

**ALLENDALE CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

*June 7, 2021*

*7:00 p.m.*

- 1) Meeting called to order
- 2) Roll Call  
Present: Adams, Zuniga, Schut, Kelley, Zeinstra, Longcore  
Absent: Westerling  
Staff Present: Greg Ransford  
Other Guests Present: Lynnelle Berkenpas, Chad Demers, Don De Groot, Merwyn Koster, Mitch Koster, Curtis Moran, Lora Richmond, Steve Witte
- 3) Received for information: Email received from the Township Engineer regarding traffic study for Allendale Christian School
- 4) Motion by Schut to approve the May 17, 2021, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Adams. **Approved: 6-0**
- 5) Motion by Longcore to approve the June 7, 2021, Planning Commission Agenda. Seconded by Zeinstra. **Approved: 6-0**
- 6) Public Comments for *non-public hearing items*:  
*Chairperson Longcore opened the public comment section for non-public hearing items. After comments were made, he closed the public comment section.*
  1. Curtis Moran – Spoke regarding the mining location at Warner Street, requesting permission to screen topsoil like other locations in Allendale, due to finding more stone than anticipated. For noise reduction, stone would not be crushed. The Bliss Street operation would not be included, as the operation was almost complete, but requested consideration for Warner Street. Mr. Longcore indicated to Mr. Moran that this would likely require a major amendment due to an increased use involving increased noise. The Planning Commission agreed.
- 7) Public Hearings:
  - A. Allendale Christian School - Building Addition  
Mr. Zeinstra recused himself from the hearing because he has been involved in the plans and the project. There were no objections from the other Commissioners.  
  
Planner Ransford referred to a memo he had prepared explaining the Allendale Christian School proposed building addition of 12,870 square feet to include additional classrooms, office spaces and storage. The applicant met with the Commission in May to receive direction and feedback on their site plan. The Commission asked the applicant to screen some ground equipment on the north side of the property, remove some planned notes about future planned additions, and finalize a traffic assessment with the Township Traffic Engineer. That correspondence was received from the engineer, who was satisfied with the traffic study if the school followed what was agreed upon. The Commission also considered the dumpster remaining as is, and the light fixtures satisfactory as well. They discussed some deviation requests for the Commission pursuant to section 23.11 of the zoning ordinance.

Ms. Lynnelle Berkenpas, with Holland Engineering, representing Allendale Christian School explained plans to expand their building off their west wing, allowing them to expand to approximately 500 students from the prior plan of 400 students. Current enrollment is about 360 students, 270 are from the young 5 to 8<sup>th</sup> grade age range. The new addition would essentially add about 5 classrooms for their middle school.

*Chairperson Longcore opened the floor to public comments. No comments were made, and he closed the public comment section and opened for Commissioner and Staff comments.*

Mr. Schut asked for clarification about whether the new set of plans had been available to the public and then confirmed availability in the Allendale office.

Mr. Kelley sought confirmation of the removal of a comment regarding future building plans not under current review, and Mr. Ransford referenced the more current revision on Google Drive that was visible, along with the version referenced by Mr. Kelley.

Seeking clarification, Mr. Longcore asked about the anticipated height of the holly bush used for screening, which the applicant explained should roughly match the height of the equipment being screened.

When Mr. Schut questioned the email from the traffic engineer, Commissioner Ransford quoted from the email that stated, that they have reviewed the study and “there will be adequate queue in theory. It will be the school’s responsibility to ensure that this operation is implemented in practice.” Planner Ransford essentially indicated that having the plan in writing would allow for enforcement.

Mr. Schut further inquired about steps being taken to alleviate traffic. Ms. Berkenpas discussed two sets of double-lanes on the property where the traffic study indicated utilizing one lane. The recommendation for the north lot was utilizing the busses after the older students went to personal vehicles, starting in the afternoon hours. This would essentially flip the current plan of where the busses were utilized. Additionally, loading up a group of vehicles 10 at a time, prior to releasing vehicles and lining up students for the next group of vehicles, allowed for two lanes to run concurrently, since cars would not be moving until all 10 vehicles are loaded. Busses would be used in both lots, with busses going first in the west lot and last in the north lot.

The Commissioners discussed concerns about busses turning left onto 64<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the possible need for signs restricting a left turn by busses. Mr. Adams asked about pedestrian traffic along 64<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the school and if any discussion had occurred about extending the existing sidewalk to the 64<sup>th</sup> Avenue portion of the property. Ms. Berkenpas was not aware of any conversations relating to it, indicating foot traffic was thought to be light from that direction.

Regarding questions from the Commissioners if the applicant did not follow the proposed traffic plan, Planner Ransford stated the Commission’s ability to advise any applicant not in compliance, notification of non-compliance, and the special use permit would be subject to revocation if not brought into compliance.

Mr. Schut made a recommendation to approve the special use amendment as presented with a condition that Allendale Christian School will be responsible to implement policies and procedures to provide a safe and uncongested circulation of traffic entering and exiting the property; should it fail to do so, and traffic circulation does experience congestion backing up onto 64<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the site plan shall be modified to correct these circulation issues.” Any modification of the plan is required to return to the Planning

Commission for review and authorization. Seconded by Adams. **Approved 4-1, with Mr. Zuniga-Kelley opposed.**

B. Kennedy Lake Site Condominium - Phase II and Private Road

Planner Ransford explained that Kennedy Lake was present for their second and final phase approval from their 2016 planned development, now including a modification the Commission approved to include a private street rather than public roadways discussed initially. This also included the site condominium application to create the sites. On the April 21<sup>st</sup> meeting the Commission determined permitting the private road second phase to match the first phase was a minor change to the PUD after the private road standards changed during the interim of the phases. There were no concerns raised by the Commission about traffic based on the 2016 during that approval, and all the master deed and private road documents were in order.

*Commissioner Longcore opened the floor to public comments. No comments were made, and he closed the public comment section and opened for Commissioner and Staff comments.*

Mr. Adams pointed out an area around the gutter that allowed too much standing water which needed to be addressed. Mr. Schut also noted a small gap on the south side where a sign interfered with the proposed sidewalk creating a small gap. The applicant agreed to resolve the issue.

Mr. Zeinstra made a motion to approve the Resolution as presented for Kennedy Lake Site Condominium Phase II and Private Road. Seconded by Schut. **Approved 6-0.**

8) No Site Plans to Review

9) Old Business

A. Master Plan - Complete Draft - Koster Classification Inquiry

Planner Ransford explained that the applicant is seeking a classification of moderate density residential similar with the R2 Zoning District within the Zoning Ordinance. In addition to narrower lots, there would be a little variation in the amount of potential density.

Mr. Don De Groot, with Exxel Engineering, addressed the Commission about the proposed future development of the property. Displaying the map of 57 acres for proposed development, he explained the location was at the west side of 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and north of Pierce Street. Approximately 43 acres are currently owned by the Kosters, with the option to purchase an additional 14 acres. The majority of surrounding existing development was designated either R1 or PUD with all of the single-family homes developed with minimum 80' wide lots and 10,000 square feet in total lot size. Due to the efforts of Allendale Township to amend their Master Plan, Mr. De Groot reiterated this plan and hoped the Township would view this particular property and the master plan appropriate to have the moderate density residential designation of 2.9 units per acre. He further explained the sites would need to be elevated due to the water table, thus there would be a water feature, both to fill and elevate the streets and serve as an amenity. Additionally, because of existing power lines and a county drain, they would be in the range of 2 units per acre. Ultimately more than the density per acre, the plan considered how the lots would be developed and their affordability. The recommendation to the Commission was a phased approach, mainly due to the sanitary sewer available for only a portion of the property, with about 2/3 of the property being able to be developed currently. Mr. De Groot noted larger parcels along the front of 56<sup>th</sup> Avenue with

recommendation for land divisions, as well as larger parcels on the north side, along 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, buffered by a church site, and designated for the medium density designation.

Mr. Longcore asked Planner Ransford what other potential development could happen if it were medium density. Planner Ransford explained from a development standpoint, they could be allowing more intense use if the applicant decided to sell. Current language of the master plan would not allow duplexes, but based on the current designations, he did not see any potential conflict.

Mr. Zeinstra recommended that all the R1 zoning areas, that no longer meet the current R1 zoning requirements because they have been approved at R-2 densities, be included as Moderate Density as well during the Master Plan update, and the Commissioners discussed points of this, as well as the process of updating the Master Plan and Zoning map. Planner Ransford agreeing from a visual perspective it would be beneficial. The consensus of the Commission was to update the draft Master Plan map in this regard as well as the Koster properties presented.

## 10) New Business

### A. Lighthouse Community Church – Major v. Minor Determination

Mr. Steve Witte, with Nederveld, Inc. representing Lighthouse Community Church presented a brief history of the property, explaining it was zoned agricultural and covered 9.4 acres. The existing church building was approved in 2014, with Phase Two approval in 2017. The 2017 plans depicted a future addition (Phase Three) of approximately 21,460 square feet, and the parking area of Phase Two had been proposed and constructed. The total area of all phases had slightly decreased from 2017 to its current proposal, with the main difference being the addition being built on the north side. Mr. Witte explained the proposed addition was 10,877 square feet serving primarily as a gymnasium, with an additional four classrooms, and smaller storage area. No new parking was being proposed. Two sidewalks would be constructed on the north and west side of the building. The lighting specification sheets would match the lights on the existing building, and he hoped the Commission would approve the specification sheets as opposed to a creating a photo metric plan. He expressed concern that since the approval of the 2017 Phase Two plans, the updated ordinance required concrete curbing around the parking area. The current site does not have curbing, and Mr. Witte requested exemption from adding it. Lastly, he addressed the landscaping, noting previous plans had shown shrubbery in front of Lake Michigan Drive. The ordinance had been updated, and the church was willing to update any ornamental planting necessary but preferred to keep the east side as it was currently.

Mr. Longcore clarified that the Commission was essentially looking at a minor versus a major change, confirmed by Planner Ransford. The Commission discussed whether it was a major amendment, comparison of the size of the buildings and square footage, and the purpose of the building and how it related to parking needs. The consensus was it would be considered a minor change.

Regarding lighting, Mr. Schut and the Commission requested the photometric plans from 2017 for comparison, and Mr. Witte agreed to the request.

The consensus of the Commission was no additional parking was needed and installing concrete curbing would not be necessary on the existing parking lot. They were also in agreement with Mr. Witte that landscaping in front of the building was sufficient, with Mr. Schut requesting they meet the landscape buffer requirements.

Mr. Schut inquired about rooftop equipment, and Mr. Demers, a member of Lighthouse Community Church, informed the Commission there were two rooftop units, one hidden behind an existing screen, and the other one screened similar with the other building.

The question was posed by Mr. Schut regarding the previous traffic analysis on the site as a whole and not just the addition. Planner Ransford and Mr. Witte both confirmed they would gather further information.

11) Public Comments

*Chairperson Longcore opened the second public comment section for non-public hearing items. No comments were made, and he closed the public comment section.*

12) Township Board Reports

Trustee Zeinstra gave reports on the Sheriff's Department, Human Resources, and Safety. They completed Allendale Baptist Church Resolutions and Ordinances, and new hires were introduced. Concerts in the Park were also discussed and approved.

13) Commissioner and Staff Comments

Mr. Zuniga addressed workmanship concerns regarding the Taco Bell, and Planner Ransford agreed inquire about inspection.

Planner Ransford received an inquiry from Mr. Moran asking if the Commission could schedule a public hearing. The Commission agreed to scheduling a hearing if all parameters had been met.

14) Adjourn – Chairperson Longcore adjourned the meeting at 9:26 p.m.

**Next meeting Monday, June 21, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.**

*Planning Commission Minutes respectfully submitted by Lora Richmond*