

**ALLENDALE CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

January 18, 2021

7:00 p.m.

Via GoToMeeting Software

1. Meeting called to order
2. Roll Call
Present: Westerling, Adams, Zuniga, Schut, Kelley, Zeinstra, Longcore
Staff Present: Greg Ransford
3. Received for information: no information received
4. Moved approval of January 4, 2021 meeting minutes to the first meeting in February
5. Motion by Longcore to approve the January 20, 2021 Planning Commission Agenda as presented. Seconded by Zeinstra. **Approval 7-0**
6. Public Comments for *non-public hearing items*:
Chairperson Longcore opened and closed the public comment section for non-public hearing items due to no comments.
7. Public Hearings: no public hearings were scheduled.
8. Site Plan Review: no site plans were scheduled for review.
9. Old Business:
 - a. Metro Health Signage—4830 Becker Drive
Planner Ransford briefed the Commission from a memo he created regarding the applicant's proposed Metro Health signage. Ransford shared that the University Park PUD does not have provisions for signage, so the general commercial provisions apply. Ransford outlined which signs complied and were prohibited.
 - The applicant is only allowed one ground sign, but they are proposing two signs.
 - Both ground mounted signs exceed the 50 square feet of maximum area and 10 feet in height: Sign A is about 150 square feet and Sign C is 75 square feet.
 - The pole sign that is proposed is prohibited.
 - The maximum area for a wall sign is 232 square feet. The proposed south sign is 343 square feet, not the 248 square feet stated previously.
 - The north and east wall signs proposed both comply.
 - The west wall sign would be prohibited by the ordinance.
 - Planner Ransford listed two options for the board to consider in reference to the applicant's proposal:
 - Option 1: an amendment to the PUD
 - Option 2: seek a variance for those signs that do not comply

Mr. Steve Witte, representative of the applicant and the developer, was joined by Mr. Brett Butler and Mr. Patrick Morrow of Metro Health, and Mr. Matt Sigma of MHP Allendale, LLC. Mr. Witte summarized their request for larger signs and their preference to seek an amendment to the PUD due to the flexibility available to the Planning Commission rather than the alternative of seeking a variance from the Zoning Board of

Appeals. He also emphasized that the purpose of the signs is for wayfinding and identification. Mr. Witte summarized the request as follows:

- Four wall signs, including the southern sign at 343 square feet.
- A primary concern for the applicant is to have more than one monument sign on the property for a few different reasons:
 1. This property effectively has three front yards with frontage on Lake Michigan Drive, 48th Avenue and Becker, so the applicant believes one sign is not sufficient.
 2. The purpose of the signs is more for wayfinding.
 3. There are sign limitations due to the amount of green space and the placement of the signs further from the roadways.
- The requested two signs on Becker could potentially be reduced to one sign.

Mr. Butler emphasized that they went with wayfinding signage rather than advertising signs and explained what their advertising signs look like at other locations. He further elaborated on the concern that the building and signs will be a great distance from the roadways.

Mr. Adams agreed with Mr. Witte that the second sign on the west side would not be required but wanted to see a rendering of the south sign, both a smaller and larger version of the sign from an elevation view because it could probably be seen from M-45.

Mr. Schut asked if an amendment to the PUD would require another public hearing. Mr. Ransford stated that it depended on the Planning Commission's conclusion on whether it was a major or minor amendment and reiterated that the University Park PUD did not establish sign sizes.

Mr. Witte addressed the idea that the Commission could set a distinction in a PUD amendment that makes it clear that the amendment is specific to the lot terrain and its use.

Mr. Zeinstra would not be opposed to looking at the language for a potential amendment that would address the proposed larger sign on the south side.

Mr. Ransford highlighted that section 12.05a identifies seven different standards that need to be reviewed when considering flexibility in the amendments language which the applicant would need to address.

Mr. Schut raised concerns about the view from Lake Michigan Drive and the sign being disconnected from the building and a concern about raising the height of the sign to fifteen feet. He was not opposed to the larger wall sign but did not want to see other signs go beyond the ordinance.

Mr. Westerling concurred with Mr. Schut and was concerned about creating a precedent.

Mr. Witte stated that the applicant is permitted one free-standing sign which would allow them to choose whether they place it on Lake Michigan Drive or Becker. However, Mr. Witte was not aware of which they would choose if only allowed one sign.

Mr. Kelley inquired about the pole sign and where it would be located. The applicant expressed that based on the preference of the Commission they were no longer interested in the pole sign.

Mr. Longcore raised the issue that Spectrum Health in a more challenging location has never raised a request for larger signage other than directional signs other than ones indicating which way to travel to the office and that the applicant will have a larger intersection with a light in addition to a known presence in the community from their current building.

Mr. Butler explained how their current, well-established location is only roughly 30 feet off the highway rather than 300 feet in the new facility and reiterated their request for the signage to help people find the clinic as quickly and effectively as possible. He also discussed a survey that was conducted demonstrating that the second vehicle in traffic would not be able to see their sign because it would be obscured by the first vehicle going northbound, so they raised the parapet for this reason.

In response, Mr. Adams asked about a wayfinding sign structure on 48th and Becker and inquired if that was an option for a sign. Mr. Schut concurred and mentioned that there were two locations.

Mr. Witte advised that the information on the specifics of the sign structure was still being sought, but the placards that would fit the structure were small and the applicant would still like to continue with their request of larger signs.

Mr. Butler discussed how the placards for that sign are small and would not change their request if allowed to use them.

Mr. Longcore discussed the use of the placards by other businesses.

Mr. Butler asked which items are more acceptable and which were less acceptable.

Mr. Zuniga expressed his desire to see a what a rendering would look like if it met code. Mr. Kelley, Mr. Schut, and Mr. Longcore agreed.

Mr. Witte asked for clarification regarding the need for a plan that meets compliance but with two compliant ground mounted signs rather than just one.

Mr. Longcore confirmed the request of the Commission.

b. Hidden Shores West Planned Unit Major Amendment

Mr. Ransford reviewed his memo about the wetland that was constructed without amending the PUD and was found to be a major change, the applicant was directed to relocate the play structure and complete their trail plan through the wetland. The applicant has submitted revised plans based on direction from the Planning Commission during an August 2020 meeting. The applicant has submitted revised plans based on direction from the Planning Commission during an August 2020 meeting.

Mr. Barr explained the new location chosen for the play structure which will now be in a more central location. Some of the trails were dead ending into some backyards as well.

The homeowner's association agreed with the amended changes to the trails to correct the issue.

Motion by Mr. Schut to recommend to the Board the approval of the Hidden Shores West Planned Unit Major Amendment, as presented. Seconded by Zuniga. Opposed by Mr. Adams.

Approval 6-1

10. New Business

a. Annual Report

- Mr. Ransford summarized the template of the annual report.
- Discussion of report

Motion by Zeinstra to approve the 2020 Annual Report, seconded Zuniga. **Approval 7-0**

b. Election of Planning Commission Officers

Motion by Westerling to retain the officers in their current positions, seconded by Zeinstra. **Approval 7-0**

11. Second Public Comment

Chairperson Longcore opened and closed public comment section due to no public comments.

12. Township Board Reports

Mr. Zeinstra advised that they took care of some general business and also hired a new Planning Commission Recording Secretary.

13. Commissioner and Staff Comments

Mr. Westerling thanked those serving as President, Vice President and Secretary. Mr. Adams expressed his gratitude as well.

14. Chairperson Longcore adjourned at 8:08 p.m.