

7:16 o'clock p.m. Member Buechler called the meeting of the Planning Commission to order.

For the record, Buechler stated there is a quorum.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Buechler , Hilton , Koob , Mills , Muir , Oprita , Wurmlinger

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Buechler , Hilton , Koob , Mills , Muir , Oprita , Wurmlinger

**ALSO PRESENT:** Sharon Wilton-Recording Secretary

**VISITORS:** Kristy Jones, Greg Stremer, Thomas Dado, William Corkins, William Vogan

Motion by Muir, supported by Oprita, to approve the agenda as printed and posted. Vote, 4/0

Motion by Oprita, supported by Muir, to approve the minutes from **02-08-2022** as printed and posted.

Vote, 4/0

**REPORT FROM TOWNSHIP BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:**

Buechler

Tax season wrapped up. Any unpaid bills were sent to the county to collect, as of March 1. There will be a meeting with Spicer regarding the potential development on Parker Road on March 23rd at 3:00. The meeting is open to the public. Will serve as a brainstorming session to see what residents and stakeholders would like to see in the development.

**REPORT FROM ZBA REPRESENTATIVE:**

Oprita

We have an opportunity with the number of requests for setbacks to update the zoning rules. We get numerous requests for the same setbacks, updating current rules would help avoid the need for those meetings.

**CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD: NONE**

- *When the Chairperson calls on you, stand and speak your name and address clearly for the record.*
- *Each person will be permitted to speak one time for 3 minutes until everyone has had a chance to speak.*
- *Any comments to be made regarding the public hearing will be heard during the continuation of the public hearing, below.*

**NEW BUSINESS**

ITEM #1

Special Land Use-Corkin's Multi-Use Designation; 3076 Krafft Rd. Parcel; 74-20-021-3014-000

Representative Comments:

Bill Vogan is the architect working on the development. Has an office in Port Huron on Bard St. Understand that zoning allowance doesn't allow mixed use. Mentioned that the ordinance language might be revised and we can return at that time.

Idea is to develop the remaining portion of the property with retail on the first floor and residential on the 2nd and 3rd story. To accommodate essential needs of people where they live. Appearance would be more residential than commercial in appearance for this development. Currently meets requirements for parking.

Buechler asked what the existing building is used for currently. It's a duplex with no changes planned for it other than some cement work.

Oprita said it's already a zoned commercial.  
Beuchler said the big question is if we are accepting mixed use on this parcel.

Wilton asked if the entrance would be off of Krafft or Willow.  
Vogan confirmed it will be off of Krafft.

Vogan stated units will be rentals.

Mills stated that years ago Mr. Corkin came before the board with another proposed development. Corkin said it was approved, he went through the process and then his developers/partners backed out of the agreement.

**CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD:**

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**BOARD DISCUSSION: \*\*\*NO PUBLIC COMMENTS WILL BE HEARD AT THIS TIME\*\*\***

Motion by Oprita, supported by Buechler, to approve special land use for 3076 Krafft Rd. Vote, 4/0.

ITEM #2

Planned Unit Development Designation-Fay's Wine and Spirits; 3832 Keewahdin Rd. Parcels; 74-20-326-0009-001, 0010-001, 0011-000

Representative Comments

Greg Stremers, Attorney

Thomas would like to expand the store, add quick stop-to-go grocery items, maybe a deli counter, increase the number of offerings in inventory. Add a two pump gas station with two drives instead of one for increased safety. Would need right of way permits.

Looking to add to the workforce housing in the area. Want to attract younger work from home professionals. Not interested in lower income. We don't have enough workforce housing for people and it makes it difficult to get people and businesses here.

Plan is for 14 units toward the back. Zoned R-1 B. Want to make sure the Planning Commission is happy. The estimated investment cost is 3 million. Asking for ideas and collective knowledge from the commission.

Thomas Dado's comments:

His goal is adapting to change, increasing product offerings and adding fuel pumps. This would help to increase revenue as margins are not very high on liquor and beer sales. Would like to add food & grocery items. Add more niche items and local products. Would like to bring in a deli and many more items that he just doesn't have the room to offer.

He plans to add a second drive for customers to be able to pull in and out to increase safety. Prevent the backing out into traffic. Use current parking spots for vendors or employees.

Would like to connect to the bike path with parking in the back of the store. We have 5 acres available. Would like to build as many units as possible. His parents have owned the store for 20 years and he would like to be here for 20 more.

Would like to find a way to tie into the bike path and develop a trail head. Offer bathrooms in the store or possibly add an external restroom trailer for access. Extend store hours earlier in the morning. Customers could stop in for water or Gatorade, use the bathroom etc...

Oprita said it would be a win-win.

Wilton asked if he was still considering electric charging stations. Thomas confirmed but he needs to reach out to estimate the cost. He would like to add three charging stations.

Beuchler asked if the residential units share the driveway with the station and store. Dado confirmed they would. Currently it is 40 ft wide but could potentially add another drive.

Front area will connect to the nature trail. Will help bring people into the store and add to the nature trail.

Oprita asked about the need for a traffic study. Wilton said that would be part of a site plan review. Beucher said our ordinance requires three public hearings and he would like to streamline the process.

Wilton mentioned the checklist and asked about the amount of space needed for fuel pumps and underground storage tanks. Would also need water and a fire hydrant added.  
Would need water and fire hydrant

Oprita asked if units would be rented out. Dado confirmed yes. Buechler mentioned they could be made into condos. Dado said he would like to make them look like the ones on Krafft Rd. With a single level condo/garage, condo/garage, not sure it would be better or worse.  
Needs to discuss with the architect and builders to see what's more beneficial, upper and lower or one level.

Streamers asked who does the traffic study, Is it the county? Wilton has the contact information but most likely it would be MDOT since it's a state highway. Part of site plan review would be a traffic study.

Oprita asked about the neighbor in lot 9. Things are talked about and everything seems fine until residents come into the township to complain. Dado has talked with neighbors within 150ft on either side.

Mills asked if they had seen the plans, Dado said not yet. Mills suggested them showing the plans. Opita expressed concerns about lighting shining in the neighbor's yard. Streamers mentioned a case he's working on now with lighting issues. Would need to look at what the ordinance requirements are for the answer.

Dado suggested plantings to help shield such as efervides.  
Oprita stated plants would look better than 150ft of wall.

Buechler asked if Dado would be extending the store hours. Dado said he would not extend night hours but would like to open earlier, 6-7 am. There isn't enough traffic on the road to be open 24 hrs. Summer hours the store closes at 10 on Friday and Saturday, weekdays at 9. Winter store hours close at 9pm weekdays and 10 pm Friday and Saturday.

Stremers suggested looking into grants for possible addition of a bicycle repair, trailhead build or bike repair. Beuchler said many of the recreation grants are not geared towards infrastructure requests but things are changing and he is keeping an eye on it. Streamers added that they would be glad to help.

Oprita asked if the 40ft would be enough space. Dado said that no one would be coming and going at the same time. It's only 14 units.

Wilton asked if they could look at a separate drive to go back to residential units.

Dado asked if the 6 spots under fuel pumps would count towards the parking requirement. Wilton stated that parking is based on the total sq ft of retail. Plan is for 5500 sq ft /150 would equal the need for 36 spots. May consider lots 8 & 9 for parking in the back of the store and keep west spots for a resident driveway.

The house behind the store will be torn down. Lots 7 & 8 would be open. If he doesn't move the parking lot, he will gravel.

Mills asked about the neighbor on Log 9 proximity to the path. Dado stated that it's approximately 30ft from his pole barn and he doesn't really use it. Doesn't see next to his pole barn approximately 30ft, doesn't really see him giving him any issues but he is willing to put walls or trees up along property line.

Oprita asked if units are single level or upper/lower. Dado has to talk to the health department about septic requirements. Need 150ft of septic per residence. He wants it to look nice. No eye sores. Two tanks per field and one duplex would share one field. Would have to put in multiple fields.

Dado would like to add public bathrooms but would not like to maintain them. Or customers could use the store bathrooms. Would benefit the store by increasing traffic and customers could purchase water or a Gatorade. Dado expressed the importance of safety. He has heavy surveillance and good lighting. Expansion would open up the store and increase safety. Right now shelves are stocked so high without the cameras it's difficult to see where customers are in the store.

Wilton said there are requirements to exterior materials. Dado plans a similar look to the current stone and brick exterior. Dado said funding is secured with his lender but has concerns about the price of construction. He is working on getting a general contractors license and plans to keep the renovation local. Customers helped him with work on the last renovation and plans to continue with this expansion.

Stremers mention the next step would be site plans. Wouldn't know about variances yet until the engineering plans are done. Dado was given a checklist.

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**BOARD DISCUSSION: \*\*\*NO PUBLIC COMMENTS WILL BE HEARD AT THIS TIME\*\*\***

Motion by Buechler, supported by Mills, to approve the Planned Unit Development designation for 3832 Keewahdin Rd. (parcels 74-20-326-0009-001, 0010-001, 0011-000. Vote, 4/0.

*CITIZEN COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS: In order to insure that the comments are recorded as accurately as possible, please follow the format below:*

- \* Address the planning commission only. Individual conversations should not be held during the meeting.*
- \* Please stand at the podium; speak your name and address clearly for the record.*
- \* Each person will be permitted to speak one time for 3 minutes until everyone has had a chance to speak.*
- \* The minutes will be transcribed from the recording. Please be respectful of the person speaking. Comments made inaudible on the recording by background sounds such as whispering, clapping or interrupting cannot be made part of the official minutes.*

**BOARD DISCUSSION: NONE**

**OLD BUSINESS: NONE**

Motion by Buechler, supported by Oprita, to adjourn. Vote, 4/0.  
Time, 8:03 P.M.

The Charter Township of Fort Gratiot complies with the "Americans with Disabilities Act" and if auxiliary aids or services are required at the meeting for individuals with disabilities, please contact Clerk Robert C. Crawford, 3720 Keewahdin Road, Fort Gratiot, Michigan 48059 (810) 385-4489, three days prior to said meeting.