

**GENOA CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
PUBLIC HEARING  
OCTOBER 10, 2017  
6:30 P.M.  
MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting of the Genoa Charter Township Planning Commission was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Present were Chairman Doug Brown, Eric Rauch, John McManus, Chris Grajek, Jill Rickard and Barbara Figurski. Absent was James Mortensen. Also present was Kelly VanMarter, Community Development Director/Assistant Township Manager, Gary Markstrom from Tetra Tech, and an audience of 40.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The pledge of allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

**Moved** by McManus, seconded by Figurski, to approve the agenda as presented.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC: The call to the public was made at 6:31 pm with no response.

**OPEN PUBLIC HEARING #1...** Review of a special use application, site plan application, environmental impact assessment, and site plan for a proposed K-12 Livingston Christian School to be located within the Brighton Church of the Nazarene at 7669 Brighton Road, Brighton. The request is petitioned by Livingston Christian Schools.

Planning Commission disposition of petition:

- A. Recommendation of Special Use Application
- B. Recommendation of Environmental Impact Assessment
- C. Recommendation of Site Plan

Commissioner Rauch asked to be excused from the discussion and motion as his children attend Brighton Christian Schools.

**Moved by** Figurski, seconded Grajek, to excuse Commissioner. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Brett LaVanway of Boss Engineering, Steven Russo of Fleis & VandenBrink Engineering, Inc., and Roger Wiegand of Livingston Christian Schools were present.

Mr. LaVanway stated that LCS is requesting to occupy Brighton Church of the Nazarene for a K – 12 Christian School. They have included their site plan, impact assessment,

and traffic impact study. They will have a maximum of 200 students and the school is in session Monday through Friday.

They have received the review letters and are working with the church with regard to the parking. There may be some minor adjustments made to the plan. They anticipate this being reconciled in approximately one week. The concerns are that the church would like to give up the least amount of parking spaces as possible as well as the number of ADA spaces. The school will need approximately 197 spaces and the church currently has 211 spaces available.

They believe they have complied with all of the other consultants' requirements.

Chairman Brown stated there is nothing in the packet showing that the church is in agreement with the proposals being made by LCS. Additionally, he would like to have the assurance that the two organizations agree to coordinate their events so that they do not overlap. This is very important.

Mr. Borden was not present this evening. Ms. VanMarter reviewed his letter dated October 5, 2017.

The Planner has found that this request does meet the special land use criteria. She noted that the school is proposing to stagger their start and end times, which will help with the traffic impact on the neighborhood.

Also, the driving school that currently operates at the church will no longer be there.

Additionally, the school and the church have different peak times; however, the Township would like more information ensuring that the church and the school are communicating and coordinate the days and times of their special events so that they do not overlap. This should be stated in the Impact Assessment.

The impacts are increased traffic and increased use of the site in general. There will now be school activities in addition to the current church activities.

The revised plan notes a slight increase in building coverage; however, there are no modifications to the building proposed. This should be corrected.

Ms. VanMarter stated that the site plan notes 180 parking spaces; however, Mr. LaVanway stated there are 197. The correct number of parking will need to be provided. The church needs to confirm that they approve with this much loss of parking as well as the physical changes that are being proposed for the site.

The plan shows an additional sign at the front of the site on Brighton Road; however there are no details. The applicant must obtain approval and a permit for any signs.

She reviewed the proposed drop-off and pick-up circulation plan for the site as well as other proposed structural changes for the parking lot. If the student count exceeds 200, then the driveway closest to the building where it narrows to two lanes would need to be widened. The driveway at Brighton Road is already three lanes. Ms. VanMarter suggested a tracking mechanism be put in place so that the Township is aware if the

population reaches close to the 200 students, as there will need to be significant changes to the site.

Mr. Wiegand stated that the current student population is 147. He believes that the enrollment will reach 200 within the next five years. The second week of the school year, they report their population to the State. This can also be reported to the Township.

Commissioner Rickard noted that the playground seems small. Mr. Wiegand stated that they have not discussed the playground at this time.

Gary Markstrom reviewed his letter of October 4, 2017. His only outstanding issue is regarding the traffic study. The traffic counts are from May of 2015 and he is recommending that updated counts be obtained. He does not expect it to change dramatically and impact the study they have presented; however, it would be good information to have. He added that the study was done at the time the I-96 and US-23 interchange was under construction so the traffic pattern may have been different in this area at that time.

Mr. Russo stated he has spoken to the Road Commission and their representative believed that their numbers from 2015 would be fairly accurate for today.

Commissioner Rickert stated that the amount of traffic on Brighton Road is very high in the morning. She would like to see an updated traffic study.

Commissioner Grajek has concerns about traffic making a left-hand turn out of the site. Mr. Russo stated that they estimated the number of left turns based on data provided by Livingston Christian Schools. When they performed the calculations for the additional student enrollment, they followed a similar formula. Mr. Markstrom is comfortable with the way this has been calculated.

Wiegand stated that they will not increase their enrollment to 200 until they have received approval for a revised site plan and the driveway has been widened as discussed by Ms. VanMarter.

Mr. Markstrom noted that Page 3 of the site plan has a narrative that includes how they will educate the parents and students regarding the traffic flow on the site as it relates to drop off and pick up.

Commissioner Grajek referred to Chairman Brown's earlier point. He would like to see written documentation that the church is in agreement with the changes that the school is proposing on their site. He would like to have that before this item moves any further. He suggested tabling the applicant until the document is received.

Mr. Wiegand stated that he can obtain all of that information in time for next month's Planning Commission meeting.

Chairman Brown stated that the Brighton Area Fire Department's letter dated September 28, 2017 notes that the applicant has met all of their outstanding requirements.

Chairman Brown reviewed the Livingston County Road Commission's letter dated September 28, 2017. They are requiring a driveway permit due to a change in use on this site.

Chairman Brown read a letter from Pastor Walls stating that the AK Services driving school has been notified that they have 3-4 months to cease their operations on their site

Commissioner McManus questioned if the issue of turning right out of the site and then turning around on the neighboring residential streets should be addressed with the parents. This could occur when parents are unable to make a left out of the site due to the heavy traffic. Commissioner Grajek agrees.

Chairman Brown noted that the lease agreement between the church and the school is three years old and should be updated.

Commissioner Figurski would like to have the Impact Assessment include that the church and the school will coordinate their events so they do not overlap. She would also like, "There will be an increase in noise and traffic in the a.m. hours" added.

The Call to the Public was made at 7:19 pm.

Chairman Brown stated a letter of support has been received from Brighton First United Methodist Church.

An e-mail from Skip Blunt of 7426 Pine Vista Drive was received. He is concerned with the increased traffic due to the addition of another school in the area. He also stated that the addition of more teenage drivers will increase the propensity for accidents.

Mr. Jay Johnson of 4931 Aljoann stated his biggest concern is the traffic study. It was done on May 15, 2015. At that time, the seniors were out of school so the count may be off. He understands that staggering the start times is a way to help with the traffic; however, it then makes the length of time there is a lot of traffic longer for the residents. He also noted that the high school has special events and there could be occasions where they have events at the same time as the Livingston Christian School.

There are currently 600 parking permits for the high school. Also, they have recently changed the flow of the parking lot. Traffic is not able to enter off of Seventh Street and is now required to enter at the light on Brighton Road. He is also concerned that cars will stand on his street during the pick-up times. He suggests a new traffic study be done.

Mr. Markstrom stated that there is ample room on the site for the car stacking for drop off and pick up and he believes it will function as it is supposed to.

Scott McCormick, Steve Warden, and Larry Webb live in the three houses on the dirt road on the west side of the parking lot. Mr. McCormick stated that he is concerned his property values will go down. The view from his front yard is now the gravel parking lot. They would like the same type of fence put on their side of the parking lot that was put on the east side. He will now be seeing 200 cars parking in the parking lot.

Mr. Webb stated that in 2013 there were items required to be done by the church that were never resolved, or resolved later than was expected. He stated that everything discussed this evening is ambiguous; the traffic study is 2 years old, the lease is 3 years old, and there is no signed agreement by the church.

Chairman Brown noted that there were issues with the church regarding the landscaping; however, they have done some landscaping and a fence has been installed. Additional landscaping issues are currently being discussed. He was not aware of the views that the three residents were experiencing.

Commissioner Rickert asked if buffer zones can be addressed during the site plan approval. Ms. VanMarter stated yes if the gravel area that Mr. McCormick was referring to is going to be used by the school. There can be additional landscaping requirements put in place.

Mr. Rob Stogdill of 4793 Aljoann agrees that if events are overlapped there will be a lot of traffic and the cars will be parking on his street, which will affect his property values and increase noise.

Commissioner McManus ask how many driving students there are currently at the school. Mr. LaVanway stated that based on an enrollment of 200, they have allotted 30 spaces for students. Today there are seven students who drive.

Commissioner Grajek asked about snow plowing and where the snow will be stored. Mr. LaVanway stated that the church will be responsible for the plowing of the parking lot. They can designate on their site plan where the snow will be stored.

Ms. Virginia Wennerburg of 7230 Pine Vista Drive would like to know the number of licensed enrollment. Mr. Wiegand stated the Fire Marshall stated the building capacity is 370; however, they are here this evening to discuss a maximum student enrollment of 200. She believes the traffic planning should be for the maximum number of students allowed. Chairman Brown stated the Township has put a maximum of 200 students on this plan. If their enrollment goes beyond that, they will need to come back to the Township for further approval.

Ms. Wennerburg asked if other locations have been considered and what is the goal of LCS. Mr. Wiegand stated the goal is to have a Christian school and be a part of a church. She asked if other locations have been considered. Mr. Wiegand stated they have had two years to pursue other options and no other sites have met their needs.

Commissioner Grajek asked when there are 200 students, how many faculty members will there be. There will be 20 faculty. Mr. Russo stated the traffic study was based on 20 faculty.

Ms. Norma Wilson lives in one of the three houses on the south side of Brighton Road between the high school and Pine Creek. People turning left into the church can block the left turn lane so she is unable to turn left into her driveway. Mr. Russo stated that their traffic study showed the maximum queue in the left turn lane during peak hours was three vehicles.

Ms. Jillian Mackey of 5696 Windham Lane is concerned with the cut through traffic. Pine Creek did their own traffic study and there are 1200 cars per day, including 200 from 7-8 am and 2-3 pm. This new school could increase this traffic. She would like her neighborhood to be considered in the traffic study.

Mr. McCormick noted that there is an elementary school on Bauer Road and a lot of traffic is generated from that.

Ms. Amy Hilscher of 4769 Aljoann is very concerned about the traffic. It is very difficult to exit out of their neighborhood at all times of the day. It is many times impossible to make a left out of her street. This new school will have a significant impact on traffic. She would encourage the new traffic study. Commissioner Grajek noted that they are proposing to stagger their start times. Ms. Hilscher is not sure if this will help with the traffic.

Mr. Wiegand stated they have done their traffic study with a student count of 200 and a conservative number for cars. They typically have three students per car. All of the kids do not leave at the same time; they filter out. Currently, they have 147 students, with 54 cars dropping off and picking up total at their Whitmore Lake location. They have many families with multiple children.

Chairman Brown stated that when this item was before the Planning Commission previously, he and Commissioner Mortensen went to the Pinckney site and he agrees with what Mr. Wiegand said.

Commissioner Figurski asked if they expect more people to come to the school because it will now be located in Brighton. Mr. Wiegand stated, "yes".

Commissioner Grajek questioned if this is approved and school starts and then the traffic is as bad as it is being stated, can the special use be removed. Ms. VanMarter stated it can only be removed if they were openly violating a condition of approval. Then the Township would have enforcement abilities.

Ms. Tammy Kay May's children attend Brighton Christian School. There were three traffic studies done over the years and they have all been consistent. The traffic impact will be negligible. She confirmed that there are seven driving students with the current enrollment. She is a mom who carpools to LCS currently, and she estimates that 50 cars are there for drop off and pick up. She can drop off and pick up in four minutes and that is a much smaller lot than the Nazarene church. With regard to the playground, they have a very small need for a playground. She would be willing to work with the parents on the education of the drop off and pick up traffic flow as she is a safety liaison for a Fortune 500 company. She hopes that the request is approved.

The call to the public was closed at 8:12 pm.

Ms. VanMarter stated that a lot of kids go to the skate park after school lets out in the afternoon. She would like to know if this traffic would coincide with the school end time of LCS. Pastor Walls stated that the skate park opens at 4 pm.

Commissioner Figurski has concerns with the noise and commotion at the school, the increased traffic on Brighton Road. Aljoann and the Pine Creek subdivision were not included in the traffic study.

**Moved** by Grajek, seconded by McManus, to table Agenda Item #1 until the November 13, 2017 Planning Commission meeting in order to allow the applicant to provide the following:

- An updated lease agreement to include written documentation of approval by the Naz for the improvements on the site.
- A reconfigured site plan to include the correct number of parking spaces as negotiated with the Naz.
- An updated traffic study.
- The Impact Assessment noting that the organization will coordinate their activities so they do not overlap.
- Health Department approval of the septic system for the increased student population.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**OPEN PUBLIC HEARING #2...** Review of a site plan application, environmental impact assessment and site plan for proposed 123-bed student housing apartment building located on the south side of Grand River Avenue and the east side of Grand Oaks Drive, at 38750 Cleary Drive, Howell. The property is located in the Cleary University Planned Unit Development. The request is petitioned by Cleary University.

Planning Commission Recommendation of Petition:

- A. Recommendation of Environmental Impact Assessment.
- B. Recommendation of Site Plan.

Commissioner Grajek stated that his daughter works indirectly for Cleary University. She is an athletic trainer for a vendor contracted by the university. He does not have a fiduciary interest in Cleary University.

Brent LaVanway of Boss Engineering; Dave Howard, the Facility Director for Cleary University; and Alan Price of University Housing Solutions were present.

Mr. LaVanway stated they would like approval to put in the Student Housing Building #2. They received approval for the first housing building a few years ago and they are in need of a second one. It will include a parking lot and a loop road, which will meet the Fire Department's requirement for access. They will be extending the water main loop for fire suppression purposes. It is in compliance with the Cleary University PUD Agreement. They are in concurrence with the recommendations of the consultants.

Mr. Price presented building samples. They will be using the same materials as the existing building. The footprint is a mirror image of Building #1. It will have double-

occupancy units sharing one common area, a bathroom, and a kitchen. Building #1 has 86 beds and this building will have 123 beds.

Ms. VanMarter reviewed Mr. Borden's letter dated October 5, 2017.

This building, similar to the last building, exceeds the maximum allowed for block and EFIS. They are recommending upgrades to the building materials or improvements to the landscape buffer.

There are minor inconsistencies between the landscape plan and the plant list and these must be corrected.

Mr. Markstrom reviewed his letter of September 28, 2017. The applicant has addressed all of his previous concerns. He noted he is currently reviewing plans for an athletic field for Cleary University. Because of this, he would like to see a storm-water drainage master plan. The athletic field will have no effect on the plan being discussed this evening, but he would like to see it as part of the submittal for the athletic field.

Chairman Brown noted that that letter from the Brighton Area Fire Authority dated September 28, 2017 states the applicant has met all of the requirements from their last review letter.

Commissioner Figurski noted that throughout the Impact Assessment the number of beds is shown as 129 so it should be changed to 123. She would like the following added to Item #C: "The Project is not anticipated to adversely impact the natural features".

Commissioner Rauch is concerned that the trees in the heavily wooded area that is being used for runoff are being negatively affected. Mr. LaVanway stated that the Drain Commissioner has noted that the water flowing into this area is gone within 48 hours after a typical storm. This is the natural flow of the water on this site. They are not anticipating any adverse effects on the existing vegetation.

Commissioner Rickard asked if a wetland study was done on this site. Mr. LaVanway stated they have evaluated it and it is not regulated, and it is not contiguous to other wetlands.

Commissioner Rickard noted that there is no curbing shown on the parking lot. Mr. LaVanway stated they did not want to install the curb in the case they will be extending the parking and then it would have to be taken out. She would like to see it curbed. Commission Rauch agrees.

Call to the public was made at 8:52 pm with no response.

**Moved** by Figurski, seconded by Grajek, to recommend to the Township Board approval of the Environmental Impact Assessment for a 123-bed student housing apartment building petitioned by Cleary University with the following conditions:

- Page 3, Item C shall include "The Project is not anticipated to adversely impact the natural features".
- The total number of beds should state 123 and not 129.

- There shall be a maintenance scheduled and plan for the storm water pretreatment unit #CDS100.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Moved** by McManus, seconded by Rauch, to recommend to the Township Board approval of the Site Plan dated September 18, 2017 for a 123-bed student housing apartment building petitioned by Cleary University with the following conditions:

- The landscape requirements outlined in the LSL letter dated October 5, 2017 shall be met.
- The building materials are acceptable to the Planning Commission and are identical to that of Building #1, which was previously approved.
- Approval of the Impact Assessment by the Township Board.
- The applicant shall comply with the Brighton Area Fire Authority's letter dated September 28, 2017.
- The sample building materials shall become the property of the Township.
- Curbing shall be installed to the drive aisle of the parking lot.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Administrative Business:**

- **Staff Report**

Ms. VanMarter stated there will be a November Planning Commission meeting.

- Approval of the September 11, 2017 Planning Commission meeting minutes

**Moved** by Commissioner Figurski, seconded by Commissioner McManus, to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2017 Planning Commission Meeting with the minor changes noted. **The motion carried unanimously.**

- Member Discussion

Commissioner Grajek attended the Michigan Association of Planners Conference in September and shared with the Planning Commission some of the interesting projects that were discussed. Ms. VanMarter stated that the Township Board encourages all Board Members to attend conferences, etc.

- Adjournment

**Moved** by Commissioner Grajek, seconded by Commissioner Rickard, to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 pm. **The motion carried unanimously.**