

CLINTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

REPORT OF MEETING

SEPTEMBER 13, 2007

PRESENT: Kenneth Pearl, Chairperson
Kirkanne Moseley, Vice-Chairperson
Denise C. Trombley, Secretary
Stephen Charron
Ron DiBartolomeo
Fred Gibson
Timothy Grajewski
Peter Henderson

ABSENT: Ernest Hornung (Excused)

STAFF: Carlo Santia, Director
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Pearl called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Ms. Moseley, supported by Mr. Grajewski, to approve the agenda as submitted. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Moseley, Grajewski, Charron, DiBartolomeo, Gibson, Henderson, Pearl, Trombley. Nays – None. Absent – Hornung. Motion carried.

LOTS 20 THROUGH 23, THE MEADOWS SUBDIVISION (SECTION 23) (LOCATED BETWEEN NORTHBOUND AND SOUTHBOUND GRATIOT AVENUE, NORTH OF IROQUOIS)

- **SPECIAL LAND USE: GAS STATION/DRIVE-THRU RESTAURANT IN
THE B-3 GENERAL BUSINESS DISTRICT; AND**
 - **SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN: WOW GAS STATION/MCDONALD'S
RESTAURANT**
 - **PUBLIC HEARING**
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- FILE #07-6225: PETITIONED BY FAIZ SIMON**

Pertinent correspondence was read and entered into the record. Ms. Trombley advised that notice of this public hearing was issued by regular mail to 31 owners and/or occupants of property located within 300 feet of the land in question, with none of those

returned as undeliverable. She read a letter into the record from Joe & Pat Urda, addressing their concerns and asking some questions.

Mr. Chester Stempien, architect for the proposed development, addressed the concerns of the letter read into the record. He assured they will landscape the site in an attractive way to provide proper screening from any neighboring residential developments. He replied to inquiry that the proposed McDonald's will be 3,000 square feet, which is their latest design for their restaurants. It will be attractive with bright yellow canopies. They will be complimenting that portion of the development with a 3,860-square-foot convenience store and gas station. He compared it to their other development on the southwest corner of Utica Road and Groesbeck, where there is a WOW Gas Station/Starbucks Coffee Shop. Mr. Stempien could not see how this would impact any residents in the area other than possibly some additional traffic on Iroquois, which is not used much at this point. He informed that there will be two lanes for the drive-thru traffic, so they will be able to take two orders at a time. Mr. Stempien reviewed some of the architectural details of the car wash, convenience store, oil lube change facility and gas station, and he showed aerial photographs of the site at this time, as well as renderings of the proposed development and photographs of their location on Utica and Groesbeck. He added that they look forward to enhancing this property with the proposed development.

Motion by Mr. Gibson, supported by Mr. Henderson, to open the public hearing. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Gibson, Henderson, Grajewski, Charron, DiBartolomeo, Moseley, Pearl, Trombley. Nays – None. Absent – Hornung. Motion carried.

Mr. Kenny Engelhardt, 38455 Meadowdale, Clinton Township, Michigan 48036, stated his property is located kitty-corner to the subject site. He inquired as to whether sidewalks will be installed. He expressed concern regarding increased light, noise and air pollution, and whether this will negatively affect his property values. He further inquired as to whether there is any consideration being given to development of the nearby vacant car dealership property.

Mr. Pearl addressed the issue of the lights, and assured there are ordinances that control the positioning of any lights so they do not shine onto abutting property.

Mr. Santia admitted that any new development is going to generate additional traffic, just as there was additional traffic when the Parkway Chrysler Plymouth dealership was open. Mr. Santia pointed out that the traffic signal on Gratiot at Iroquois still assures they will be able to exit their street safely onto Gratiot without any more difficulty than they experience now. He noted that the lighting will be shielded so that it does not spill out onto abutting properties, although he acknowledged there will be some additional light in the area. The property is zoned B-3 General Business and the uses proposed are allowed in this zoning district.

Mr. Engelhardt inquired as to whether the additional approaches to the site will congest the area.

Mr. Santia replied that Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) controls the access points off of Gratiot because it is a state highway. He added they try to minimize the impact of traffic flow on neighboring businesses and homes, and the Township has to rely on them to make sure those approaches are situated appropriately. He replied that installation of sidewalks is the responsibility of the developer, and the Township requires them on all new developments.

Motion by Ms. Moseley, supported by Mr. Charron, to close the public hearing. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Moseley, Charron, DiBartolomeo, Gibson, Grajewski, Henderson, Pearl, Trombley. Nays – None. Absent – Hornung. Motion carried.

Mr. Charron inquired as to whether there is any way they can put a boulevard in at the entry points from northbound and southbound Gratiot to eliminate any confusion and separate the incoming and outgoing traffic.

Mr. Stempien replied that this is no different than any other facility on a major one-way thoroughfare. He felt there will be sufficient signage and markings on the pavement to indicate the entrance and exit. Mr. Stempien clarified that the vehicles will stay to the right side of the access when they enter, as well as when they exit. He felt the entrance and exit on one-way streets is much safer than on two-way streets.

Mr. Charron considered it to be a safety issue. After some discussion, it was discovered that Mr. Charron was under the impression that motorists would be staying to the far left to enter the site and the far left to exit the site because of the direction of the arrows on the site plan. If traffic were to adhere to that pattern, the motorists would be driving on the wrong side of the Street.

Mr. Stempien assured he would correct the prints prior to the matter being forwarded to the Township Board.

Mr. Charron was still concerned about traffic flow onto the subject parcel, regardless of the directional arrows. He added that he is a facilities director for a school district and he emphasized that such directions need to be spelled out very well.

Mr. Grajewski pointed out several other developments in the immediate area with similar traffic patterns, and he inquired as to whether there is a history of accidents at these locations.

Mr. Santia replied that he is not aware of any traffic problems in the area. He noted that Walgreens on Gratiot has similar entrances/exits. He recommended that the developer install some pavement marking with arrows.

Mr. Grajewski noted that the far bay of the building is referred to on the plan as “end cap user”. He inquired as to the proposed use.

Mr. Stempien explained the “end cap user” will depend upon who wants to lease that spot. He noted that it could be a business such as a dry cleaners or a retail facility. He assured that it would not be another drive-through restaurant.

Ms. Trombley stated that, at the Board of Appeals meeting, it was mentioned that the WOW Gas Station will be similar to an existing site at Utica Road and Groesbeck Highway. She recalled the petitioner indicated that, upon receiving approval for this site, they will eventually be closing the older McDonalds on the west side of Gratiot, south of this site.

Mr. Stempien confirmed that they are proposing an oil lube change facility on this site, but from past experience, he did not feel there is usually a back-up.

Mr. Gibson inquired as to whether they are providing adequate parking for a restaurant use.

Mr. Santia replied to inquiry that the parking meets the ordinance.

Mr. Gibson felt it is an improvement to the area.

Mr. Henderson stated it appears as though the service drive behind the McDonald’s dead-ends into the drive-thru lane. He inquired as to how vehicles can maneuver on the service drive if the drive-thru lane is active.

Mr. Stempien replied that vehicles can back up to get out, or there is a double drive around the island. He added that the service drive is generally used during the “off hours”.

Mr. Charron inquired as to the hours of operation.

Mr. Stempien replied that the facility will be open 24-hours.

Mr. Pearl inquired as to the Planning Department’s request for continuation of a 30-inch-high screen wall on the east and west side of the property in lieu of the 30-inch landscaped berm.

Mr. Stempien explained that they would like to put a 30-inch-high wrought iron fence with posts every so often. He felt it is much more attractive than a solid wall.

Mr. Santia explained that the intent of the wall in lieu of a berm is for the purpose of keeping headlights from shining into the adjacent roads. He noted that they would allow the type of wall Mr. Stempien referred to if the parking area is not adjacent to a road, but where it is adjacent to a road, they will have to put in a 30-inch-high berm or solid wall. He indicated that a solid wall or berm will be required along northbound and southbound Gratiot, and he felt that even with the pump islands, there will be vehicles facing south toward Iroquois, so there should also be a solid wall along Iroquois.

Mr. Stempien stated they will be using landscaping to soften the lights shining from the site.

Mr. Santia agreed there are some areas where landscaping and/or decorative fencing can be allowed, but he informed that this site is going to need a solid wall. He advised that the site plan can be revised administratively at a later date.

Motion by Ms. Trombley, supported by Mr. Gibson, with reference to File # 07-6225 and application from Faiz Simon, Simon Land Development Group LLC, 24501 Ecorse Road, Taylor, Michigan 48180, concerning the proposed special land use being a gas station with a drive-thru restaurant in the B-3 General Business District and Site Plan for WOW Gas Station/McDonald's Restaurant, to be located on Lots 20 through 23, The Meadows Subdivision (Section 23), generally located between northbound and southbound Gratiot Avenue, north of Iroquois, that, in consideration of variance granted by the Board of Appeals, recommendation be submitted to the Clinton Township Board for approval of the special land use and site plan, contingent upon a 30-inch screen wall be continued on the east and west side of the property, and directional pavement markings at the entrances/exits for safer traffic flow. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Trombley, Gibson, Charron, DiBartolomeo, Grajewski, Henderson, Moseley, Pearl. Nays – None. Absent – Hornung. Motion carried.

**7.242 ACRES OF LAND FRONTING THE EAST LINE OF GARFIELD ROAD,
NORTH OF MORAVIAN DRIVE (SECTION 29)**

- **SPECIAL LAND USE: OUTDOOR DISPLAYS IN B-2 COMMUNITY BUSINESS DISTRICT AND**
 - **SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN: HOLIDAY SHOPPING CENTER/RANDAZZO'S MARKET**
 - **PUBLIC HEARING**
 - **FILE #06-0475-A: PETITIONED BY FRANK ARAGONA**
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Pertinent correspondence was read and entered into the record. Ms. Trombley advised that notice of this public hearing was issued by regular mail to 58 owners and/or occupants located within 300 feet of the land in question, with none of those returned as undeliverable.

Mr. Paul Aragona, 37020 Garfield, Clinton Township, Michigan 48036, explained that this is the third transformation for Holiday Shopping Center. They signed a lease with Mr. Sonny Randazzo for a market to occupy a portion of the shopping center, which takes up the former CVS space and a good portion of the space that was previously occupied by Damman Hardware. They will be refacing those areas, and, as part of the improvement, he would like to have an outdoor trellised sales area for fruit and vegetable products, flowers, etc.

Mr. Sonny Randazzo, 37180 Willow Lane, Clinton Township, Michigan 48038, explained that they will be selling a lot of flowers, budding plants and baskets outside, and there will be large electric doors leading from the building to this fenced-in area, which would wrap around to the north side of the building with another set of electric doors on that side. He felt it will keep customers corralled in the fenced-in area without them wandering around the parking lot. At this time of the year, they would sell pumpkins, corn stalks, bales of hay and fall plants outside, and in the spring they would have an assortment of flowers. He assured they will not be selling any Christmas trees at this site.

Mr. Aragona felt the proposed development will fit in well with this shopping center. He noted that they will be revising part of the roof system, and they will be adding colorful awnings.

Mr. Randazzo noted that they will have the same look as their location on Hayes, south of 23 Mile Road.

Motion by Mr. Henderson, supported by Mr. Grajewski, to open the public hearing. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Henderson, Grajewski, Charron, DiBartolomeo, Gibson, Moseley, Pearl, Trombley. Nays – None. Absent – Hornung. Motion carried.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion by Mr. Grajewski, supported by Mr. Gibson, to close the public hearing. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Grajewski, Gibson, Charron, DiBartolomeo, Henderson, Moseley, Pearl, Trombley. Nays – None. Absent – Hornung. Motion carried.

Mr. DiBartolomeo inquired as to the total size of the building.

Mr. Aragona replied to inquiry that it is approximately 22,400 square feet.

Mr. Santia replied to inquiry that the property is zoned properly for this use with special land use approval.

Ms. Trombley inquired as to when they intend to open.

Mr. Randazzo replied that they would like to open in April 2008. He added that they have a lot of work to do and they want to “do it right”.

Mr. Aragona replied to inquiry that the remainder of the shopping center takes up another 23,000 square feet, so the proposed development is approximately half of it. He replied to further inquiry that two of the current tenants will be relocating further south in the shopping center. He noted that there will be very little vacant tenant space left after the transformation to accommodate this store.

Mr. Randazzo explained that they will have a small café where they will sell items such as coffee and gelato. He felt their market will be a nice accent to the bike path for the bikers and walkers.

Mr. DiBartolomeo felt it is refreshing that there is an existing building in the Township that is going to be “re-used”. He felt it is a very attractive development, and he complimented Mr. Aragona.

Ms. Moseley requested that a location sketch be added to the plan, which is required by ordinance.

Mr. Aragona assured they will add the location sketch.

Mr. Pearl complimented Mr. Aragona on the fantastic job they have done with the center. He was glad they were able to keep CVS in the same complex, and he complimented Mr. Aragona on the beautiful landscaping in the Metro Parkway median.

Motion by Mr. DiBartolomeo, supported by Ms. Moseley, with reference to File #06-0475-B and application from Frank Aragona, Holiday Shopping Center LLC, 37020 Garfield, Suite T-1, Clinton Township, Michigan 48036, concerning the proposed special land use for outdoor displays in the B-2 Community Business District and the revised site development plan for Randazzo’s Market @ Holiday Shopping Center, located on 7.242 acres of land fronting the east line of Garfield Road, north of Moravian Drive, that recommendation be submitted to the Clinton Township Board for approval of the special land use and site development plan as submitted, subject to the location sketch being shown on the plan. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – DiBartolomeo, Moseley, Charron, Gibson, Grajewski, Henderson, Pearl, Trombley. Nays – None. Absent – Hornung. Motion carried.

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

- **APPROVAL OF JUNE 14, 2007 REPORT**
 - **APPROVAL OF JUNE 28, 2007 REPORT**
 - **APPROVAL OF JULY 12, 2007 REPORT**
 - **APPROVAL OF AUGUST 9, 2007 REPORT**
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Motion by Mr. Grajewski, supported by Mr. Charron, to approve the reports of the June 14th, June 28th, July 12th and August 9th, 2007 reports as written. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Grajewski, Charron, DiBartolomeo, Gibson, Henderson, Moseley, Pearl, Trombley. Nays – None. Absent – Hornung. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION ON NEXT MEETING AGENDA

Mr. Santia advised that the following items are anticipated to be on the next Planning Commission agenda for their meeting on Thursday, September 27, 2007:

- Special Land Use/Revised Site Plan for Resurrection Cemetery: Mr. Santia noted that they are proposing to expand the cemetery by developing approximately 40 acres off of 18 Mile Road on the northwest portion of their property.
- Rezoning of property on Hereford Street from I-1 Light Industrial to RML Multiple-Family Residential (Low-Density). He added it is a small parcel.
- Re-Review of Site Development Plan for Wal-Mart: Mr. Santia explained that this will be placed on the agenda at the direction of the Township Board, but he has requested additional information that they have not yet provided. If they do not receive the information in time, it may be placed on a later agenda.

Mr. Grajewski understood that there was discussion at the Township Board regarding possible boulevard improvements to Romeo Plank to be paid for by Wal-Mart. He inquired as to whether the purpose of the boulevard would be to prevent trucks from turning left.

Mr. Santia replied that it is more for passenger vehicles to provide a little more safety and ease in getting out. Motorists exiting the site on Romeo Plank who intend to head north would have to turn right and proceed to make a “Michigan left”, utilizing a boulevard turn-around. He felt they would be able to stop the boulevard just short of the south driveway so that the large semi-trucks would not have to maneuver around the boulevard. Mr. Santia felt that deliveries would most often be made during off-peak hours. There was discussion at the Board level that the boulevard would enable a safer and more efficient traffic pattern on Romeo Plank Road with less of an impact from the Wal-Mart traffic. Mr. Santia also mentioned that there was some concern by the Board that passenger traffic may drive behind the building and intermingle with trucks, causing a safety hazard. Mr. Santia explained that Wal-Mart’s objection is that they have received approvals from the Road Commission and Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), along with a recommendation for approval from this Commission. He added that the Road Commission has no objection to the plan with or without the boulevard. Mr. Santia estimated the boulevard would cost approximately \$250,000, and he compared it to the boulevard on Hayes Road, south of Canal Road.

Further discussion took place regarding the items of concern by the Board that Wal-Mart has conceded to and those to which they are objecting.

Mr. Santia clarified that the Township Board is asking the Planning Commission to reconsider some issues they may not have thought of before because they were relying on the reviews of the Road Commission and MDOT.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Ms. Moseley, supported by Mr. Grajewski, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise C. Trombley, Secretary
CLINTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

ces:09/17/07
ces:10/25/07