

**MINUTES OF THE GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON  
JULY 27, 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:** Talimma Billips, Connie Giarmo, Tim Haagsma,  
Lani Thomas, Ronnie Rober, 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 22, 2017 – Regular Meeting Minutes

**Motion:** By Member Rober supported by Member Haagsma to approve the minutes for the June 22, 2017 Planning Commission Regular Meeting.

**Discussion:** None

**Ayes:** Billips, Giarmo, Haagsma, Rober, Thomas, 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 Hearing Items**

**a. 7921 Eastern Avenue SE-SPU Group Child Day Care Home (RL-10)**

Special use permit request to expand an existing Family Child Day Care Home (1-6 children) to a Group Child Day Care Home (7-12 children).

**Michael House, 7921 Eastern Avenue SE**

House and his wife currently operate a day care business out of their home. Their current operation is at maximum capacity for a family day care license (6 children). The Houses have received requests from current clients to watch additional children on snow days during the school year and sporadically during the summer months. A group child day care license would allow them to watch up to 12 children, but they anticipate they will have about 7-8 children at the most. The hours of the operation for the daycare are currently 6:30 am-5:30 pm Monday-Friday and will not change as a result of this request. The Houses are not proposing to change the physical layout of their property in any way. The daycare operation has a small yard sign that is only displayed when they are seeking new clients.

Planner Sisson stated that there were no major issues with the request. The location of the applicant's property is well-suited for a child day care business. Staff has received no inquiries from the public about the request and there are no indications of past complaints about the day care operation. The inspection report from the State of Michigan for their current operation identified some small problems. Those matters will be investigated by the state licensing agency and are out of the purview of a zoning review.

Chair Giarmo opened and closed the public hearing at 7:07 pm.

**Motion:** By Member Haagsma supported by Member Billips to approve the special use permit allowing the Group Child Day Care Home, subject to the following conditions:

1. That the applicant comply with all standards for Group Child Day Care Homes as required by the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs.

**Discussion:** None

**Ayes:** Billips, Giarmo, Haagsma, Rober, Thomas, Waayenberg

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion:** Passed

**b. Railtown Brewing Company- Major PUD Amendment**

Request for a major amendment to the Dutton Mill Village PUD to allow for construction of a 5,983 SF Microbrewery & Restaurant.

**Justin Buitter and Gim Lee of Railtown Brewing Company**

Railtown Brewing has experienced tremendous growth since it first opened in late 2014 and is quickly outgrowing its current location. The brewery is often over seating capacity on weekends and will soon lack the room to increase beer production. Railtown had considered expanding into a third suite within the strip mall, but found that it would be more cost effective in the long term to construct a new building. Railtown plans to purchase the car wash property at 3095 68<sup>th</sup> Street for this purpose. Constructing a new building will allow Railtown to continue to expand production to meet demand and add a full kitchen as well.

Planner Sisson gave an overview of the history of the PUD and outlined the important discussion points relative to the current proposal. The property was originally planned for restaurant use as part of the

Dutton Mill Village PUD. The PUD was later amended to construct the carwash that currently occupies the site. The applicant is requesting site plan approval and to amend the Dutton Mill Village PUD to allow Railtown to add a canning facility in the future. The 2008 Dutton Subarea Plan calls for pedestrian-oriented businesses that would reflect traditional architectural forms. Staff worked with the applicant to move the building closer to the street than what would be permitted in the C-1/C-2 districts. The proposed building façade wouldn't be classified as "traditional architecture" but it could serve as a nice transition from the more suburban dollar store to the east. The proposed outdoor seating area and awning in conjunction with the provided landscaping will create an attractive streetscape that makes up for a deficit in landscaping points along 68<sup>th</sup> Street. A lack of parking spaces is the largest concern with the site plan. The site plan is short about 15 spaces compared to the GCTZO parking minimums and has an even larger deficit when compared to what is prescribed for a 229 seat restaurant by the International Transportation Engineer's manual. The applicant has several more years on their current lease and will be able to use their allotted parking spaces at the strip mall as overflow parking during that time. Staff would like to see a permanent arrangement to be made with the strip mall to allow the parking lot to accommodate overflow parking from the new Railtown building. Staff would also like to see the parking spaces adjacent to the parking lot entrances converted into landscaped parking peninsulas. This would help better define the drive and add additional landscaping to the parking lot.

Buiter concurred with Sisson's assessment of their parking needs. Railtown studied their current parking usage for their existing 89 seat building and found they used about 50 spaces during peak periods. Extrapolating from this calculation, it can be assumed that the 72 spaces provided on the site plan will likely not be adequate for their proposed 229 seat building. Railtown will work with their current land to lease additional parking spaces from the strip mall once the lease on their existing location ends in December 2019.

Chair Giarmo opened and closed the public hearing at 7:20 pm.

The Planning Commission asked questions pertaining to signage, parking lot circulation, pedestrian paths, and the phasing of construction.

Buiter and Lee addressed the questions raised by members of the Planning Commission. Railtown is hoping to break ground on the new building starting in the fall, with completion planned for mid-winter. Railtown will construct the outdoor patio area once weather permits in the summer of 2018. Railtown is planning that the south entrance to the parking lot will be used primarily by patrons, with the north entrance being used for deliveries. Railtown feels that there is more demand for a bike path connection to their new facility than the installation of a sidewalk along East Mill Run. East Mill Run already has a 3 foot wide shoulder along both sides of the road. Railtown's architect is preparing an updated site plan that will address the typographical errors pertaining to signage. The wall sign on the south side of the building will be around 70 SF and the sign on the west side of the building will be about 30 SF. Buiter has discussed the engineer's report with their architect and found that the recommendations are fairly standard and they shouldn't have any trouble complying.

Member Haagsma informed the Planning Commission that Railtown was approved for a second microbrewery license by the Township Board in early July. Buiter added that they are also working on a small wine maker's license with the state, which would allow Railtown to make/sell cider, wine, and mead.

Planner Sisson asked for clarification on whether or not an access/maintenance agreement for East Mill Run exists. Buiter explained that he had spoken with the manager of the mobile home park about several

issues. The deed to the car wash property contains a description of an access easement on East Mill Run. A maintenance agreement for the road has never been written. Railtown intends to work with the mobile home park to contribute toward the costs associated with maintaining the road.

**Motion:** By Member Haagsma supported by Member Rober to direct staff to draft a resolution with appropriate conditions of approval for consideration at the August 24 meeting.

**Discussion:** None

**Ayes:** Billips, Giarmo, Haagsma, Rober, Thomas, Waayenberg

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion:** Passed

**VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**VIII. GENERAL DISCUSSION**

**1. Four Corners Meeting**

Planner Sisson gave the Planning Commission an update on discussions with the Four Corners group. Several members of the group recently met with representatives from Switch to discuss peripheral development opportunities. Switch is actively recruiting businesses from around the country to lease space within their facility. Many of these companies have expressed interest in having locations near the data center. Switch is very interested in ensuring that adequate water/sewer/fiber optics are in place to facilitate development. It is probable that some of these developments could lead Dutton to expand into a lifestyle area with residential and commercial components catering to these new developments. This is largely consistent with the types of development envisioned by the 2008 Dutton Subarea plan.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

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

**Discussion:** None

**Ayes:** Billips, Giarmo, Haagsma, Rober, Thomas, Waayenberg

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion:** Passed

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the above is a true copy of the minutes from the July 27, 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,



Lani Thomas, Secretary  
Gaines Charter Township  
Planning Commission

Dated: August 24, 2017