

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF ORION PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
PC-2018-16, 3537 GREGORY ROAD REZONE REQUEST
PUBLIC HEARING MEETING, WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 2018**

The Charter Township of Orion Planning Commission held a public hearing on Wednesday, May 16, 2018 immediately following the public hearing for PC-2018-17 at the Orion Township Hall, 2525 Joslyn Road, Lake Orion, Michigan 48360.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Don Gross, Vice Chairman	Neal Porter, PC Rep to ZBA
John Steimel, BOT Rep to PC	Scott Reynolds, Commissioner
Don Walker, PC Rep to ZBA	

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:

Justin Dunaskiss, Chairman

CONSULTANTS PRESENT:

Doug Lewan (Township Planner) of Carlisle/Wortman Associates, Inc.
Tammy Girling, Township Planning & Zoning Director

OTHERS PRESENT:

Joe Lehman	Mario Izzi	Margaret Chaffee
Erin Wolff	Shamik Tripathi	Kim Murley
Christina Belanger	Don Harris	Joseph Peterson
Martina Nunnery	Martin Kaufman	Michele Chirco
Luke Ferguson	Denise Kaufman	Lynn Harrison
Don Hickmott		

Vice Chairman Gross opened the public hearing at 7:10pm, immediately following the public hearing for PC-2018-17, Stadium Ridge Conditional Rezoning Request.

Vice Chairman Gross explained the request is to rezone the subject property from Suburban Farms (SF) to Single Family Residential (R-3). Both are single family residential zoning districts but of different densities.

Mr. Mike Robbe, Clearview Homes, 811 E. South Blvd., Rochester Hills, MI, presented. They are requesting a rezone from Suburban Farms to R-3 as designated in the Future Land Use Map; calling out this land use for single family medium-high density. The subject property is bordered to the east by property that is Future zoned as Village Center.

It is their opinion that R-3 zoning provides a good transition from the higher mixed use of Village Center and transitioning over to the less dense, residential uses of the property to the west. He believed their project follows along with the trend of the development of the Baldwin Road corridor.

Mr. Robbe stated, their R-3 rezoning request relates more to flexibility of design than it does to density for them. He showed a slide depicting the topography of the site and that there is 72 ft. elevation change from the high and low points on this property. Therefore, they are looking for the R-3 zoning to give them the flexibility for road frontage and reduced setbacks. He explained some of the sites will have a lot of "fall" where the road will be to gain the required slopes for a public road which will need to wind and turn.

Mr. Robbe said he hopes to accentuate the characteristics of the property. It is full of trees and there is a lot of hills. He does not want to go in and clear cut and mass grade – he wants to make it fit the property; it is a beautiful piece.

He completed a rough sketch and was aware that a site plan was not included with their application. After getting the Planner's review, they decided to do the sketch and would show it if the Commissioners would like to see it or had any questions.

Mr. Robbe said in consulting with the engineer regarding some of the slopes, their estimate for density is about 70 units, give or take, because of the way it has to be laid out.

The property will be accessed by two public roads – Peppermill Lane to the south and Pasadena to the east; there will then be no long dead ends, it will create a flow through.

They envision the 30 ft. strip of property that goes out to Gregory to be used for utilities if that's what is needed as a result of the planning process.

Mr. Robbe commented the site is almost completely wooded. In walking the site, it appears that it had some forest management practices performed on it. There wasn't a lot of massive or legacy trees but there is a full stand of trees except for the two-tracks that are almost everywhere on the property.

Given the topography and the need to get the roads at grade so they are safe and satisfy the County, they are requesting R-3 zoning.

Vice Chairman Gross asked if there was anyone from the public that would like to comment?

Don Hickmott, 3731 Gregory Road, lives near where the 30 ft. right-of-way is. He commented that there is another development going in on Gregory Road which will create a lot of construction traffic. He believed that the plan is to repave the road once most of that construction is finished. He was concerned if there will be a lot of construction traffic caused by this development – 70 units seems like a lot of truckloads of cement. Will they be using Gregory Road as a source for that?

Erin Wolff, Peppermill Lane, commented that she believes a lot of the people in her sub are concerned about an entrance off their dead-end road. There are about 22 homes in the Morgan Pines development, it is very quiet and quaint. In those homes there are 20 kids under the age of 18; there are many kids constantly playing in the street and yards. She is upset that if it does open up for the high-density Mr. Robbe talked about, that would be a lot of traffic going through. Another reason she is concerned is that they back up to a lot of those trees and part of why their community is like a "hidden nest" in Lake Orion - "Where Living is a Vacation". Again, she was concerned about high traffic volumes on their road. She commented on the elevation; it is quite hilly and once they start grading, what about flooding, there is also a wetland back there? She noted that there are two handicap persons that live in the neighborhood and with more traffic, was concerned about the risk. A lot of the families have been there for a long time.

Kim Murley, 3575 Gregory Road, commented that she lives along the 30 ft. stretch of the parcel Mr. Robbe said could possibly be used for utilities. She asked how those utilities would be accessed? What would travel up and down that road if that subdivision was copyrighted and approved? Why are the hills considered unsafe and why can't they leave the hilly terrain? It is a quaint area; how close would it be to their property line where all the trees would be removed? Would construction be going up and down her driveway because her driveway is right next to the driveway the owner has today? Again, it is quaint and one of the reasons she has lived there for over 20 years. Is it possible to keep the zoning the way it is and have larger parcels? If there is going to be 70 homes, how many people will be in each of those homes? She figures there will be about 280 vehicles if there are 4 vehicles per home. There will already be congestion from the new subdivision going in up the road that they have to live with. She was

also concerned about flooding. She asked when would they see if there is any type of construction plan submitted?

Luke Ferguson, 3426 Gregory Road, commented that he read the “manual” to be a Zoning Board Member and in Chapter 2 it states that they need to set foot on the property or the best ability to set foot and walk on it; in Section 30, it says they are supposed to participate and listen to the community - he appreciates that. He then talked about his concerns. Regarding the number of added vehicles – he estimated, based on the number of vehicles per home and average number of trips, that would equate to about 900 trips a day down those roads; there are kids in that community. He commented that the entire section of land between Morgan and Gregory is a marshy environment, how many more subdivisions can actually be put in this community, it cannot handle the water load. Back before I-75 was put in, this area was all a marsh, how much more can the land take? The expansion of Baldwin is causing even more concern in that regard. He commented it has been stated that millennials like townhouses and subdivisions, he is a millennial and likes this area because of the community and the country feel. He doesn’t want to have to drive an hour away to get that feel. This area is the best kept secret of Lake Orion and in his opinion, needs to stay this way. If anything, the Township should be putting in community gardens and standing up and saying they are doing something good for the community. We don’t need more concrete houses; we need more trees and land; to be able to feed the community. Are we actually harming the community by putting more homes in and starving our food resources? He then gave the definition of nuisance and asked if we are creating a public nuisance for all the surrounding people within these property lines, but also for the entire community if we accept this.

Tina Nunnery, 4570 Alan Lane, commented she moved here because it was country; it is turning into a business area now; there is a sign on Lapeer Road that says “Welcome to Vacation Land”, it is not a vacation land anymore; there is constant construction and more homes, where is the country; she feels like she lives in a big subdivision in the city.

Martin Kaufman, 3761 Westlyn, commented he was here last year and this seems like the same story all over again. He noted that everyone thought they were safe because the Gregory Meadows request did not fit the Master Plan; everyone thought it was going to be maintained as Suburban Farms. Everyone knows what happened there and now as soon as that was done, like a domino effect, another one is trying to come in. If this continues, there will be nothing left to the county atmosphere they were all led to believe it would go on like. For some reason money is opening all of this up; they can no longer rely on what they thought.

Denise Kaufman, 3761 Westlyn, concurred with the above comments and would like to see the property remain Suburban Farms. The Township spent a lot of time coming up with that decision and was very disappointed with the Gregory Meadows situation. She reiterated she would like to see it remain zoned Suburban Farms. There is a lot of wildlife there that will be disrupted and already has been.

Erin Wolff came back up and stated that she wants to keep the zoning as Suburban Farms; the land is beautiful.

Don Harris, 3510 Pasadena, asked what was going to happen to the road if this goes through? Will he be in the middle of subdivision? He moved there to be in the country. He wants to leave it the way it is.

Joe Peterson, 3501 Gregory Road, he agreed that traffic will increase if they sell all these homes but he doesn’t think they will. He believes the market is dying; there are 4 subdivisions off of Maybee Road and they are unable to sell their houses. He (Mr. Robbe) may start the

construction of 70 homes but he won't sell 70 homes just like Gregory Meadows won't sell all their homes. There will be a bunch of empty houses, a bunch of construction, vandalism, etc. It is not a good idea.

Kim Murley came back up and stated that she does not want it rezoned and wants it to stay zoned as Suburban Farms and to keep it to bigger lots.

Vice Chairman Gross asked if there was anyone else from the public that would like to speak? There was not. Vice Chairman Gross closed the public hearing at 7:30pm

Respectfully submitted,



Lynn Harrison
PC/ZBA Recording Secretary
Charter Township of Orion

June 6, 2018

Planning Commission Approval Date