

**ALLENDALE CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

May 17, 2021

7:00 p.m.

Via Zoom Software

- 1) Meeting called to order
- 2) Roll Call
Present: Adams, Zuniga, Schut, Kelley, Westerling, Longcore
Absent: Zeinstra
Staff Present: Greg Ransford
Other Guests Present: Lynelle Berkenpas, Marcel VanderLaan, Lora Richmond, Kevin Yeomans
- 3) Received for information
- 4) Motion by Schut to approve the May 3, 2021 meeting minutes. Seconded by Kelley.
Approved: 6-0
- 5) Motion by Longcore to approve the May 17, 2021 Planning Commission Agenda. Seconded by Adams.
Approved: 6-0
- 6) Public Comments for *non-public hearing items*:
Chairperson Longcore opened the public comment section for non-public hearing items. Kevin Yeomans facilitated the public comments beginning with callers, proceeding to participants using the web or app. No comments were made. Chairperson Longcore closed the public comment section.
- 7) Public Hearings
- 8) Site Plan Review:
 - A. Allendale Christian School – Building Addition

Planner Ransford summarized the request for minor versus major amendment for special use. The Commission had determined there was a major change. Since that time, the applicant has revised the plans for improvement for the dumpster, a buffer along the south and southeast property lines, and rooftop equipment on the gym. Upon Planning Commission approval, it would be scheduled for public hearing.

Lynelle Berkenpas, with Holland Engineering provided an overview of the expansion plan and the impacts expected, including several existing conditions. She explained the school was originally constructed in 2007, with an addition in 2017. Both site plans were reviewed by the state at the township’s direction and approved at that time—so some of what was seen on the site currently, may not have met the zoning ordinances at the time. The initial construction at 64th and Henry Street involved about 37,000 square feet, with a 2017 addition of 5,700 square feet. The current proposal was for an additional 12,000 to 13,000 square feet with four to five more classrooms. The current student body count was less than 400 students, and the plan would provide capacity for 500 students. No additional parking had been included, and there were no planned changes outside of the site itself. In addition, there had been moderate storm water improvements and preliminary feedback from the Water Resources Commission indicated that they would likely be approved.

Chairperson Longcore opened the session for Commissioners questions or comments.

Mr. Adams asked Planner Ransford for clarification about parking during athletic events and whether they occur during regular school operations. Marcel VanderLaan, with Lakewood Construction, explained athletic events historically occurred after school operations. Additional conversation led Mr. Longcore to ask a future project to be removed from the drawings, as it was not intended to be submitted by the applicant at this time.

The Commissioners agreed that they did not have any concerns with the proposed lighting plan, pending any concerns that may be raised by the public. They asked several clarifying questions about the storm water improvements. Ms. Berkenpas explained the plan further regarding the shallow depth of the retention areas and described the existing storm water ponds throughout the site.

Mr. Schut expressed that he was okay with the ground equipment as long as it was screened per the Ordinance. Commissioners found the dumpster enclosure as acceptable to remain, pending comments at the public hearing.

Mr. Longcore raised concerns about the current traffic issues and any applicable traffic studies. Ms. Berkenpas said that the school was considering a couple of things to reduce traffic at the site and has taken some steps to improve the amount of queuing.

It was suggested by Mr. Adams to consider an “incoming” direction from 64th Avenue and exiting onto Henry Street, allowing a more controllable circulation flow. Ms. Berkenpas somewhat disagreed due to the proximity to the intersection at Henry Street, across from the Family Fare exit, and crossing a left turn lane. She did however, state she was willing to investigate it further. Mr. Kelley also agreed with Ms. Berkenpas, that it was not a satisfactory solution.

Mr. Schut voiced concern about the growth of the school without additional parking. Ms. Berkenpas reiterated the school was aware that the issue would need to be addressed, and there were discussions about the potential options however, until the gymnasium expansion moved forward, those plans were in a holding phase, unless the ordinance required them. Mr. Schut responded that it would be helpful for the Commission to see those plans as it related to the current project and future expansion.

Regarding the traffic concerns, Mr. VanderLaan noted the potential for cars to turn into Henry Street, proceeding to the east lot to reverse the traffic flow there, allowing them to stack more cars for the carpool process. Because of the good relationship with Allendale Baptist Church, there had also been conversation for the potential of shared parking for special events.

Mr. Adams asked if there had been any conversations about relocating the existing driveway on 64th Avenue to make it a one-way street and make circulation clearer. Mr. VanderLaan responded there had not, and relocation would displace athletic fields, which were somewhat landlocked, unless there were a future land acquisition.

Mr. Schut and Mr. Longcore remarked about the parent drop-off and bus areas being swapped. Mr. VanderLaan expressed being open to suggestions.

The Commission agreed unanimously to allow Planner Ransford to schedule a public hearing for June 7, 2021.

9) Old Business

10) New Business

A. Work Program

Planner Ransford brought before the Commission the 2021 list of completed business, as well as upcoming business and requested the Commissioners to provide input for priority of future planning items.

The Commission reviewed the list, with comments regarding ground water quality and major developments connecting to sewer. Mr. Longcore also mentioned the non-motorized path. Kevin Yeomans, Project Coordinator for Allendale Township, spoke to the Commission regarding the non-motorized path. He mentioned that the project had been detained for another year, but he would work on gathering information to bring before the Commission.

The Commission agreed on three items for Planner Ransford to prepare for future business.

11) Public Comments

Chairperson Longcore opened the second public comment section for non-public hearing items. Kevin Yeomans facilitated the public comments beginning with callers, proceeding to participants using the web or app. No comments were made. Chairperson Longcore closed the public comment section.

12) Township Board Reports

13) Commissioner and Staff Comments

Mr. Longcore discussed the BP Station fencing. The requirement was to be a retaining wall and then additional fencing turning north to 48th Avenue. They had requested to use either chain link fence or ornamental fencing. The Commissioners discussed options as Planner Ransford shared the site plans. The consensus was a wood fencing option, with Planner Ransford agreeing to relay the decision.

Planner Ransford noted that the applicant for 5015 Warner Street Mining Site desired to screen the topsoil separating the stone from the sand. Planner Ransford had advised the applicant this request would possibly require re-application or an amendment to the recently issued special use permit. He asked the Commission whether they preferred to speak with the applicant first, or if it could be scheduled for public hearing as a major change. The Commissioners agreed, given the neighborhood concern and the change of special use, it would be best to speak with the applicant first before deciding whether re-application would be required, or a public hearing could be scheduled. Planner Ransford agreed to follow-up with the applicant.

Mr. Westerling asked the Commission regarding a question he had been asked about dividing a parcel of land. Kevin Yeomans stated he would follow-up to provide a definitive answer.

14) Adjourn – Chairperson Longcore adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

Next meeting Monday, June 7, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

Planning Commission Minutes respectfully submitted by Lora Richmond