

Crockery Township

Regular Planning Commission Meeting

December 16, 2014

(Approved)

Chairman Bill Sanders called the December 16, 2014, Regular Planning Commission Meeting to order at 7:32 P.M. Roll-call was taken with Dave Meekhof, Jon Overway, Bill Sanders, Ryan Arends, Mike Munch, and Roy Holmes present. Z/A Toland was also present for this session.

Commissioner Rich Suchecki was absent.

Agenda Item 2. Approval of the Agenda

Approved as submitted.

Agenda Item 3. Approval of Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the November 18, 2014, Regular Planning Commission Meeting. A motion was made to approve the minutes, as written, by Commissioner Ryan Arends. A 2nd was offered by Commissioner Roy Holmes. The motion was unanimously approved.

Agenda Item 4. Announcements

None.

Item 5. Communications

Mr. John Groenink has requested an extension to complete his building project, site plan by Brock Hesselsweet AIA, Cricklewood Drive, Grand Haven, Michigan, dated December 26, 2012, revised January 26, 2013, and originally approved by the Planning Commission March 18, 2014. Mr. Groenink original extension expires on January 15, 2015. Mr. Groenink is requesting an extension to April 15, 2015, to complete the construction.

After reviewing Mr. Groenink's communication and request for extension, a **motion** was offered by Commissioner Mike Munch to grant an extension for the approved, revised Groenink site plan (of January 26, 2013), by Brock Hesselsweet, until April 15, 2015. A 2nd was offered by Commissioner Ryan Arends. The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

Mr. Toland also provided the Commission with a memo from Mr. Doug Hopkins, Building Official (for Crockery Township), dated November 24, 2014, to the Planning Commission, assessing the needs and processes regarding the change of use proposal for the Schmidt Property.

Agenda Item 6. Public Comment

Chairman Bill Sanders asked for any public comment. No public comments were offered at this time.

Agenda Item 7. Action Items

A. Hope Network – Rezoning – Public Hearing.

Documents provided to the Commission for this review include; (1) a Planning and Zoning Review by Z/A Toland, dated December 16, 2014, regarding the proposed rezoning of the Hope Network property, 16908 130th Avenue, parcel #70-04-17-400-016, from C-1 Commercial (west half) / I-1 Light Industrial (east half) to R-1 Low Density Residential, (2) a Crockery Township Zoning Application, signed by Ms. Allison Reuter, General Counsel for Hope Network, dated November 14, 2014, requesting change of zoning, (3) a letter from Ms. Allison Reuter to Z/A Robert Toland, dated October 28, 2014, discussing the proposed zoning change, (4) a black and white copy of the Crockery Township Future Land Use map, (5) a black and white aerial map of parcel #70-04-17-400-016 and surrounding parcels by Ottawa County GIS, (6) a listing of EMS calls to the existing Hope Network facility on 130th Avenue from 12/05/2009 through 11/03/2014, author not stated.

Representatives present for Hope Network Behavioral Health Services were Ms. Allison Reuter, General Counsel for Hope Network, Mr. Rich Fabbrini, Chief Financial Officer for Hope Network, Ms. Pat Howe, Executive Vice President – Integrated Health Offices, for Hope Network, and Mr. Terry Mulvihill, Security Services for Hope Network.

Chairman Bill Sanders opened the public hearing.

Z/A Toland provided a lead-in to the discussion outlining the current split zoning (Commercial/Light Industrial) of the 10.7 acre Hope Network property, located at 16908 130th Avenue, and their request to rezone to Low Density Single Family Residential, which would allow for the operation of an Adult Foster Care facility. Mr. Toland pointed out the current future land use map proposes Low Density Single Family Residential for the parcel owned by Hope Network. Mr. Toland further advised Adult Foster Care facilities, housing six clients or less, are allowed in residentially zoned districts, which is supported by both State regulations and Crockery Township Ordinance. Facilities housing seven or more clients would require a Special Land Use permit.

Ms. Reuter advised the current structure at 16908 130th Avenue would require some electrical and plumbing updates, as well as cosmetic renovations prior to housing clients. Ms. Reuter stated the short term goal would be to house six clients and in the long term, twelve clients.

Mr. Fabbrini noted the property had been utilized as an Adult Foster Care facility in past years and Hope Network would like to continue this use.

Ms. Pat Howe indicated the facility would be used to house clients transitioning from their present facility (on 130th Avenue to the north) who had achieved a higher level of success in their treatment.

Ms. Jaelene Harker. 16980 130th Avenue inquired as to the reason for requesting a zoning change.

The Commission responded that the current zoning (Commercial/Industrial) does not allow for Adult Foster Care facilities. Chairman Sanders further pointed out the request was consistent with the future land use map, which was approved as a part of the Township's current Comprehensive Plan (also known as the Master Plan).

Ms. Nancy Czinder, 16939 130th Avenue asked what type of clients would be housed in the new facility. Ms. Czinder indicated a concern for the safety of the neighborhood based on "wanderers" from the present facility, to the potential of housing sex offenders. This sentiment was echoed by George Czinder as well. The Czinders also state the Sheriff's Department is regularly out in the neighborhood to deal with Hope Network residents, which causes them alarm.

Ms. Iva Hutchinson, 16960 130th Avenue, asked if the new facility was going to be a home for sex offenders, a notion that was apparently circulating in the neighborhood.

Ms. Sue Sneller, 17004 130th Avenue, was concerned that she and her neighbors would be “sandwiched” between the two facilities, which makes her uncomfortable. Ms. Sneller stated that at times there are eight men from Hope Network walking on the bike path and this makes her fear for the safety of local residents, including children, who use the bike path.

Ms. Diane Lunt, State Road, also echoed similar concerns and asked about fencing ordinance within the Township and if the fence at the proposed facility was rightly placed, as a portion of the fence was in the front yard of the facility.

Ms. Reuter advised Hope Network’s clients have a range of physical and mental challenges that are treated by staff. Ms. Reuter advised the facility is not a home for sex offenders, however, it is possible a client may be a sex offender, in which case they would be required register in the State’s publicly accessible system for area residents to see.

Mr. Shawn James, who is a member of the Ottawa County Sheriff’s Office, indicated deputies do make calls to the present facility, however, the vast majority of calls are for medical purposes. Mr. James advised on occasion a client will walk-away and the Department assists in locating the client and returning them to the facility. Mr. James further stated that any assaultive behavior has been limited to staff – client interaction, and to his knowledge no one in the neighborhood has ever been physically harmed.

Mr. James further pointed out that the Hope Network facility is not a “jail” and that clients are able to access public facilities as any other citizen would.

Ms. Reuter and Ms. Howe further explained the mission of Hope Network, including staffing ratios (1.5 staff to 3 clients), licensing requirements, and accreditations, which include exemplary performance. Ms. Howe advised their clients primarily come from the West Michigan area, stay for an average of nine months, before being reintroduced to their home communities. Ms. Howe advised staff members do chaperon clients when they walk the bike path or use the roadway, but acknowledges staff have called for assistance when a client leaves without permission. Ms. Reuter noted some clients are eligible to sign themselves out.

Mr. Fabbrini advised the proposed facility will comply with necessary standards, including those related to fencing. If it appears the present fence is outside the regulations it would be made compliant.

Chairman Sanders inquired if the facilities might be open to the neighbors to tour to increase their understanding of the operations at Hope Network.

Ms. Reuter advised the present facility would not be open for tours due to client privacy concerns, however, the proposed facility could be open for tours, upon completion of the renovations, and before clients are present.

After all interested parties were heard, Chairman Bill Sanders Closed the public hearing.

The Commission inquired as to the current licensed capacity of the existing facility. Ms. Howe indicated they have fifteen beds, with a maximum of thirty under current licensing restrictions.

The Commission noted that Adult Foster Care facilities (group homes) are standard for assisting and treating people with physical and mental disabilities, are commonly in use throughout Ottawa County, and have long been preferable to larger institutions.

The Commission respectfully noted this hearing is in place to address a zoning change, which is apart from any debate over intended use of the property. Chairman Sanders summarized the proposal and explained the future land use map, as found in the Township's Comprehensive Plan.

After all discussion was complete and all interested parties heard, Commissioner Jon Overway made **a motion** to recommend to the Township board that parcel #70-04-17-400-016, located at 16908 130th Avenue, be rezoned from Commercial/Light Industrial to Low Density Single Family Residential. A 2nd was offered by Commissioner Dave Meekhof. The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

B. Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Adult Foster Care Homes – Resolution of Intent to Hold a Public Hearing.

The Planning Commission has determined on its own initiative to amend the Crockery Township Zoning Ordinance, related to Adult foster Care Homes, including Section 3.03 General Provisions, Section 7.06 R-1 Low Density Single Family Residential District, Section 8.07 R-2 Medium Density Residential District, Section 9.08 C-1 Commercial District, and Section 19.14 Special Land Uses.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dave Meekhof to hold a Public Hearing in this matter on **Tuesday, January 6, 2015, at 7:30 P.M.** at the Township Hall. A 2nd was offered by Commissioner Ryan Arends. The motion was unanimously approved.

Agenda Item 8. Presentations.

Mr. Toland noted Attorney James Brown was still reviewing proposed zoning ordinance amendments forwarded for his review. The Commission would likely address further needs regarding zoning ordinance amendments in the upcoming January and February sessions.

Agenda Item 9. Discussion Items

None.

Agenda Item 10. Adjournment

A **motion** to adjourn was made by Commissioner Ryan Arends at 9:05 P.M. A 2nd was offered by Commissioner Mike Munch. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jon C. Overway, Secretary
Crockery Township Planning Commission

Next Meetings: Regular Session - January 20, 2015
 Special Session - January 6, 2015