

HARTLAND TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

January 12, 2023– 7:00 PM

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Fox called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:**
3. **Roll Call and Recognition of Visitors:**
Present – Commissioners Eckman, Fox, Grissim, Mayer, McMullen, Mitchell, Murphy
Absent – None
4. **2022 Annual Planning Commission Organizational Meeting**
 - a. Reaffirm By-Laws
**Commissioner Mayer offered the following Motion:
Move to approve the Rules and Procedures (By-Laws) as presented and dated January 12, 2023. Seconded by Commissioner Murphy. Motion carried unanimously.**
 - b. Election of Officers
Commissioner Mayer offered a Motion to retain as Planning Commission Chair, Commissioner Fox; Vice-Chair, Commissioner Mitchell; Secretary Commissioner Murphy for 2023. Seconded by Commissioner Grissim. Motion carried unanimously.
 - c. Committee Appointments
 - **Ordinance Review Committee: Commissioner Murphy, Commissioner Grissim, Commissioner Eckman**
 - **Site Plan Review Committee: Chair Fox, Commissioner Mitchell, Commissioner Mayer**
5. **Approval of the Meeting Agenda:**
A Motion to approve the January 12, 2023 Planning Commission Meeting Agenda was made by Commissioner Mitchell and seconded by Commissioner Grissim. Motion carried unanimously.
6. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:**
 - a. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of October 13, 2022
A Motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of October 13, 2022 was made by Commissioner Grissim and seconded by Commissioner Murphy. Motion carried unanimously.
 - b. Planning Commission Special Meeting Minutes of October 20, 2022
A Motion to approve the Special Meeting Minutes of October 20, 2022 was made by Commissioner Grissim and seconded by Commissioner Mitchell. Motion carried unanimously.
 - c. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of November 17, 2022
A Motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of November 17, 2022 was made by Commissioner Eckman and seconded by Commissioner Grissim. Motion carried unanimously.

7. Call to the Public:

None

8. Old and New Business:

- a. Site Plan #23-002 Hartland Commerce Center Phase III & IV, a request to construct twelve (12) office/warehouse buildings containing a total of seventy-two (72) condominium units, and construct three (3) detached storage buildings, as part of Phase III and IV of Hartland Commerce Center.

The Applicant, Dave Willacker, introduced himself to the Planning Commission.

Director Langer gave an overview of the location and scope of the request stating the following:

- Located north and west of Old US 23 and Bergin Road; Phases III and IV wrap around and continue north and east of the existing Phase I and II.
- Zoned LI Light Industrial.
- Phase III is north of the existing development; Phase IV continues to the east.
- This LI condominium option is helpful for smaller companies or startup new businesses.
- On the north portion of the site are private storage units for the use of the businesses within the complex, not for public use.
- Site Plan approval only, this request is not required to be heard by the Township Board.

The Applicant shared they put some of their plans on hold for a time during COVID but are happy to be back moving forward. He also commended the Planning Staff for their thorough review. They were a joy to work with and full of ideas. The report is very detailed, concise and accurate.

The Applicant stated the following:

- Twenty-one years ago, Hartland Commerce Center was a new idea he was trying out to meet a need.
- It was a little slow starting out but with the growth in Hartland, the need for this kind of product is growing too.
- There is now some pent up demand sufficient to add more units.
- They went into this anticipating they would cater to some small contractors, some warehousing and some light manufacturing, which they did. What they did not anticipate are cheerleading companies, mortgage companies, title companies, a wide variety of uses.
- He feels they generally have a good sense of community where people help each other and a good experience.
- They are adding storage units in the back, a need that was not anticipated for the original phases, but they get frequent requests from their owners for additional storage for materials or products.
- The storage areas are unheated, with no electricity, strictly for storage designed in increments of twelve by twenty-four feet deep. After canvassing our owners this seems to be what they need so we added that to the site plan this time around.
- There is no intent to change the design or details; they will be constructed and look the same as the existing units.
- The condominium by-laws and master deed will be set up from the start so what is being proposed will be a continuation of what already exists.
- Phase II included the storm water infrastructure for what is being proposed now. Detention ponds, drains, pipes were installed over ten years ago and are ready to continue on.

- The Hartland Township Zoning Ordinance states that a structure that fronts on Old US 23 must meet a higher standard. The intent is to keep the phases the same but add some additional architectural features to the building that fronts Old US 23 to comply with the Ordinance.

[The Applicant provided some façade drawings for the Planning Commission to view.]

Chair Fox referred to the staff memorandum dated January 5, 2023.

SITE PLAN REVIEW – Applicable Site Standards

Site Requirements

Dumpster Enclosure (Sec. 5.7)

Director Langer stated no details were provided on the site plan for this item, but the Applicant has provided a written description. Staff is calling attention to the item stating the revised detail drawing of the dumpster enclosure is to be included on the Construction Plan set and it will be brick to match the building. Staff has spoken with the Applicant about this item.

Barrier-Free Parking – Phase IV

Director Langer stated they have all of the Barrier-Free spaces, but one needs to be van-accessible. The plans are to be revised to provide one (1) van-accessible barrier-free parking space, with 8' wide access aisle, on the Construction Plan set.

Commissioner Murphy asked if the parking setbacks and through-rows will be the same in Phases III and IV as in the existing development. The Applicant stated yes.

Access Management and Non-Residential Driveway Standards (Sec. 5.10)

Director Langer displayed the existing street map and stated the following:

- Existing gravel access to Old US 23 will be paved as Phase IV is completed.
- Applicant will need to apply for and acquire all applicable permits and approvals from the Livingston County Road Commission (LCRC) as part of the current proposal prior to the construction phase.

Landscaping and Screening (Sec. 5.11)

Greenbelt Landscaping (Sec. 5.11.C.)

Commissioner Grissim asked about the hedge row location stating the shrubs were shown about ten feet apart; she inquired if this is intended to screen the parking area, and will there be mowed lawn in between the shrubs? The Applicant stated he has been working with Staff and provided a supplemental document. The yews are larger than two feet, they will spread up to forty-two inches or more. Commissioner Grissim stated that seems fine to screen the pavement.

The Applicant asked about the landscaping in Phases I and II installed twenty years ago. The decision making body for that portion of the development is comprised of the owners and they complained about maintenance of the mulch beds. They chose to replace the mulch beds with rock. They asked if the new phases would be able to have the rock as well. Staff has encouraged keeping as much of the landscape beds mow-able lawn for ease of maintenance as the rock is typically not permitted. He also stated the landscape plan will be revised to state the specific shrub species name and planting size and areas of lawn on the Construction Set of plans.

Foundation Landscaping (Sec. 5.11.2.D.)

Commissioner Grissim stated the following:

- Due to height constraints with the roof overhang and the width of the planting bed (5 feet wide), the proposed ornamental trees will not thrive in the locations shown. Staff would recommend the ornamental trees be planted in the landscaped areas (medians) next to end units of Building M, O, P, R, S, and U.
- In front of the building, additional plantings (shrubs, groundcover, perennials) are required in each foundation planting bed so there is not as much mulch.
- Revisions to be shown on the Construction Plan set.

Parking Lot Landscaping (Sec. 5.11.2.E.1.)

Commissioner Grissim referred to the various comments in the memorandum.

Perimeter Landscaping (Sec. 5.11.2.E.11.a.) – For areas visible from a public road (east, facing Old US-23), parking adjacent to Building X in Phase IV

Commissioner Grissim stated the following:

- Intent is to screen parking areas from Old US 23.
- There is a hedge row as part of the Greenbelt.
- Staff has suggested adding evergreen shrub hedge row on inner edge of each median next to parking spaces/loading spaces.
- The hope is to reduce some of the maintenance required with mowed lawn rather than large mulch beds.

The Applicant stated it was suggested to use some of the hedge row items at the ends of the parking spaces; he is good with either.

Buffering or Screening Requirements (Sec. 5.11.2.G.i.) – Northwest area of the site (adjacent to Cobblestone Preserve to the west and CA zoned property to the north)

Commissioner Grissim spoke of the tree removal, especially in the northwest corner. She cautioned if all the trees marked are removed, it does not leave much of a screen between the development and the neighboring residential properties. They would encourage retaining as many of the existing trees as possible and filling in to provide a solid screen. The Applicant stated the Civil Engineer said it would be easier to remove the indicated trees than to preserve them but that is not the Applicant's desire. He would like to preserve as many of the trees as possible.

[The Applicant displayed a photo board of the existing trees.]

Commissioner Murphy asked Director Langer to display the aerial view. He asked if the area to the east of the two houses north of the tennis courts is the location of the existing trees he intends to keep. The Applicant stated yes. When they developed Cobblestone Preserve, they planned recreation areas to abut the future commercial development. East of the Cobblestone Preserve tennis courts there is a grass covered berm. At the end of the berm to the north, is a cluster of pine trees. At the end of the pine trees are the large deciduous trees shown on the photo board. The Applicant intends to revise the plan to conserve the mature trees if possible.

Commissioner Murphy supports keeping the trees but suggested if some of the trees die, could there be an agreement to replace the dead trees with some pine trees to maintain the screen.

Commissioner Grissim concurred that once the project is completed, if trees do die, they would be replaced so that the screen will be maintained. Director Langer asked for clarification as to what type of tree should be used to replace a mature canopy tree. Commissioner Grissim stated the Ordinance calls for year round screening through evergreen trees. Director Langer suggested a condition that calls replacement of trees lost due to construction be filled in with evergreen trees to maintain the required screen.

Commissioner Mayer asked about the Grading and Paving Plan elevation change on page 3.5 of the Civil drawings. He stated with a difference of thirteen feet of elevation change within fifteen feet of space from the existing elevation, the existing trees will need to be removed and it may even require a retaining wall.

The Applicant stated he will need to discuss that with the Engineers as it is their desire to keep as many of the trees as possible but also to have the property drain correctly. They can plant more trees, but the drainage has to be where it is. He also stated it will take approximately five years to build what is being presented tonight. The tree line to the north abuts property currently zoned CA Conservation Agriculture but it is possible that property will not be developed as residential lessening the concern for screening. If the trees need to be removed, he will replace them with the required evergreen screening.

Lighting (Sec. 5.13)

Director Langer stated there are a couple of areas on the photometric plan that do not meet the requirement and will need to be adjusted and resubmitted with the Construction Set of plans.

Architecture / Building Materials (Sec. 5.24)

Chair Fox stated if you look at the façade drawings, they are doing what they have been doing all along. The Planning Commission had no additional comments.

Director Langer called out a correction to the staff memorandum stating the products are not vinyl.

The Applicant stated the ribbed steel product used is probably more durable than vinyl. He also stated that because they developed the abutting residential properties, they used products on the front of the buildings that felt more residential than commercial. On the rear of the buildings, they have used more industrial type products. On the storage units, they plan to use the same utilitarian approach.

Commissioner Murphy asked for clarification if they were viewing the façade of the storage unit structure.

Commissioner Mitchell offered the following Motion:

Move to approve Site Plan Application #23-002, a request to construct twelve (12) office/warehouse buildings containing a total of seventy-two (72) condominium units, and construct three (3) detached storage buildings, as part of Phase III and IV of Hartland Commerce Center. Approval is subject to the following conditions:

- 1. The applicant shall adequately address the outstanding items noted in the Planning Department's memorandum, dated January 5, 2023, on the Construction Plan set, subject to an administrative review by the Planning staff prior to the issuance of a land use permit.**

2. **The applicant complies with any requirements of the Township Engineering Consultant, Department of Public Works Director, Hartland Deerfield Fire Authority, and all other government agencies, as applicable.**

Seconded by Commissioner Grissim. Motion carried unanimously.

9. **Call to the Public:**

None

10. **Planner Report:**

Director Langer reported the following:

- The Planning Director for Livingston County, Kathleen Kline-Hudson, is retiring. Her last day is Friday.
- Several Planning Commissioners attended the Michigan State University Citizen Planner program last year and he is interested in hearing about their experiences. The Planning Commission offered the following comments:
 - Well done program by MSU both presenting and instructing.
 - It was intense. Important to review the material to retain the benefit.
 - Spent some time discussing the Conway Township solar farm issue and feels it would be beneficial to be proactive and review Hartland's Ordinance regarding solar farms.
 - Director Langer stated the Ordinance is supposed to reflect how the community feels about any given development opportunity and it would be good to look at it again. At the reception for Ms. Kline-Hudson, he spoke with planners from the three townships involved in that issue and learned our Township Attorney is helping one of those townships to write an Ordinance to address that topic. Chair Fox agreed that would be a good topic to look at again. He also mentioned Hartland Township was able to sit down with the Hartland schools and discuss the location for their solar project and ultimately found a better location for all parties.

11. **Committee Reports:**

None

12. **Adjournment:**

A Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Mitchell and seconded by Commissioner McMullen. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:05 PM.

Submitted by.



Tom Murphy
Planning Commission Secretary