

7:01 o'clock p.m. Chairperson Buechler calls the meeting of the Planning Commission to order.

**1. ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Buechler, Koob, Mills, Muir, Oprita

ABSENT: Hilton, Wurmlinger

ALSO PRESENT: Courtney Landreville, Recording Secretary  
 Jorja Baldwin, Zoning/Planning Consultant  
 Leslie Accardo, Auburn Hills  
 Evan Priest, Canton  
 Zohaib Syed, Hampton Manor Premier Assisted Living, LLC  
 Bill Shagena, Fort Gratiot  
 Cindy Wile, Fort Gratiot  
 Dave & Sandy Heyboer, Fort Gratiot  
 Schultz Family McDonalds, Fort Gratiot  
 Vance Richardson, Fort Gratiot  
 Shane Richardson, Fort Gratiot  
 Laura Campbell, Fort Gratiot  
 Angela Defrain, Fort Gratiot

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: December 12, 2023**

**Motion by Muir, supported by Oprita, to approve the agenda as printed and posted.  
 Voice Vote, 5/0. Motion Carried.**

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 10, 2023 and November 08, 2023**

**Motion by Muir, supported by Oprita, to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2023 regular meeting as presented.**

**Voice Vote, 5/0. Motion Carried.**

**Motion by Koob, supported by Mills, to approve the minutes of the November 08, 2023 special meeting as presented.**

**Voice Vote, 5/0. Motion Carried.**

**4. REPORT FROM TOWNSHIP BOARD REPRESENTATIVE: Clerk Robert Buechler**

- DNR Grants awarded for campground and trail system
- Budgets
- Shop with a Hero

**5. REPORT FROM ZBA REPRESENTATIVE: Nathan Oprita**

No comment

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Angela Defrain – Solar meeting, sidewalks along business on 24<sup>th</sup> Ave

Vance Richardson – Petitions on website, Portside Solar

Cindy Wile – Solar meeting/Portside Solar

**7. PUBLIC HEARING:**

**ITEM 7-1 REQUEST TO REZONE FROM AG AGRICULTURAL TO R-2 TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL**

<i>Property Owner</i> GRAB, Inc.	<i>Applicant (If Not Owner)</i> Hampton Manor Premier Assisted Living, LLC	
<i>Current Zoning of Property</i> AG Agricultural	<i>Parcel Identification Number(s)</i> 74-20-016-2004-000 & 74-20-016-2005-000	
<i>Proposed Zoning of Property</i> R-2 Two-Family Residential	<i>Street Address or Location:</i> Vacant lots, south side of Carrigan Road, west of 24 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	
<i>Fort Gratiot Master Plan Zoning Designation</i> High Density Residential	<i>Total Acreage of Site:</i> 10 acres	<i>Total Acreage to Rezone:</i> 10 acres

**PROPERTY OWNER/APPLICANT PRESENTATION:** Evan Priest, Engineering/Surveyor for GRAB, Inc. The first part of the process for their proposal is rezoning for their first-class facility to be built. Zohaib Syed, Hampton Manor Premier Assisted Living, LLC, can answer any questions.

Oprita asked if they have other facilities, Syed stated they have 15 in Michigan and Illinois, Florida, Missouri, and Texas. Koob asked what level of care the facility will offer. Syed stated they have independent, assisted and memory care. It is a single-story state licensed facility. Most needed facilities are offered in the building and Hampton Manor offers transportation to outside appointments. Koob mentioned there is no access off of Carrigan Road. Offers a maximum of 76 units.

**Motion by Buechler, supported by Muir, to open the public hearing for Item 7-1.  
Voice Vote, 5/0. Motion Carried. Public Hearing Opened at 7:20 P.M.**

**PUBLIC HEARING CITIZEN COMMENT:**

Dave Heyboer – Attorney for GRAB, Inc can answer any questions

Cindy Wile – Opposed for new assisted living facility, master plan

Angela Defrain – Ambulance noise, support for rezoning but not for assisted living, middle class housing

Shane Richardson – Have they had planning/development delays or current/prior lawsuits?

**Motion by Oprita, supported by Muir, to close the public hearing for Item 7-1.  
Voice Vote, 5/0. Motion Carried. Public Hearing Closed at 7:29 P.M.**

**BOARD DISCUSSION:**

Explanation of rezoning process by Baldwin. Baldwin stated the uses between R-2 and agricultural for this area and what will be allowed if rezoned. The only access for the proposed use is the Kettlewell Audubon. The master plan identifies these parcels as high density residential; R-2 does not allow high rise apartments, but allows for duplexes and the senior living facility as a special land use.

Oprita mentioned the traffic not having access to Carrigan Road from the proposed facility and filtering through the stop light is preferred. He mentioned middle class housing is needed but behind Provencal Preserve is potentially going to assist in that need.

Baldwin mentioned work force housing is a huge need; and regional studies have shown a shortage of housing options for people to age in place or in a facility close by. There is a need for R-2 duplex living for both the aging and other generations looking for minimal upkeep.

Koob mentioned Cindy Wile's comment from Koob's statement from the solar meeting. He said this project fits the definition of being gradual, logical, and a buffer between C-2 and residential; and being concerned about sidewalk availability, which can be addressed during site plan.

**Motion by Buechler, supported by Oprita, to recommend approval for the request to rezone vacant lots on Carrigan Road, parcels 74-20-016-2004-000 and 74-20-016-2005-000, from AG Agricultural to R-2 Two Family Residential, based on the full rezoning report and the following reasons:**

1. The proposed rezoning is consistent with the Fort Gratiot Master Plan, specifically the goals and objectives and the future land use plan.
2. The land directly east is the last large tract available for high-density commercial, and the R-2 district allows for high-density residential, which creates a more desirable buffer for the surrounding properties.
3. R-2 allows for more uses than AG, and helps protect the rural residential in the area by preventing office or commercial sprawl.
4. There is a lack of R-2 zoned land, and both duplex developments and senior living facilities are in more demand.
5. Rezoning to R-2 does not prohibit most of the uses currently permitted in AG.

**Roll Call Vote: Yay: Koob, Mills, Oprita, Muir, Buechler; Nay: None.  
Motion Carried. Rezoning recommended for approval.**

8. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None

9. **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Item 9-1: SITE PLAN APPROVAL FOR CHICK-FIL-A, 4783 24<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE / 74-20-016-2031-010**

**APPLICANT:** PEA Group, Leslie Accardo, 1849 Pond Run, Auburn Hills, Michigan 48326

**REQUEST:** Site Plan Approval for proposed 5,100 square foot Chick-fil-A restaurant

**LOCATION:** 4783 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Meijer outlot, former Golden Corral site)

**PARCEL#:** 74-20-016-2031-010

**APPLICANT PRESENTATION:** *Attached slideshow*

- Family oriented and locally owned
- Donations to local food bank and team member scholarships
- Providing 50 stacking spaces for drive-thru
- No direct access for 24<sup>th</sup> Ave, access through Meijer parking lot
- Bike racks, new landscaping, and sidewalk access

**BOARD DISCUSSION:**

Muir asked estimated construction time, Accardo stated they would start in Spring – April/May and finished October/November.

Buechler asked if employees are outside, Accardo said yes, weather depending, employees will be out taking orders under the drive-thru canopy. Buechler mentioned the engineering report stated Fort Gratiot requires an additional handicap space.

Oprita mentioned he has been to many other locations and asked if this location is larger than normal lot. Accardo said yes, this size is preferred.

Koob mentioned comments received on the sidewalk placement. Accardo stated a lot of research was done and they decided to put it right after the drive-thru boards where customers are stopped. It is not a straight walkway therefore bikes and pedestrians will have to slow down before crossing. Koob is also concerned about the walkway on the west side of the property going into Meijer parking lot with no extra signage. Chick-Fil-A has an agreement with Meijer to use their parking lot. Koob is requesting more signage for the crossing into Meijer to ensure safety. Storm drainage was mentioned as there is none on-site, it is linked to behind Meijer.

**Motion by Mills, supported by Koob, to grant the site plan approval for Chick-fil-A, 4783 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 74-20-016-2031-010 with the following conditions:**

1. **Provide one additional ADA parking spot.**
2. **Signage and pavement markings on the crosswalk on the west of the site connecting the onsite parking and offsite overflow parking areas.**

**Voice Vote 5/0. Motion Carried. Conditional Site Plan approval granted.**

10. **COMMISSIONER UPDATES:**

- Outside self-storage facility – not interested in reviewing
- Accessory structure with living space
- January meeting will be held
- Solar updates with the state

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Koob, supported by Oprita, to adjourn. Voice Vote, 5/0. Time, 9:05 P.M.**