

**HOPE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
June 15, 2023**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Norton at 6:30 pm at the Hope Township Hall, 5463 S M43 Hwy, Hastings, MI. Pledge of allegiance to the flag.

**Members Present:** Bob Norton, Junior Homister, Roger Pashby, Jim McKelvey.

**Members Absent:** Craig Jenkins.

**Others Present:** Planning Consultant/Zoning Administrator Nathan Mehmed, Attorney Catherine Kaufman, Attorney Codie Burt, Tenny Corbett, and one additional individual at the Township Hall.

**Selecting Secretary Pro Tem:** Motion by Pashby, support by McKelvey to elect Homister Secretary pro tem for the meeting. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Agenda:** Motion by Pashby, support by Homister to approve the agenda as presented. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Meeting Minutes:** Motion by Pashby, support by McKelvey to approve the May 18, 2023 meeting minutes. All ayes. Motion carried.

**General Public Comment:** None.

**Public Hearing: Camp Michawana SEU and Site Plan Amendments:**

- a. **Introductory comments.** Norton asked Mehmed to give a brief overview of the request. Mehmed explained that Tenny Corbett, on behalf of Camp Michawana, submitted an application for site plan and special exception use amendment for the construction of three 416 square foot cabins and associated improvements located at 5800 Head Lake Road. The existing camp is a special exception use in the AR district and has been previously reviewed by the Planning Commission through various expansions and amendments. Section 5.5 of the Hope Township Zoning Ordinance addresses changes to an approved site plan. The addition of buildings to the property is considered a major change that requires site plan review by the Planning Commission. Section 4.1, J addresses amendments to a special exception use permit. The

addition of cabins and overall camp capacity is not considered to be a minor non-substantial change and is required to be handled in the same manner as the initial special exception use application. Mehmed explained that he has provided a staff memo outlining the Zoning Ordinance standards that must be reviewed by the Planning Commission, including the site plan review standards of Section 5.3, special exception use standards of Section 4.0, and specific use standards of Section 4.2, J.

Tenny Corbett noted that Mehmed covered just about everything. These cabins will be part of the campground portion of the camp, and will be available for rental. They are not being used for the summer camp operations, but may be used to house staff. They would be located adjacent to existing cabins and share an existing parking area that would be slightly expanded. Existing trash facilities would be used and are large enough to accommodate the expansion.

- b. Acknowledge written comments received. Norton noted that there were no written comments received.
- c. Open public hearing to receive comments. Norton opened the public hearing at 6:34pm.
- d. Close public hearing. Hearing no comments, Norton entertained a motion to close the public hearing at 6:35 pm. Motion by Pashby, support by Homister to close the public hearing. All ayes. Motion carried.
- e. Deliberation and motion. Norton asked the Planning Commission if they had any questions before they begin their review of the standards outlined in Mehmed's memo. Pashby asked what the capacity of each cabin would be. Corbett noted that each will sleep six. McKelvey asked how often the cabins are used. Corbett noted frequently, but primarily on the weekends. The Camp is looking to increase weekend capacity. Homister asked about fire department access. Mehmed indicated that this could be addressed as a condition of approval. Corbett explained that he didn't think that there would be an issue. Norton asked about lighting. Corbett noted that they would have porch lights. McKelvey asked if the new cabins would be similar in look at size to what is existing. Corbett explained that they would.

The Planning Commission evaluated the standards of Section 5.3, Section 4.0, and Section 4.2, J, finding that each standard was met, either fully or with

conditions. It was noted that the small increase in the number of cabins wouldn't have a substantial impact on adjacent land uses, traffic, or neighboring properties.

Motion by Pashby, support by Homister to approve the Camp Michawana special exception use and site plan amendment incorporating the findings in Mehmed's report, subject to the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall obtain all necessary local, county, state, or federal permits and approvals, including a soil erosion and sedimentation control permit from Barry County, if required. A copy of any approvals or permits needed from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy shall be submitted to the Township.
2. The applicant shall comply with all stipulations of the Barry-Eaton Health Department, Delton Fire Department, and the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy.
3. The operation shall at all times comply with the ongoing requirements of Section 4.2, J and Section 10.15 of the Zoning Ordinance.
4. All conditions pertaining to the original site plan and special land use approval shall remain effective.

All ayes. Motion carried.

**Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment Discussion:** Mehmed provided an overview of what was discussed at the previous meeting, including Kaufman's list of options, and noted that the Planning Commission asked Kaufman to be present at the June meeting, which was granted by the Township Board.

Kaufman briefly summarized some of the previous conversations had between the owners of the Guernsey Lake Park and the Township. During the last call, Mehmed, Kaufman, Supervisor Peck, and Trustee Homister discussed options that were in Kaufman's email with Burt. Kaufman explained that no matter what option is chosen, the keyholing provisions of the Zoning Ordinance conflict. Mehmed reiterated that the current standards of Section 10.12, Riparian Lot Use Regulations, requires 50 feet of frontage for each dwelling unit. Burt confirmed that there were about 24 units. Norton noted that would require 1,200 feet of frontage, which is not in compliance now. Kaufman explained that removing any frontage would increase the nonconformity. The Planning Commission agreed that they would be in favor of

putting four single-family dwellings on the frontage, along with allowing the existing access, so long as no additional backlots gained access.

Kaufman explained that a Planned Unit Development may be the best option, but that the Zoning Ordinance would need to be amended to allow PUDs in the existing district. Mehmed noted that the minimum lot size would also need to be adjusted, and that the PUD section regarding the modification of requirements would also need to be clarified. This would allow for a PUD in the MHC – Manufactured Housing Community district and allow for the deviation of frontage requirements.

Norton asked if a conditional rezoning would allow for the deviation of standards. Kaufman explained that it wouldn't, they would have to ask for a variance. Norton reiterated that in his opinion he didn't see a hardship.

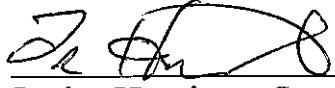
Homister asked if there are any unintended consequences to allowing PUDs in more districts. Mehmed explained that a Planned Unit Development would allow the Planning Commission the flexibility to approve a unique project so long as the intent and performance objectives are met. Theoretically, more properties would be available for PUD, but the Planning Commission wouldn't have to approve them unless the standards are met. Kaufman mentioned that it depends on how much property is in those zoning districts. Mehmed explained that there isn't a lot of property in MHC or RL - Residential Lake in comparison to AR, where PUDs are already allowed. The Planning Commission unanimously agreed that they would like to go the PUD route.

Kaufman suggested having Mehmed propose some edits to the Zoning Ordinance for discussion at the next meeting. Mehmed noted that he could take the existing sections and insert new language with track changes. The Planning Commission agreed that they liked that approach. Mehmed noted that he would not be available for the July meeting. The Planning Commission agreed that they could wait until August. Kaufman asked Burt if her clients would be amenable to that approach. Burt explained that she would talk to them but did not believe that would be an issue.

**Zoning Administrator/Planning Consultant Nathan Mehmed:** Mehmed noted that there is an upcoming variance application in July and that there will likely be a special exception use application on the Planning Commission's agenda in August. The application from StoneCo is still not complete. Kaufman mentioned that the case is ongoing.

## **Adjournment**

Pashby moved to adjourn meeting, support by Homister. All ayes. Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.

  
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Junior Homister, Secretary pro tem

6-28-23  
Date