

**MINUTES OF THE GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON  
OCTOBER 25, 2018  
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 Chair Giarmo. A quorum was present.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Burns, Giarmo, Haagsma, Rober, Thomas, Waayenberg

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Billips (w/ notice)

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

**II. CONSIDERATION OF MEETING AGENDA**

No Changes

**III. CONSIDERATION OF MEETING MINUTES**

September 27, 2018 – Regular Meeting Minutes

**Motion:** By Member Haagsma, supported by Member Rober to approve the minutes for the September 27, 2018 Planning Commission Regular Meeting.

**Discussion:** None

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

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Decision:** Passed

**IV. INQUIRY OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None

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

None

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Advertised Public Hearings**

**a. PUD Waiver Request-6503 Sunny Spot Ct (PUD)**

*A waiver from the dimensional standards of the Summer Shores PUD to allow for the construction of a 240 sq. ft. freestanding garage for the purpose of additional vehicle storage. The proposed garage would be located in an area considered to be a "front" yard, which is not permitted*

**Tim Slagter, 6503 Sunny Spot Ct**

Slagter would like to construct an accessory building on the east side of his home. Slagter understands that this area is considered to be a "front yard" due to it being a corner lot. Slagter would like to place the proposed building on the east side of his house because the

rear yard of his home is prone to flooding and not easily accessible for its intended purpose as a storage shed/workshop.

Assistant Planner McKernan explained that corner lots are considered to have two front yards. The original owner of the property placed the home at a 45 degree angle along the west property line which greatly reduces the area of the side and rear yards. The rear yard of the applicant's home is the lowest point on the lot and is wet for large sections of the year. The applicant has other options for minimizing or avoiding the need for a PUD waiver. These options include placing the structure on a raised platform in the rear yard or setting it closer to the house with the addition of a firewall to the structure.

Chair Giarmo opened and closed the public hearing at 7:10 pm.

Slagter explained to the Planning Commission that he had received visits from several of his neighbors who approved of the proposed location of his building. Slagter wishes to have a detached accessory building because it is significantly less expensive than expanding the attached garage.

Planning Commission members expressed a consensus that allowing an accessory building in the proposed location would not match the character of the rest of the neighborhood. Members showed a preference toward granting a waiver that would reduce front yard setbacks for an addition to the attached garage rather than allowing an accessory building in the proposed location.

**Motion:** By Member Rober, supported by Member Thomas to approve a waiver from the front yard setback requirements for homes within the Summer Shores PUD to allow for a 12 foot wide expansion to the east side of the house located at 6503 Sunny Spot Ct. The PUD waiver is subject to the following conditions:

1. 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.
2. No commercial uses of the building shall be permitted.

**Discussion:** None

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

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Decision:** Passed

**b. Cooks Crossing South (PUD)**

*The request is for an amendment to the Cobblestone Corners PUD. The proposed amendment would allow a 141 unit single-family and attached condominium development in the southeast 40 acres of the PUD.*

**Mike McGraw, Eastbrook Homes (w/Jeff Van Laar, PE, Exxel Engineering)**

Cook's Crossing South will feature a mixture of single-family homes and attached townhomes, and will be similar to previous phases of Cook's Crossing/Cobblestone Corners. The development will connect the existing phases of the development to 84<sup>th</sup> Street.

Planner Sisson agreed that the development is a continuation of the existing pattern. Eastbrook Homes has submitted a phasing plan that indicates that the 84<sup>th</sup> Street entrance will be created in Phase 2. This is important because the density of the existing development has begun to exceed the limits for a single ingress/egress point. The phasing plan ensures that only 22 additional home sites will be added before a second entrance on 84<sup>th</sup> Street is created. The development will feature a pedestrian connection to the Township owned "Cody's Mill" property to the east. The plan indicates that sidewalk will be installed throughout the development and along the 84<sup>th</sup> Street frontage. The Planning Commission should consider whether or not a multi-purpose trail might be more appropriate along 84<sup>th</sup> Street. Another possible topic of discussion would be a potential stub/easement that would allow potential developments to be connected to the southwest corner of the property.

Member Haagsma explained that the Kent County Road Commission did not intend to widen 84<sup>th</sup> Street between Eastern and Kalamazoo Avenue. Haagsma stated that he'd rather have sidewalk installed along 84<sup>th</sup> Street during construction than to wait for a multi-purpose trail that might not be needed. Haagsma asked McGraw if they planned to install sidewalk along the east side of the 84<sup>th</sup> Street entrance.

McGraw stated that he wasn't sure why the site plan didn't show sidewalk on the east side of the entrance drive and that Eastbrook would agree to install sidewalk in this location if required by the Township. McGraw explained that they didn't pursue purchasing property to the southwest of the development because the owners were not interested in selling additional land. Eastbrook will investigate leaving an easement for a possible connection, but it might be difficult to do with private roads.

Chair Giarmo opened the public hearing at 7:45 PM.

**Leslie Jeruzal, 1156 Cobblestone Way**

Jeruzal stated that construction traffic within the existing development travels too fast. Jeruzal would like to know if construction traffic for the new section will be required to use the 84<sup>th</sup> Street entrance. Jeruzal would like the applicants to address how the new development will impact storm water runoff onto to the properties at the end of Dreamfield Ct. Jeruzal expressed the desire of residents to see additional parks within the development.

**Karen Baker, 8184 Dreamfield Court**

Baker repeated previous concern about drainage issues on Dreamfield Court.

**Tim Wiltjer, 1008 Dreamfield Drive**

Wiltjer's property backs up to the new development. Wiltjer was curious about how the new development would be graded and how that would impact drainage. Wiltjer seconded the concern about a lack of parks in the new phase of the development.

**Brian Walker, 8181 Dreamfield Court**

Walker had additional questions pertaining to stormwater management. Walker would like all construction traffic to be required to use the 84<sup>th</sup> Street construction entrance. Walker stated that construction on existing phases sometimes starts at 6 am and requested that the Planning Commission consider limiting construction hours in the new development.

Chair Giarmo closed the public hearing at 8:08 PM.

McGraw explained that heavy construction equipment necessary for underground utility installation would utilize a construction entrance constructed on 84<sup>th</sup> Street. McGraw stated that it would be difficult to limit other contractors to this entrance. McGraw instructs all of his contractors to utilize safe driving habits and will follow up if he receives any complaints.

Jeff Van Laar from Exxel Engineering addressed the drainage questions raised by residents. The undeveloped property currently has poor drainage. The new development will actually improve the drainage for existing homes by adding underground infrastructure that will carry storm water away from the site.

The Planning Commission explained that concerns about stormwater management would be addressed by the Township Engineer during the site plan reviews for the individual phases of the project. Commissioners expressed that it would not be necessary to require additional parks because the development already has several parks and is connected to a trail network that gives it access to Countryside Elementary School and Brewer Park. The Planning Commission informed the neighborhood residents that there would be a follow-up hearing at the November 15 meeting and another public hearing at the Township Board in December.

**Motion:** By Member Waayenberg, supported by Member Rober to direct Staff to draft a resolution recommending approval of the PUD amendment for Cook's Crossing South to the Township Board. Resolution should address the construction entrance, sidewalks along 84<sup>th</sup> Street, sidewalk along the east side of the entrance drive.

**Discussion:** None

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

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Decision:** Passed

**c. Stoneco, 10175 Kalamazoo Avenue & 1560 100th Street (A-B)**

*Stoneco is requesting the rezoning of approximately 43 acres of land from A-B, Agricultural/Agri-Business to PUD-MR Mineral removal. If approved, the rezoning would authorize the eastward extension of their existing gravel mining operations, across Kalamazoo Ave. and along the south side of 100th street.*

**Tony Halloran, Stoneco**

The economy is going strong and there is a high demand for gravel. Stoneco would like to like to relocate their gravel mining operation to east side of Kalamazoo Avenue once they have completed mining on their existing site. The expansion will be operated in the same manner

as their existing operation. There will be no on site processing. The only vehicles on the property will be support vehicles. The vehicles will be fitted with “white noise” backup alarms to reduce noise pollution. A culvert will be installed under Kalamazoo Avenue to convey mined materials to their existing processing location. The proposed mining site will be surrounded by berms and fencing.

Planner Sisson proposed an alternative end use plan. Sisson has discussed the potential of working with the Kent County Road Commission to temporarily remove Kalamazoo Avenue and to join the sites on the east and west sides of the street as the final mining phase. This would allow Stoneco to mine an additional 400 foot wide section and would result in an end use property with a lower elevation that would be much more conducive to residential and farming uses.

Chair Giarmo opened the public hearing at 8:35 PM.

**Kathy Vander Stel, 10034 Kalamazoo Avenue SE**

Vander Stel’s home is a converted school house that was originally constructed in the 1880s. The property was surrounded by farmland when Vander Stel purchased her home 22 years ago. Vander Stel’s property will be surrounded by berms on three sides of her property if the proposed PUD amendment/rezoning is approved. Stoneco has done a good job in controlling noise on their existing site, but there are issues with dust control that make it difficult to open her windows in the summertime. Vander Stel feels that the height of the proposed berm behind her home should be increased. The berm to the south of her home may impact her ability to safely turn onto Kalamazoo Avenue. Vander Stel has explored options for relocating her home in the event this amendment is passed.

Halloran explained that the berm across the street from Vander Stel’s home would be removed within 18 months of commencement of mining on the east side of Kalamazoo Avenue. Halloran will investigate Vander Stel’s concerns about the berms to the east and south of her home and will modify the plans accordingly.

Chair Giarmo closed the public hearing at 8:50 PM.

Member Haagsma stated that he was not comfortable with approving a 10 year time frame for completing the mining operation. Haagsma recommended approving a shorter approval period while allowing Stoneco the ability to request any necessary extensions at their yearly reviews. Member Burns questioned whether the site would be able to be used for agricultural purposes following the conclusion of mining activities. Halloran explained that a property to the west of their current mining operation had been reclaimed for farmland quite successfully. Member Haagsma concurred with Halloran’s assessment.

Member Waayenberg expressed approval for Sisson’s proposed end use of the site. Waayenberg did not feel the end use plan proposed by Stoneco would be very desirable for residential purposes.

Planner Sisson explained that this was a preliminary hearing and a decision by the Planning Commission was not needed. The request will next be reviewed by the Township Board. The Planning Commission will have a chance for further review at a future meeting.

**2. Site Plan Review**

**a. Stonewater Medical Office, 7169 Kalamazoo Avenue (PUD)**

*Site Plan Review for a 10,000 square foot medical office building.*

**Jeff Brinks, PE, Venture Engineering**

Stonewater Medical Office is requesting site plan approval for a 10,000 square foot medical office at 7169 Kalamazoo Avenue. The property is located within the Crystal Springs PUD. The commercial portion of the PUD was amended in 2008 to allow the planned country club to be moved to the west side of Kalamazoo and to allow office uses in the location of the former maintenance building pending site plan approval. Brinks addressed issues that were raised in the Planner's report:

- Lighting plans will be updated so that the proposed fixtures match the other lighting fixtures on the west side of Kalamazoo Avenue.
- The parking lot slightly exceeds the maximum number of spaces allowed by right. Stonewater is requesting that the Planning Commission utilize their discretion to allow the overage. The layout of the parking area was designed to integrate with and be partially shared by the Stonewater Country Club.
- Stonewater Medical Office has submitted a preliminary shared use agreement for the parking area to be shared with Stonewater Country Club. An application for a lot line adjustment will be filed with the Township to bring this portion of the property under the applicant's control.

Planner Sisson stated that many of the issues of the site plan had been resolved prior to the meeting. The only outstanding question was whether the Planning Commission felt that there was a need for additional sidewalks within the interior of the site. Planning Commission members did not feel that requiring additional sidewalks within the development would be beneficial.

**Motion:** By Member Waayenberg, supported by Member Haagsma to approve the site plan for Stonewater Medical Office. Approval is subject to the following conditions:

**Discussion:** None

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

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Decision:** Passed

**b. Heidi Christine's Retail Building, 7100 Kalamazoo Avenue (PUD)**

*Site Plan Review for a 5,267 square foot professional services business.*

**Jeff Van Laar, PE, Exxel Engineering**

Heidi Christine's salon and spa will be the third site constructed with the Stonewater-Crystal Springs PUD. Van Laar addressed the several outstanding issues outlined in the Planner's report:

- The staff report noted that the proposed landscaping along Kalamazoo Avenue is deficient. Heidi Christine's has contacted their landscaping company to revise the plans and hope to submit them for staff approval.
- The staff report also noted that the photometric/lighting plan didn't show the location of light poles and the types of fixtures. The site will feature twenty foot tall poles with identical colors and fixtures to those that have been previously approved within the PUD.
- Heidi Christine's will feature wall signage and have a monument sign along Kalamazoo Avenue. Detailed plans will be submitted as part of the building permit process.

Assistant Planner McKernan explained that the Planning Commission could approve the site plan on the condition that revised lighting and landscaping plans be submitted for staff approval. Signage will be reviewed by staff as part of the building permit process.

**Motion:** By Member Haagsma, supported by Member Rober to approve the site plan for Heidi Christine's. The approval is subject to the following conditions of approval:

1. The applicant shall comply with all recommendations of the Township Engineer and Fire Chief.
2. Light poles shall not exceed 20 feet in height and match the other light poles found in the Stonewater-Crystal Springs PUD.
3. The applicant shall submit a revised landscaping plan that addresses the shortfalls along the Kalamazoo Avenue frontage.

**Discussion:** None

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

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Decision:** Passed

**VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**VIII. GENERAL DISCUSSION**

None

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

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

**Discussion:** None

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

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Decision:** Passed

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the above is a true copy of the minutes from the October 25, 2018 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: November 15, 2018