

**MINUTES OF THE GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON  
March 28, 2019  
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:** Billips, Burns, Giarmo, Haagsma, Rober, Waayenberg

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Thomas – with notice.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** David Jirousek, Planning Consultant  
Matt McKernan, Assistant Planner  
Robin Haaksma, Recording Secretary

**II. CONSIDERATION OF MEETING AGENDA**

No Changes

**III. CONSIDERATION OF MEETING MINUTES**

February 28, 2019 – Regular Meeting Minutes

**Motion:** By Member Haagsma, supported by Member Rober to approve the minutes for the February 28, 2019 Planning Commission Regular Meeting.

**Discussion:** None

**Ayes:** Billips, Burns, Giarmo, Haagsma, Rober, 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. Hideaway Open Space Development, 3250 100<sup>th</sup> St. (A-B)**

*Review of plans for a 34 lot single family residential development on approximately 113 acres of land. Development will utilize rural open space preservation provisions of Chapter 22.*

**Jarid Halverson of Halverson Engineering** presented the proposed development to the Planning Commission. He explained they planned their layout around the unique rolling terrain of the property. He feels they did their best to preserve the beauty of the property

and left natural boundaries of trees or open space between the development and adjacent properties. Halverson showed a parallel plan with 28 lots of 150,000 sq. ft. and doesn't believe that plan preserves the natural landscape of the property. Due to varying soil types throughout the property the developers are proposing a community septic drain field and had Larry Stevens, a consultant on community septic systems, present to answer any questions the planning commission might have. Their design has one entrance to provide a community feel and to cut down on through traffic. Mr. Halverson also stated due to the hills on Hanna Lake it was difficult to find an entrance with clear lines of sight.

Assistant Planner McKernan explained that 34 lots is close to the maximum number for a single entrance development. He would like the planning commission to discuss some of the issues outlined in the staff report. Is a fire entrance necessary? Should any additional landscaping buffers be added between the development and neighboring properties? The proposal contains lots with an average size of 1.73 acres, would ¾ acre lots with better clustering be closer to the intent of the zoning. McKernan recommended to postpone making a decision tonight. He would like the planning commission to provide feedback on concerns brought up in the public hearing and allow the developers to make any necessary revisions for next month's meeting.

Chair Giarmo opened the public hearing at 7:25 pm.

Chuck Ward, 3592 100<sup>th</sup> St., shared his concerns with the planning commission. He would like to see a second entrance to the development and believes it could be achieved between lots 22 and 23. Mr. Ward inquired about the capacity of the detention ponds because he gets flooding from runoff already and it will worsen with the addition of the development.

Don Hilton read a letter from Larry and Lynn Hilton of 10656 Hanna Lake who were unable to attend the meeting. The Hiltons are not opposed to the development, they only want to make sure the development will not hinder the use of their property on the southern border of the development. They would like to see a border fence installed between the properties at the developer's expense. They also expressed concerns about drainage and the current logging of the property.

Dick McCarthy, 10585 Hanna Lake, shared that the entrance/exit of the development is in line with a home across the street and could be a nuisance with lights shining in windows. He also asked about perk tests and drain fields and septic tanks.

Keith and Kathy Morren, 10457 Stirrup Dr. SE, are concerned about the lack of a barrier between their home and the proposed development.

Chair Giarmo closed the public hearing at 7:40 pm.

The Planning Commission discussed the proposed open spaces of the development. They would like them to be more accessible, possibly by adding access points between some of the lots. Also, due to recent logging the woodlands the developers plan to leave as a buffer are very thin. The remaining open spaces will be open field that could become overgrown if not maintained. Member Haagsma stated he would like to see smaller lots clustered closer

together to preserve more of the farmland. He believes that was the original intent of the rural open space zoning.

The Planning Commission expressed concern that the community septic system could become a liability to the township. Assistant Planner McKernan stated the township engineer is looking into legal issues that could arise.

The fire department expressed concern about the length of the street and the lack of a second entrance. The Planning Commission discussed shortening the street to allow for more open space, adding a second entrance, or adding a secure fire entrance toward the end of the cul-de-sac. Mr. Halverson stated the developer would be open to adding a fire entrance.

The Planning Commission also discussed the need for additional buffers on the south and west of the development due to concerns brought up by neighbors present at the meeting. A fence could fall into disrepair, would trees or landscaping be a better option?

**Motion:** By Member Burns, supported by Member Waayenberg to table a decision on the proposed development.

**Discussion:** None

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

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Decision:** Passed

## **VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Member Haagsma shared that the Township Board has requested a second public hearing for StoneCo. Residents claim they did not receive proper notice of the first public hearing. The residents have concerns about noise, berms and dust control.

## **VIII. GENERAL DISCUSSION**

### **1. 2018 Planning and Zoning Department Annual Report**

Assistant Planner McKernan presented the annual report.

**Motion:** By Member Rober, supported by Member Haagsma to forward the annual report to the Township Board.

**Discussion:** None

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

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Decision:** Passed

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:** By Member Rober, supported by Member Waayenberg to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 pm.

**Discussion:** None

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

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Decision:** Passed

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the above is a true copy of the minutes from the March 28, 2019 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: April 25, 2019