

CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES FROM THE MAY 7, 2008 MEETING

Regular Meeting: The regular meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Tom Hackley with members Steve Payne, Robert Beemer, Tamara Samuels and Michael Livengood present. Bill Marske arrived at 7:02 p.m. Also present were Zoning Administrator Betsy Bohac and Recording Secretary Marisue Hojnacki.

Approval of Minutes: Livengood moved, supported by Payne to approve the minutes of the rescheduled April 9, 2008 meeting as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of Agenda: Livengood moved, supported by Samuels to approve the agenda as presented with the addition of discussing the Land Use Map at the end of the meeting. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Special Land Use No. 171 – The Church of the Mediator

The Church of the Mediator, represented by Rev. Paula Durren and Paul Cromheecke, requested a Special Land Use Permit for the expansion of the church located at 14280 Red Arrow Highway in Lakeside (Property Code No. 11-07-7350-0006-00-0) per Section 5.04.5 of Chikaming Township Zoning Ordinance No. 87, as amended. The proposed new 11,464 square foot addition and expanded parking will be located on a 4± acre parcel that is zoned R-1 Single Family Residential. The proposal will require some variances from the zoning ordinance and a hearing before the Zoning Board of Appeals has been applied for. Mike Durren introduced the architect Venoy McAndrew of Keystone Designs. He said the current church seats 75 and they have 50-52 people during the off season and are bursting at the seams during the summer. He said that studies show that if you build a bigger building they will come. They are planning for the next 75 years. He added that when they did the soil boring they learned that they could not have a basement so that is why they are adding on a Fellowship Hall. Rev. Durren said that they need educational space, a Fellowship Hall, nursery space and office space. Cromheecke said that they are going green with this project using geothermal for heating and cooling and grassy pavers in the parking lot. McAndrew said that the Fellowship Hall will be a space to be used by the community for weddings, meetings and special events. They will have seating for 200 in the sanctuary. The entry will be off a new drive that is being reviewed by the Berrien County Road Commission. There will be two entries off of Red Arrow that will be paved to the property line and then gravel over paver rock. The Drain Commission will require a small area of retention just short of the wooded area. The wooded area will be a preserve. The property goes to Lakeshore and Red Arrow and is 190 feet at the widest point and then

gets narrower so they will need to get variances. The parking area will be grass pavers with wheel stops. There will be a covered drop off canopy that has an English cottage style. The church is stone and then wood so it will be in character with the surrounding homes. He stated that it is the Anglican tradition to have an English cottage style church. A covered walkway goes across the front and the base of the building will be stone and then shingled walls. The nave space faces due east which has historical significance and a rose window at the end. The stained glass windows will be placed in the waiting area. On the Lakeshore Drive side there will be a garden with Stations of the Cross and a baptismal font. They also hope to incorporate a labyrinth into the landscaping. McAndrew said that right now they have a 1600 square foot footprint upstairs and downstairs. In the old church they will have a small chapel and office space with classrooms in the basement. On the left of the steeple will be the Fellowship space.

Hackley asked about the existing trees. He was told that most of the trees on the south side of the building will be taken out for the parking area. However, they will put in new trees and screen vegetation in the 20 feet of green space. Livengood asked how many parking spaces and was told 54 standard and three handicapped. Bohac asked if he was aware of a water easement on the south side and McAndrew said that he did not think it was recorded. She told him to contact Julie Schroeder in the water department. Bohac asked if the electric poles on the north side were going to be relocated and was told that they would not change. She asked about drainage in the parking lot as the water table is just four feet below the surface. McAndrew said that it was and that some of the sidewalk would be paved. He said that the pond shown on the drawing is the size that they would need if they paved the parking lot. It will probably be a third of that because they are not paving it. Bohac was also concerned about the height of the lighting and the shortness of the trees being planted. She did not want the house to the south to be impacted by the lighting. McAndrew said that they would have an automatic shut off and be pointed down. She asked about the lights on the church and was told that they would be under the canopy and in the court yard area. Hackley asked if the pond would release water and was told it would not release water as it was a retention pond. He then asked the depth of the pond and McAndrew said two feet. It is designed for 100 year flood. The soil borings showed that it is sand down to four feet and then clay. Beemer asked about the potential preserve area. McAndrew said that it would be 86,746 square feet. Mike Durren said that Harold Russell is working with the neighbors to get an environmental easement donation to the church. He is also working with Chikaming Open Lands. Rev. Durren said that it also involves involvement at the diocesan level as the easement would be forever. Samuels suggested that they leave the pond larger as a precautionary measure. Hackley asked if they will have their letters of approval from the Road and Drain Commissions for the public hearing. McAndrew did not know as both Commissions are very busy. Marske moved, supported by Livengood to set the public hearing for the Special Land Use Permit for Wednesday, June 4, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. Motion carried.

Land Use Map

Bohac showed the Commission the new Land Use Map and a few other corrections the Treasurer Dorothy Simmons and Fire Chief Mike Davidson had for the Master Plan. It will go before the Township Board on May 8th. Bohac will then send discs to the surrounding municipalities, who will then have 40 days to respond. Bohac suggested that they set the public hearing at their next meeting for their July meeting.

Payne moved, supported by Marske to adjourn the meeting at 7:46 p.m. Motion carried.

Marisue Hojnacki
Recording Secretary