

CLINTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

REPORT OF MEETING

AUGUST 14, 2008

PRESENT: Kenneth Pearl, Chairperson
Kirkanne Moseley, Vice-Chairperson
Denise C. Trombley, Secretary
Stephen Charron
Ron DiBartolomeo
Peter Henderson
Ernest Hornung

ABSENT: Fred Gibson (Excused)
Tim Grajewski (Excused)

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

Mr. Pearl called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

3.92 ACRES OF LAND FRONTING THE EAST LINE OF HARPER AVENUE, SOUTH OF 15 MILE ROAD (SECTION 36)

- **PROPOSED REZONING FROM B-1 NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS TO
SP-1 SPECIAL PURPOSE (NURSING HOMES)**
 - **PUBLIC HEARING**
- FILE #08-6292: PETITIONED BY JAMES W. DUFF
REPRESENTED BY JIMETTA J. LEWIS**
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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 32 owners and/or occupants of property located within 300 feet of the land in question, with 2 of those returned as undeliverable.

Ms. Jimetta Lewis, 9101 Division, Casco, Michigan, distributed printed information to the Planning Commissioners about their organization. It is a fact sheet of their program and what they intend to do. She explained that if this rezoning is approved, they would propose a multi-purpose facility, the culmination of a ten-year countywide program. She noted that they do not currently have a facility with the ability to house some men who are severely mentally ill and/or handicapped. These are individuals who have taken up residence in the fields and under bridges in this area, and they do not fit in to the traditional MCREST program. They are homeless, no money to pay rent, and 99% of them do not have vehicles for transportation. There will be office space for the organization so that services can be facilitated. They would operate “Safe Haven” for the severely handicapped and/or mentally ill. “New Passages” would provide the services, including case managers and direct care workers. Ms. Lewis informed that they would be limited to 25 men, which she assured is a good, manageable amount. Part of the facility would house a commercial kitchen, and they could therefore offer a meal a day for the homeless who could access the building. Any homeless individuals who access the building could also utilize the services. She explained that they have a downriver community service organization that will open a medical clinic in the building. She has talked to the Macomb County Dental Society and a dental clinic could also be opened in this building. They would also provide showers, laundry services, etc.

There were several people in attendance, but Ms. Lewis noted that they are all involved in this program. She stated that about one-half of the Board of Directors for their organization are present tonight. There were no objections to the proposed rezoning.

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

Mr. Hornung inquired as to whether it will be limited to 25 men.

Ms. Lewis assured that the Safe Haven portion will be limited to 25 men. They would each have a room of their own, and would be provided with psychological care. They would be allowed to live there for two years and provided three meals each day. They would be given incentives for taking their medications. She clarified that one of the biggest problems is keeping them on their medications because once they start feeling better, they quit taking them and ultimately regress.

Mr. Hornung inquired as to how they are selected to be one of the 25.

Ms. Lewis explained there is an outreach team and they are selected by diagnosis. She commented that their case managers are very aware of the behaviors of mentally ill. She added that there are many who fall into this category, and she estimated that she could have filled this building “twice over” this past year. Ms. Lewis replied to inquiry that the homeless have been known to walk five miles to get to their facility, or they turn in returnable bottles to make enough money to purchase a bus ticket. She replied to further inquiry that they would have security provided through a security company 24 hours a

day, 7 days a week. Ms. Lewis replied to still further inquiry that these individuals do not generally have violent tendencies, but she assured they do not take anyone who has any past of sexual crimes. They are required to report themselves if they have any history as a sexual predator. She added that is also something they can check. Ms. Lewis explained that their caseworkers are trained to detect violent behavior. They are not permitted to be on psychotropic medications. She acknowledged that they can only help a very small percentage of the population who could benefit from such a facility, but it will be a start.

Ms. Trombley inquired as to where these men go after two years.

Ms. Lewis responded that Community Housing Network runs a program and they would be eligible at that time. They could possibly get subsidized housing, and there would be caseworkers checking up on them. Michigan Works partners with them, as well as the college, who provides culinary arts training in their commercial kitchen. Some of the men are eligible for SSI, and the caseworkers can help them with that.

Mr. Charron observed that the site they have selected is very limited for pedestrian traffic.

Ms. Lewis stated they are talking to SMART with regards to available transportation. She added that they do have a bus.

Mr. Charron inquired as to how many other soup kitchens are in the area, and where they are located.

Ms. Lewis was aware of two in the area: one through the Salvation Army on Mound Road, between Nine and Ten Mile Roads; and the other through the Salvation Army on Church Street in Mount Clemens.

Mr. Henderson inquired as to whether they will be giving any preference to military veterans who are homeless.

Ms. Lewis replied they take in people who come to them. They were looking at that possibility; however, there is housing for veterans in Detroit, and they have access to the Veteran Center in Detroit every Friday via bus that leaves the Verkuilen Building. She felt they would get more help there than what will be offered at this facility.

Mr. Pearl noticed that the Planning Department did not recommend approval or denial of the rezoning, but he added that it meets the criteria. It is a fairly isolated area, and they cannot get anywhere in the back through the parking lot. He inquired as to whether residents will be free to come and go during nighttime hours.

Ms. Lewis explained that some of the men have entry-level jobs that hire in the afternoons. They would be allowed to re-enter after work, and they also have to allow the residents to leave at night. She explained that they may possibly have to give them up to two weeks before they would close out their case. She cautioned that individuals of

this type often relapse up to ten times before they choose to make a difference in their life.

Mr. Santia clarified that the proposed use is housing for the mentally ill and handicapped, and the organization would have to make the building suitable for that use, working through the Building Department. He cautioned that if they are considering the opening of a soup kitchen at this location, he did not feel that use would fall under the SP-1 Special Purpose (Nursing Homes) designation, so they may be required to apply for a Special Land Use. At that point, it would come back to the Planning Commission and ultimately the Township Board to determine whether that use will be compatible in the area.

Mr. Pearl hoped that they will install some sidewalks.

Ms. Lewis replied to inquiry that there is a bus station in front but it is across the street in front of McDonald's.

Mr. Pearl inquired as to whether there are sufficient funds to keep the building going.

Ms. Lewis explained that they had a benefactor come in to their July Board meeting. They are through the Community Reinvestment Program and are going to present a check for \$4.5 million to assure purchase of the building and property, necessary renovations, and operating costs. They are also setting up a foundation, and the benefactor is going to help people apply for grants to keep the building going for many years to come. She added that they have their business plan in place.

Mr. Charron admitted that, upon first hearing of this plan, he was skeptical, but after hearing the presentation tonight, he would agree with the proposed rezoning to SP-1; however, he expressed serious reservations with regards to putting a soup kitchen in at this location. He pointed out that the existing zoning district has either a neutral or positive impact on the neighborhood business, but with the attraction of numerous homeless individuals coming and going from the facility for the soup kitchen and other services offered, he felt there may be an impact on the immediate neighborhood. He did not feel the area is pedestrian-friendly.

Ms. Trombley inquired as to whether there has been any talk about the adjacent skating rink.

Ms. Lewis claimed they were working on it today.

Mr. Santia replied that he is not aware of anything going on at the skating rink.

Motion by Ms. Trombley, supported by Mr. Charron, with reference to File #6292 and application from James W. Duff, Creative Realty Management Company LLC, 18720 Mack Avenue, Suite 260, Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan 48236, as represented by Jimetta J. Lewis, Macomb County Rotating Emergency Shelter Team (MCREST), 20415

Erin, Roseville, Michigan 48066, concerning the proposed rezoning from B-1 Neighborhood Business to SP-1 Special Purpose (Nursing Homes), for 3.92 acres of land fronting the east line of Harper Avenue, south of 15 Mile Road (Section 36), addressed as 34820 Harper Avenue, that recommendation be forwarded to the Clinton Township Board for approval of the rezoning as requested. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Trombley, Charron, DiBartolomeo, Henderson, Hornung, Moseley, Pearl. Nays – None. Absent – Gibson, Grajewski. Motion carried.

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

- **APPROVAL OF JULY 17, 2008 REPORT**
 - **APPROVAL OF JULY 31, 2008 REPORT**
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Motion by Mr. Charron, supported by Ms. Moseley, to approve the reports of the July 17, 2008 and July 31, 2008 Planning Commission meetings, as submitted. Roll Call: Ayes – Charron, Moseley, DiBartolomeo, Henderson, Hornung, Pearl, Trombley. Nays – None. Absent – Gibson, Grajewski. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION ON NEXT MEETING AGENDA

Mr. Santia advised that there are no items for the next Planning Commission agenda.

Mr. Hornung indicated that if there is a meeting on August 28, 2008, he will not be able to attend.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. DiBartolomeo, supported by Ms. Moseley, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise C. Trombley, Secretary
CLINTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

ces:08/15/08
ces:08/21/08