

**GENOA CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
PUBLIC HEARING  
FEBRUARY 13, 2023  
6:30 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Grajek called the meeting of the Genoa Charter Township Planning Commission to order at 6:30 p.m. Present were Chris Grajek, Eric Rauch, Tim Chouinard, Diana Lowe, and Marianne McCreary. Absent was: Glynis McBain. Also present was Township Manager Kelly VanMarter, Planning Director Amy Ruthig, Brian Borden of SafeBuilt, and Shelby Byrne of Tetra Tech.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The pledge of allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

**Moved** by Commissioner Lowe, seconded by Commissioner McCreary, to approve the agenda as presented. **The motion carried unanimously.**

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST: None

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

The call to the public was opened at 6:31 pm with no response.

**OPEN PUBLIC HEARING # 1...**Consideration of special land use application, environmental impact assessment and site plan for the construction of an 11,990 sq. ft. boat showroom and sales office building replacing the existing building for Wonderland Marine West located at 5796 Grand River Avenue. The request is petitioned by Mitts, LLC.

- A. Recommendation of Special Use Application.
- B. Recommendation of Environmental Impact Assessment (dated 11-1-22)
- C. Recommendation of Site Plan (dated 2-9-23)

Mr. Wayne Perry of Desine, Inc. and Mr. Paul Mitter, the applicant, were present. Mr. Perry provided a review of the request. They would like to remove the existing showroom and, in its place, construct a new showroom and parking lot. The site currently sits forward on Grand River Avenue and the drive aisles are very tight to the road. The proposed plan would relocate the building and parking further back from Grand River Avenue.

Mr. Borden reviewed his letter dated February 8, 2023. He stated the plans that he reviewed are the same plans from the December Planning Commission meeting. The Township is in process of having the Town Center Overlay District removed from the zoning map. The plans were reviewed under the General Commercial District zoning for this meeting.

1. Special Land Use (Section 19.03):
  - a. The standards of Section 19.03 are generally met.

- b. In order to make favorable findings related to compatibility and impacts, the conditions of Section 7.02.02(c) which is the requirements for boat sales need to be met to the Planning Commission's satisfaction.
  - c. The applicant must address any comments provided by the Township Engineer or Brighton Area Fire Authority regarding public facilities and services.
2. Use Conditions (Section 7.02.02 (c):
- a. The vast majority of the use conditions are met.
  - b. The boat sales with outdoor storage requires a buffer zone B. Those are not fully met for either side or the rear of the site. The Planning Commission does have discretion in regards to landscaping requirements.
3. Site Plan Review:
- a. The front parking lot setback is deficient by 2 feet. The additional 2 feet needed for compliance can be gained by reducing either the drive aisle width (from 26 to 24 feet) or the parking space depth (from 18 to 16 feet).
  - b. Building materials and design are subject to review and approval by the Planning Commission. The front façade presented indicates there are two overhead doors. Overhead doors are typically located on the side or rear. In addition, the west and south elevations are metal sided, if deemed to visible from the road or parking lot, then the amount of metal siding exceeds Zoning Ordinance requirements in section 12.01.
  - c. We request the applicant evaluate alternatives to the use of parallel parking spaces.
  - d. The site plan is deficient by 1 barrier-free parking space.
  - e. One of the proposed light fixtures will cast light outwards instead of downwards similar to a flood light style.
  - f. The lighting plan did not include photometric readings. There are two types of fixtures shown on the plan including 1 flood light located at the back of the building. Due to the nature of the variance, we would like to see a detailed lighting plan with lighting levels.
  - g. The landscaping plan is deficient in terms of greenbelt and parking lot tree plantings.
  - h. The Planning Commission has the authority to waive or modify landscaping requirements.
  - i. We request the applicant describe the intended method of refuse removal.
  - j. We suggest the applicant remove the nonconforming pole sign as part of this project.

Mr. Perry stated that the applicant could reduce the parking spaces to 16 feet. Commissioner Rauch stated that the vehicles in the boat market are typically larger. He believes that the parking lot should maneuver well and would prefer to have more room in the parking lot since there is vehicles coming off of Grand River Avenue. Commissioner McCreary agreed since she has been to the site. Commissioners agreed the 18-foot greenbelt is sufficient.

After discussion, Commissioners agreed with the location of the overhead doors on the front façade since they are all glass and the use of metal siding on the west and south elevations since the new building is located further back on the property.

Mr. Perry stated that the parallel parking is required to meet the parking standards and also gives the ability to park a vehicle trailering a boat while not obstructing the main driveway. Mr. Perry stated that the applicant will add one more barrier free parking space to meet ordinance.

Commissioner Rauch requested to see a more detailed landscape plan specially in the front of the parking area. It does not have to be high shrubs. Also, on the west side of the parking area could easily be doubled in that area. He would like to see fifty percent more landscaping material. Commissioner McCreary would also like to see additional landscaping due to the building and concrete, it would soften the look. Mr. Perry agreed that the applicant could plant more low-lying shrubs however, they cannot plant trees in the front area due to the utility lines.

Mr. Perry stated that the only location of the flood style light is located at the rear of the building which is used for safety purposes.

In regards to the ability to plant greenbelt trees there are overhead wires and poles in the greenbelt area. Mr. Mitter stated that the overhead lines are low hanging.

Chairman Grajek sees that the only place for landscaping is located in the front yard area. Commissioner Rauch asked about the location of the waste receptacle. Mr. Mitter stated that the waste receptacle was located in the rear of the property in an enclosure.

Commissioner Lowe questioned if they have discussed obtaining a new sign. Mr. Mitter stated that they have not even looked at the pole sign and is not sure what the ordinance requirements are. Commissioner Rauch agrees with Mr. Borden in regards to the removing the pole sign. He stated that he does not want to require a new monument sign and then the applicant can not meet the setback requirements. Mr. Perry stated that they could place a sign closer to the road right of way.

Ms. VanMarter agreed with Mr. Borden on replacing the nonconforming sign and the Commission could ask for the applicant to attempt to obtain a variance due to the setback requirements.

A call to the public was made at 7:10 p.m.: Jordan Mitter is an employee of the company. In asking for more greenery which there are a lot of semi-trucks coming in and out and a consumer with a boat trailer could damage the semi or their product could be damage with the addition of more greenery or shrubs.

The call to the public was closed at 7:11 p.m.

Ms. Byrne stated that all of her items have been addressed per the letter dated December 7, 2022.

The Brighton Area Fire Authority Fire Marshal had no outstanding issues noted in his letter dated December 5, 2022.

Commissioner McCreary asked if the applicant has thought of installing signs to help indicate direction for customers pulling in the parking lot or if they have considered an “exit” and “enter” only driveway. Mr. Perry stated that there are two entrances and the east entrance is both an enter and exit for anyone towing a boat or semi-trucks delivering boats which leads to the south end of the site. The other entrance is plenty wide enough for anyone towing a boat to the maneuver the lot. Commissioner McCreary asked if any signage could be added to show direction for anyone entering the property. She asked if a sign could be located on the fence. Commissioner Rauch would like to see a single sign on the east side would state “Delivery and service” would be helpful.

Commissioner Rauch stated that the turning radius on the east side turning out seems tighter than the west side entry. Mr. Mitter stated that it is currently wide enough right now. Mr. Perry stated that expanding the radius, due to the flare of the radius, could cross over the property line and the Livingston County Road Commission would not approve that. Mr. Perry stated he would approach the Livingston County Road Commission to seek approval.

Ms. VanMarter asked if there is a detail on what the new fence would look like. The Commission would like to see a more decorative fence than the original fence that is located on the property. Mr. Perry stated that they could do an architectural fence across the front. Ms. VanMarter would like to clarify that a single trailer will be on display in the front. Applicant agreed.

**Moved** by Commissioner Rauch, seconded by Commissioner McCreary, to recommend to the Township Board approval of the Special Use Application for Wonderland Marine West located at 5796 Grand River Avenue as this Commission finds that the conditions in Sections 19.03 are generally met and that there are favorable findings relating to the compatible impacts of 7.02.02 (C) and 19.07 and specially find it consistent to waive the buffer zone requirement of that section.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Moved** by Commissioner Rauch, seconded by Commissioner Lowe, to recommend to the Township Board approve of the Environmental Impact Assessment dated November 1, 2022, for 5796 Grand River Avenue. **The motion carried unanimously.**

**Moved** by Commissioner Rauch, seconded by Commissioner Lowe, to recommend to the Township Board approval of the Site Plan dated February 9, 2023 for 5796 Grand River Avenue, conditioned upon the following:

- The front greenbelt of 18 feet is satisfactory.
- An additional barrier free space will be added to make a total of 2 on the site.
- All site lighting and building mounting lighting will meet the requirements of the township ordinance and a photometric drawing will be submitted to the Township staff for review.
- Petitioner will review with the LCRC the east entry to seek to improve the drive radius.
- A single sign on the east entry indicating “Deliveries” be added.
- The security fencing will be an architectural fence to be approved by township staff.

- A landscape plan will be improved by adding an additional 50 percent of low-lying plant material.
- The petitioner will seek variance approval for a ground monument sign. The pole sign will only be allowed to remain if a variance is not approved.

**The motion carried unanimously**

**OPEN PUBLIC HEARING # 2...** Consideration of a sketch plan application and sketch plan to install an all-abilities playground "Senior Survivor Park" within the existing Genoa Charter Township park property. The park is located at 2911 Dorr Road, on the east side of Dorr Road, just north of Crooked Lake Road. The request is petitioned by Genoa Charter Township.

A. Disposition of Sketch Plan (10-31-22)

Ms. VanMarter stated that the request is to expand the existing park that is located at the Genoa Charter Township Hall property. The Township has partnered with Howell Public Schools for a project to construct an all-abilities playground. Participant seniors at Howell High School has raised funds over the last two years and the Township Board has offered to contribute funds, location and long-term maintenance for the park facility.

Ms. VanMarter stated that there were concerns about parking stated in engineer's letter. She provided a parking analysis that shows that there is suitable parking and as Township Manager she is keeping an eye on the parking and she does think that there could a real possibility that the Township could require additional parking. She has ideas on how and where to add additional parking.

Ms. VanMarter gave an overview on the all abilities components of the park. It is meant to have design features that are usable in some way shape or form by everyone.

Mr. Borden reviewed his letter dated February 9, 2023.

1. The accessory recreational structures are affiliated with a principal use, per Ordinance requirements.
2. The height of all structures proposed are within that allowed for conventional accessory structures.
3. Each structure is located well outside of required setbacks.
4. The Commission should consider any comments provided by the Township's Engineer.

Ms. Bryne reviewed her letter dated February 6, 2023.

1. The petitioner addressed the parking comment.
1. The proposed playground plan shows multiple small boulder retaining walls. Prior to construction the petitioner should provide more detail on the proposed grading and retaining walls around the picnic area for review.

The Brighton Area Fire Authority Fire Marshal requested that if a fence is required by the Livingston County Building Department that it should be installed on the proposed retaining walls.

A call to the public was made at 7:32 p.m. with no response.

**Moved** by Commission Rauch, seconded by Commissioner McCreary to approve the sketch plan dated October 31, 2022 for the all-abilities park located at 2911 Dorr Road. **The motion carried unanimously.**

**OPEN PUBLIC HEARING #3**...Close public hearing for the proposed Genoa Charter Township Master Plan, Master Plan Implementation Discussion, and consideration of adoption of Master Plan by resolution.

A call to the public was made with no response and was closed at 7:34 p.m.

Ms. Jill Bahm and Rose Kim were present for Giffels Webster. Ms. Balm gave an overview on the Master Plan process. The public hearing continued to remain open during the last three Planning Commission meetings while staff and consultants could refine the map area and locations. Ms. Kim reviewed the revisions to the draft per the memo that was provided in the packet. The revisions included realignment issues on the maps, shifts in boundaries for categories, individual parcels that were incorrectly classified, the Chaldean Diocese Camp property was revised as discussed at the January 9, 2023 Planning Commission meeting, and draft language revisions to section 3.4.

Commissioner Dhaenens joined the meeting at 7:57 p.m.

Commissioner McCreary stated that a grammatical correction should be made to map 1.7 in regards to the tree canopy as it should not be labeled Sylvan Lake. She asked if the maps included in the Master Plan could be made easier to read. The maps appear distorted. Ms. Balm stated that the final Master Plan will have higher resolution maps. They did not want to make the Master Plan too large of a document.

There was discussion in regards to solar farms as they are implemented in the Mater plan. It was decided to have the following language "where appropriate" included in regards to solar farms.

After discussion with the Planning Commission members it was determined to leave the Master Plan action strategies open to implement throughout the year in conjunction with the Board of Trustees.

**Moved** by Commissioner Rauch, supported by Commissioner Lowe to adopt by Resolution PC 23-01, the Genoa Charter Township Master plan dated January 30, 2023 with minor updates as follows:

1. A grammatical correction to map 1.7 in regards to Sylvan Lake.
2. Include road names on the map included on page 3.29.
3. Update the names on the Acknowledgement page of the Master Plan.
4. Include language "where appropriate" in regards to the solar farms
5. Update business name for the golf range to Tap In's.

**The motion carried as follows: Commissioner Chouinard, Commissioner Rauch, Commissioner McCreary, Commissioner Lowe, Commissioner Dhaenens, Commissioner Grajek.**



**ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:**

**Staff Report**

There was discussion in regards to Lowe's request to amend the location of their previously approved outdoor storage. Lowe's is concerned with the safety of the employees and customers having to cross the drive aisle due to an increase in traffic that could be created by the new Panda Restaurant under construction. After some discussion that Commissioner's agreed that an amended site plan indicating the proposed revisions be submitted for staff's review and approval.

Ms. Ruthig stated that she has not received a submittal for the March 13, 2023 Planning Commission meeting.

**Approval of January 9, 2023 Planning Commission meeting minutes**

**Moved** by Commissioner McCreary, supported by Commissioner Dhaenens, to approve the January 9, 2023 Planning Commission meeting as corrected. **The motion carried unanimously.**

**Member Discussion**

Commissioner McCreary asked if staff had any update in regards to the secured ballot boxes and how it will affect the Township. Ms. VanMarter stated the Township Clerk has been in discussions with the Livingston County Clerk's office in regards to the changes in the law.

**Adjournment**

**Moved** by Commissioner McCreary, seconded by Commissioner Lowe, to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 p.m. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Ruthig