

**ALLENDALE CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

*Minutes of a Meeting held April 16, 2018*

*7:30 p.m.*

*Allendale Township Public Meeting Room*

1. Meeting called to Order

2. Roll Call:

Present: Adams, Kleinjans Knoper, Longcore, Schut, Zuniga

Absent: Zeinstra

Staff Present: Planner Greg Ransford

3. Received for Information: A letter dated April 4, 2018 was received from Blendon Township providing notice of approval of their Master Plan. Planner Ransford will continue to monitor as needed.

Chairman Longcore noted two letters from a resident concerning the Trader's View Site development were also received after the April 16, 2018 Planning Commission packet was distributed.

4. Motion by Kleinjans to approve the April 2, 2018 Planning Commission Minutes as presented. Seconded by Schut. **Approved 6-0.**

5. Motion by Longcore to approve the Agenda as presented. Seconded by Zuniga. **Approved 6-0.**

6. Public comments for *non-public hearing items*: None

7. Public Hearings: Trader's View Site Condominium and Private Road Application

Mr. Rob Berends with Nederveld Engineering summarized the Trader's View Site Condominium and Private Road Application.

Planner Ransford contributed to the summary, noting the status and history of the approval of the project now before the Planning Commission.

Chairperson Longcore opened the public hearing.

Comment was heard from members of the public including:

Mr. Jay Knoper voiced concern about the impact of the project on water quality and water quantity in the area. Citing a 2012 water quality study from Michigan State University (MSU), Mr. Knoper stated that the volume of water available from the area aquifer is already diminishing. The addition of approximately 52 more wells, as anticipated by the Trader's View development, will likely exhaust that receding water supply. Mr. Knoper evoked another development in Allendale, Highland Trails, as a cautionary tale of an overbuilt residential development that experienced groundwater depletion before the development was completed.

Mr. Knoper described the long-term ownership of his property, and its use for hunting. He requested a setback or lot adjustments from the developer in order to retain full use of his property while remaining compliant with setback regulations imposed for hunting. Mr. Knoper requested relocation of the access

trail currently shown near his lot line. As well, Mr. Knoper requests the developer pay for and install a fence to deter trespassers onto his property. Noting that hunting season lasts more than half of each year, Mr. Knoper remarked, "This is not a piece of dirt, this is my home."

Mr. Scott Drier echoed the water concerns expressed by Mr. Knoper. He wonders what will happen when his well dries up. Mr. Drier feels with 52 more wells, that water and sewer are a big concern. He also believes traffic from the development on the road will be excessive and it concerns him.

Next, Ms. Karen Guzicki expressed four concerns about the development, including:

- Density: Ms. Guzicki noted the area is zoned as agricultural and rural in order to provide opportunity for single family dwellings while leaving space for agricultural use. She noted the development, as planned, increases the density of the area in excess of that intention and what is called for on the Township Master Plan.
- Streetlights and lighting: Ms. Guzicki feels the addition of lighting and fixtures for 52 homes will create a pool of light that takes away from the quiet reserved quality of the existing environment. She believes the lighting introduced by the development is incompatible with zoning in the area.
- Ingress and egress: Ms. Guzicki believes additional access points are needed for the development. With only one road for 52 properties, she believes the traffic could be a nightmare and an additional outlet/inlet is needed.
- Water and sewer: Joining with previous commenters, Ms. Guzicki referred to a history of Allendale wells going dry, reaching back to 2009. She also referred to the MSU study, noting the report indicated that the area water table fell 11 feet between 2000 and 2010. She believes an additional study was recommended but was unable to locate it for this meeting. Ms. Guzicki joins her neighbors in expressing concern about the impact of this development on the quality and quantity of water in the area.

Originally moving from a subdivision in Jenison, Mr. Jack DeGlopper said he had lived in the area for 10 years. He moved to this neighborhood because he and his family were attracted by the rural setting. Mr. DeGlopper's stated concerns about the development include 52 sites, one ingress and egress, excessive traffic, the added strain on the water and sewer, and the lack of effort to keep with the style and character of the location. He felt there should be fewer homes, more access points, and real concern for the water problem.

Mr. Don Postema, also a resident in the area of the development, expressed concern for the safety of his children. While they are able to play and enjoy their property privately at present, a road that brings several hundred cars by each day is too much traffic. Mr. Postema joins with his neighbors to emphasize the water and well problems, and too few traffic access points.

Another resident attracted to the area for its view and rural country setting, Mr. Marc Gereaux, said he had moved here because Allendale seemed like a good school district and a setting where he and his wife wanted to raise a family. In addition, Mr. Gereaux explained he purchased his property to train bird dogs, which requires the discharge of guns on his property. He feels the development may require him to move because the resulting restrictions on firing a gun would prohibit his discharge of firearms in pursuit of this endeavor. As well, Mr. Gereaux invested in an in-ground pool last year and is troubled that notification was not sent out earlier to alert residents of the change in potential land use.

Mr. Mark Guzicki, also a neighbor, commented that he read the April 2, 2018 Planning Commission Minutes about a proposed deed restriction for water and sewer. Mr. Guzicki pointed out that the water

and sewer problem is “not if, but when.” He posed the question of “who will pay for that,” and believes the issue should be addressed now.

Adding to his earlier comments, Mr. Knoper asked Commissioners about protection for homeowners who currently have wells. Mr. Knoper feels some assurance is needed about the water use and source for the proposed development. He emphasized it happened in Highland Trails, and it is not just quantity but quality of water. Mr. Knoper seeks some assurance that existing residents of the area are going to be taken care of.

There being no further comments, Chairperson Longcore closed the public hearing.

The Commissioners extensively discussed the issue of water quality, quantity, and the added strain to the aquifer likely to occur if the development proceeds as planned.

It was noted that the Township would not be financially responsible for the cost should water and sewer be required in the area of the development. Concern was expressed that the line to the property is low-pressure, and although it would deliver water, all residents in the area would probably still need to purchase and install a pump.

Mr. Berends noted that if the city water line is extended, each home will also need to be fitted for a future high-pressure line. Mr. Berends noted the developer would pay to run the line to the development and agreed to deed restrictions requiring homeowners pay for the water and sewer extension to their property.

In the meantime, each prospective homeowner will also need to pay approximately \$8,000 to install a 150 foot well. Mr. Berends said final approval has not yet been received from the Health Department and additional water testing is needed.

When questioned by the Commissioners concerning the likelihood that the well water of current property owners would be depleted before the wells in the new development, Mr. Berends stated he “had no answer.” He noted the development had lawfully proceeded through the approval process and is meeting state requirements.

A discussion between the Commissioners and Mr. Berends ensued concerning the hunting setback issue expressed by Mr. Knoper. Mr. Berends noted the houses adjacent to the property of Mr. Knoper will be built on top of a ridge with a 20-foot drop in grade. With a 10-foot setback from the wetland also required, Mr. Curtis Moran with Trader’s View stated the regulated setback for hunting was “as good as guaranteed.”

Substantial conversation was held concerning the access trail currently located close to the property of Mr. Knoper. Mr. Berends stated throughout that he doubted the access trail would be used. The Commissioners discussed access to the river by residents and expressed concern that location of the access trail would cause users to stray onto Mr. Knoper’s property. Questions were asked about options including relocation of the access to a stairway down to the river or an elevated walkway.

The Commissioners noted that ordinance and the Master Deed indicate the need for maintenance of the rural character of the area. Concern was expressed about whether this development, in density and design, supports the integrity of that rural character.

To the issue of rural character, the Commissioners commented the only open space is the floodplain. The lot density allows for no other open space, which detracts from the environment and lifestyle created by those already living in the area. On the question of a traffic study, it was felt that Ottawa County would find the road will handle the anticipated traffic. Mr. Berends stated the plan meets the zoning ordinance for lot sizes.

Discussion was held between Mr. Moran and the Commissioners concerning lot costs, with the potential cost for some sites with a river view to sell for between \$750,000 and \$1 million once a house was built on the property.

The Commissioners identified areas of concern including the water quality and quantity in the area, the fact that the development does not meet the requirement for rural character and requires redesign, and the lack of open space throughout the development. While Mr. Berends noted the floodplain is an open space, the Commissioners noted it is not an open space if it cannot be accessed.

In addition to these concerns, the Commissioners expressed a desire to see the language of the restrictive covenants that will be required of future homeowners. The Commissioners noted their significant concern for the present and future impact of this development on the area.

Given these concerns and data still to be provided from water testing, it was suggested the matter be tabled until more information is available and the concerns expressed by the Commissioners are addressed.

Motion by Knoper to table the Trader's View Site Condominium and Private Road Application to receive evidence of approval from the Ottawa County Health Department, to allow the applicant the opportunity to address rural character, provide a traffic assessment, provide building envelopes on the plan, and provide for more accessible open space. Seconded by Schut. **Approved 6-0.**

Mr. Berends noted the developers would return with an adjusted plan.

8. Site Plan Review: None

9. Old Business: None

10. New Business:

A. Ottawa County Road Commission Booster Station / Cursory review

As a courtesy, Mr. Pat Staskiewicz with the Ottawa County Road Commission (OCRC) provided a summary of the plans of the OCRC to replace the current booster station located just north of Lake Michigan Drive at 60<sup>th</sup> Avenue with a new 2,140 square foot station. A start date is tentatively planned for late 2018.

The booster station provides water service to the City of Coopersville, Polkton Charter Township, and Allendale Charter Township.

Mr. Staskiewicz stated the OCRC plans that the facility will correspond with its surroundings by approximately matching the external color of the station to the nearby church, providing plantings, and appropriate fencing. The OCRC will remove the old booster station when the new facility is built. Lighting on the station will be installed with consideration for light leakage, and the facility will be

equipped with sensors so that the light is on as needed or as triggered. Mr. Staskiewiz emphasized a willingness to work with the Township and to return as needed to fine tune these details.

The Planning Commission suggested that it would be appreciate if the OCRC met the required landscaping for the use and prefer PVC fencing.

Planner Ransford noted he would transmit Township landscaping information to Mr. Staskiewiz.

B. Heritage Towne Square Planned Unit Development / Major Amendment inquiry to the allowed uses in the Planned Unit Development

Tim Johnson of MainStreet Planning Company on behalf of the Gillespie Group summarized the status of the project. Text amendments are sought that will allow residential apartments on the first floor of two existing and two future buildings within the project. Also, approval is sought to allow studio (efficiency) apartments and reduce the minimum sizes permitted in the Planned Unit Development Ordinance for one and two-bedroom apartments.

Mr. Johnson noted the occupancy of the two present buildings is approximately 100 percent, with individuals, families, and only a few students.

The Commissioners, Mr. Johnson, and Mr. Joe Hooker with the Gillespie Group, discussed unlet first floor space in the development. They also discussed commercial space, the demand in Allendale for affordable rental housing for non-student populations, and the desire of the parties to support the success of this mixed-use development.

The Commissioners expressed a lack of desire to see a reduction in the square footage of the apartments.

Indicating they were open to the idea of a percentage of first-floor space designed for non-commercial use, the Commissioners requested Mr. Johnson return with a colored preliminary sketch in order to better visualize requested changes on the first level. Mr. Johnson indicated they will return with a preliminary sketch to discuss with the Planning Commission prior to setting a public hearing.

11. Public Comments: None

12. Township Board Reports: None

13. Commissioner and Staff Comments:

Commissioner Knoper noted he will not be present at the next meeting.

Concern was raised regarding the need for enforcement at the corner of 68th Avenue and Fillmore.

14. Meeting adjourned at 9:36 PM.

**Next meeting May 7, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.**