

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF UNION
Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes

A regular meeting of the Charter Township of Union Planning Commission was held on February 21, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. at the Union Township Hall.

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Present:

Albrecht, Buckley, Gross, LaBelle, Lapp, McDonald, Squattrito, Shingles, and Thering
Chair Squattrito congratulated Nivia McDonald on her appointment and welcomed her as a new member of the Planning Commission.

Others Present

Rodney Nanney, Community and Economic Development Director; Peter Gallinat, Zoning Administrator; Tera Green, Administrative Assistant

Approval of Agenda

Gross moved Buckley supported to approve the agenda as presented. Vote: Ayes: 9. Nays: 0. Motion Carried

Approval of Minutes

Gross moved LaBelle supported to approve the regular meeting as presented. Vote: Ayes: 9. Nays: 0. Motion carried.

Correspondence / Reports/ Presentations

- A. Board of Trustees updates by Thering – gave an update on the Board of Trustees meeting held on February 8, 2023.
- B. ZBA updates by Buckley – gave an update on the ZBA’s new members and MTA online training activities.
- C. Sidewalks and Pathway Prioritization Committee by Shingles – no activity.

Public Comment

Open 7:08 p.m.

No comments were offered.

Closed 7:09 p.m.

New Business

- A. **PSPR23-03 Final Site Plan approval for expansion of the Clint’s Autobody Car Repair Shop at 5598 S. Mission Rd.**
 - a. Introduction by staff
 - b. Updates from the applicant
 - c. Commission review of the site plan

- d. Commission deliberation and action (approval, denial, approval with conditions, or postpone action)

Nanney introduced the PSPR23-03 Final Site Plan approval for Clint's Auto Body Shop Addition located at 5594 and 5598 S. Mission Road in the SE ¼ of Section 34. The final site plan can conform to site plan requirements with some minor housekeeping items and changes to the proposed wall pack fixtures on the addition.

Tim Bebee from CMS & D addressed some of the items brought forward by Mr. Nanney. The owner, Clint Oswald and Tim Bebee, were available for questions. Deliberation by the Commissioners.

Shingles moved **Lapp** supported to approve the PSPR 23-03 final site plan dated January 31, 2023 for a 3,200 square-foot addition to the existing Clint's Auto Body Shop located at 5594 and 5598 S. Mission Road in the southeast quarter of Section 34 and in the B-4 (General Business) zoning district, finding that it can fully comply with applicable Zoning Ordinance requirements for final site plan approval, including Sections 14.2.P. (Required Site Plan information) and 14.2.S. (Standards for Site Plan Approval), subject to the following conditions:

1. Revise the "Development Schedule" note on sheet 3 to confirm that paving of the residential parking area as depicted on the site plan shall be completed by the end of the 2024 construction season.
2. Add the specific species of trees and shrubs to the landscape plan.
3. Correct the three (3) proposed wall-pack light fixtures to be fully shielded and directed downward per Section 8.2 standards.
4. Zoning Administrator review and acceptance of the revised final site plan prior to issuance of a building permit for this project.

Roll Call Votes: Ayes: Albrecht, Buckley, Gross, LaBelle, Lapp, McDonald, Squattrito, Shingles, and Thering. Nays: 0. Motion carried.

B. PSPR23-02 Combined Preliminary and Final Site Plan Application for the Isabella County Cultural and Recreation Commission's addition to the Isabella Sportsplex Morey Courts building for a new indoor gymnastics facility at 5175 E. Remus Road.

- a. Introduction by Staff
- b. Updates from the applicant
- c. Commission review of the site plan
- d. Commission deliberation and action (approval, denial, approval with conditions, or postpone action)

Nanney introduced the PSPR23-02 Combined Preliminary and Final Site Plan Application for the Isabella County Cultural and Recreational Commission Gymnastics Addition located at 5165 E. Remus Road. The Preliminary Site Plan complies with the applicable Zoning Ordinance requirements. However, based on several missing key outside agency permits or approvals, the Final Site Plan is not fully consistent with Section 14.2.S (Standards for Site Plan Approval). The staff recommends that the Planning commission approve only the preliminary site plan as presented.

No representative from the Isabella County Cultural and Recreation Commission was present, but project engineer Tim Bebee from CMS & D and building contractor Joe Claybaugh from JBS Contracting, Inc. spoke on their communication with some of the outside agencies and expressed their frustration with the process. Mr. Bebee stated his impression that remaining outside agency approvals would not affect the site design and emphasized his client's preference for action on the final site plan to provide certainty for ordering construction materials with a long lead time for delivery.

Mr. Claybaugh pointed out the importance of the Isabella Sportsplex to the community and to hold up the site plan over a bike rack and a letter to move a water main seems ridiculous. Mr. Claybaugh urged the Commissioners to think about what this affects as far as the Morey Foundation's donation to the community and then the hurdles that get put in front of something that doesn't need to be there. The project is a gift and everyone should be rejoicing that the foundation is doing this and bring all of this to the community. We need to get this final site plan approved to get the building ordered, the construction starts well before dirt in the ground. Mr. Claybaugh said he appreciates that, at the time of submission, they were missing some stuff and that it seems like there could be another step in there as updates come in prior to the meeting.

Mr. Nanney referred to language out of the Ordinance indicating the effect of preliminary and final site plan approvals. In response to Mr. Claybaugh's wanting a final site plan approval for assurance that they can begin to order material, Mr. Nanney noted that under the Township's Zoning Ordinance it is the preliminary site plan approval action that is intended to create that level of assurance for an applicant. That is one of the reasons the process is set up this way is not only can the Commissioners see the plan early in the process but the applicant can have a level of certainty earlier in the development review process that the site layout, the mix of activities, the size and location of the buildings, parking and the basics that are on the preliminary site plan are accepted.. If the Planning Commission chooses to grant approval for both the preliminary and final site plans subject to the four suggested conditions, staff can certainly work with the applicant to make sure those items are taken care of and proceed forward administratively.

Commissioner Buckley asked the applicant if he had any disagreement with Mr. Nanney's comment in terms of preliminary site plan approval being sufficient to proceed with ordering materials.

Mr. Claybaugh agreed preliminary is fine and they like to see things in writing too. He added that we are not trying to do something outside of the letter of the zoning book and I have no idea why your Economic Coordinator is trying to pause economic development. It just baffles my mind that the Coordinator of Economic Development is stomping on development. Lets slow them down, lets pause them, lets do what we can to slow this process down and halt these projects coming into our township. It just blows my mind.

Commissioner Buckley responded that he wants on the record that he doesn't think that's what our Community and Economic Development Director is doing. Trustee Thering echoed

Commissioner Buckley's comment. We all would like to see this project happen, it just needs to happen in a certain way. That doesn't mean we are not grateful for someone who is willing to donate and make this project happen. I'm a little disturbed by some of those comments.

Commissioner Lapp agreed that the staff is rightly concerned that they don't overreach what's the Planning Commission's responsibility which is to do the review and approval of these site plans and if they are given this option to do that review and approval, then they are basically doing our job, which is not what they are supposed to be doing. Commissioner Gross commented that the four suggested conditions on a combined preliminary and final site plan approval are pretty cut and dry and that he doesn't see why we couldn't move forward that way.

Commissioner LaBelle stated that he believes that the language Mr. Nanney included in the proposed condition number 4 protects us as a board. If for some reason there were some major changes that came from the Fire Department or Public Services then the final site plan would come back to the Planning Commission.

Buckley moved **LaBelle** supported to approve the PSPR23-02 combined preliminary and final site plan dated January 30, 2023 for the Morey Courts Recreation Center Expansion located at 5175 E. Remus Road in the SW 1/4 of Section 13 and in the B-4 (General Business) zoning district, finding that the site plan can comply with the applicable Zoning Ordinance requirements for preliminary and final site plan approval, including Sections 14.2.P. (Required Site Plan Information) and 14.2.S. (Standards for Site Plan Approval), subject to the following conditions:

1. Add the required short-term bicycle parking facilities to the plan per Section 9.1.C.5.
2. Add the specific species of trees and shrubs as notes on the landscape plan sheet 8.
3. Zoning Administrator review and acceptance of the revised final site plan prior to issuance of a building permit for this project.
4. Planning Commission review and approval of the revised final site plan shall be required upon determination by the Zoning Administrator that any outside agency requirements or recommended changes from the Fire Department or Township Public Services Department necessitate corresponding revisions to the final site design as depicted on the combined preliminary and final site plan dated January 30, 2023.

Roll Call Votes: Ayes: Albrecht, Buckley, Gross, LaBelle, Lapp, McDonald, Squattrito, Shingles, and Thering. Nays: 0. Motion carried.

***8:11 p.m. Commissioner Shingles left the meeting with approval**

Other Business

A. Five-Year Review of the adopted Master Plan

- a. Updates by Staff
- b. Discussion

Nanney reintroduced the State Planning Enabling Act requirement that the Planning Commission review the Master Plan document every five years to determine whether it needs updated or if the plan is acceptable in its current form, and answered questions about the scope of review and

options for Planning Commission action.

Discussion by the Commissioners.

Buckley moved **Thering** supported to open the 2018 Master Plan for an update in 2023. **Roll Call Votes: Ayes: Albrecht, Buckley, Gross, LaBelle, Lapp, McDonald, Squattrito, and Thering. Nays: 0. Motion carried.**

Extended Public Comments

Open: 8:28 p.m.

Tim Bebee, 2257 E. Broomfield Rd, expressed frustration that staff had requested the specific species of trees and shrubs on the landscape plan when the Zoning Ordinance does not require this information on a final site plan, and also asked for clarification about what the Ordinance means when it states in Section 10.4 that a list of specific species of trees are “undesirable” and “not encouraged” for required landscaping.

At the Chair’s request, Mr. Nanney provided an answer to Mr. Bebee’s questions, after which Mr. Bebee acknowledged that he had overlooked the checklist item under Section 14.2.P., Required Site Plan Information, related to requirements for plant material species information on final site plans.

Closed 8:42 p.m.

Final Board Comment

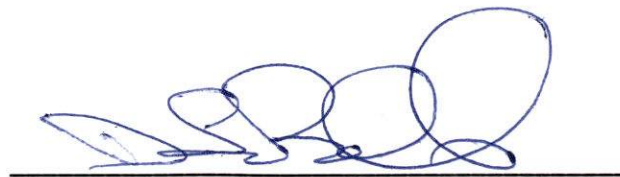
Commissioner LaBelle mentioned that he and a group of local contractors met with Manager Stuhldreher to provide their perspective on the construction approval process in Union Township.

Chair Squattrito reminded the commissioners of the MAP Training for the Commissioners is March 1st. Contact Peter to register.

Adjournment – Chair Squattrito adjourned the meeting at 8:46 p.m.

APPROVED BY:

(Recorded by Tera Green)



Doug LaBelle – Secretary
Tera Albrecht – Vice Secretary