendment that would regulate issues such as minimum house width and aesthetic concerns. Sisson also discussed possible revisions to the mobile home ordinance that would bring it more in line with state and federal standards. The Township currently has an ordinance that has stricter regulations than what is required by the Michigan Mobile Home Commission or the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:** By Member Rober supported by Member Haagsma to adjourn the meeting.

**Discussion:** None

**Ayes:** Burns, Giarmo, Haagsma, Thomas, Rober

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion:** Passed

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the above is a true copy of the minutes from the December 21, 2017, 2017 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,

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Lani Thomas, Secretary  
Gaines Charter Township  
Planning Commission

Dated: January 25, 2018