

FRENCHTOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
June 18, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

Roll call: Kraig Yoas Dennis Staelgraeve Fred Calkins  
Ignazio Cuccia Paul Thoma Brian Dotson

Via Zoom: Hillary Venier  
Stephon B. Bagne, Attorney representing James Upton

Also present: Mark Mathe, Mannik & Smith Group, Township Engineer Representative  
Mario Ortega, McKenna Associates, Township Planning Consultant  
Kerry Bondy, Township Attorney  
Joseph Lehmann, Township Building Official  
Natalie Askar, Planning Commission Recording Secretary  
Chad Woelmer, Fedor Steel – Owner/Manager  
David Fedor, Property Owner  
Jim Jacobs, James S Jacobs Architects, PLLC, Representing 2815 N Telegraph  
Jeff McBee, 2815 N Telegraph - Property Owner  
Hatem Hannawa, H & H Designs, representing Simon Z Gas Station  
Satar Zaitouna, Simon Z Gas Station – owner  
James Upton, Landscaping Business at 6585 N Telegraph - owner  
Jessica Eggenton, Landscaping Business at 6585 N Telegraph  
Vullnet “Billy” Nuhaj, Carleton Farmers Plaza, LLC – owner  
Kimet Nuhaj, Carleton Farmers Plaza, LLC - owner

4 interested citizens

A quorum being present, Chairman Ignazio Cuccia called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. This meeting was held under the Open Meetings Act.

All those present were requested by Chairperson Cuccia to rise and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Item No. 1 Agenda Approval.**

**Motion**

Moved By: Dennis Staelgraeve Supported By: Paul Thoma

A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented.

MUC

**Item No. 2 Minutes of June 4, 2020 Meeting.**

**Motion**

Moved By: Paul Thoma Supported By: Kraig Yoas

A motion was made to approve the minutes for the June 4, 2020 Planning Commission meeting with corrections made.

MUC

**Item No. 3 Public Hearing - Rezoning: request to rezone Parcel #5807-079-005-10 (2833 N. Telegraph Road) from A – Agricultural to LM - Light Manufacturing. The 1.24-acre parcel requesting to be rezoned is located on the west side of the N. Telegraph Road, north of LaSalle Road.**

**Motion**

Moved By: Hillary Venier

Supported By: Paul Thoma

MUC

A motion was made to accept and place on file the following correspondence:

- Mario Ortega, McKenna Associates, dated April 8, 2020
- Mark Mathe, Mannik & Smith Group of Michigan, dated June 10, 2020
- Josh Maddox, Fire Inspector, dated April 6, 2020
- Affidavit of Mailing on May 21, 2020 of which 14 property owners were notified
- Submittal Documents

Chad Woelmer, owner/manager of Fedor Steel, along with David Fedor, property owner, approached and presented their case for the requested rezoning approval from AG (Agricultural) to LM (Light Manufacturing).

Mario Ortega, McKenna Associates, Township Planner, presented the Planner's report dated April 8, 2020. Mr. Ortega also explained about the covenant agreement between Mr. Fedor and the Township from 1994. Mr. Ortega recommends that the Planning Commission recommend denial of the rezoning to the Township Board based on the items listed in his review.

Mr. Mathe, Mannik & Smith Group of Michigan, Township Engineer, presented the engineer's report dated June 10, 2020. Mr. Mathe states in his review that the Planning Commission use his review as a supplemental resource to the Township Planning Consultant's report when making a recommendation regarding the proposed rezoning.

**Motion**

Moved By: Paul Thoma

Supported By: Dennis Staelgraeve

A motion was made to open the public hearing at 7:37 pm.

MUC

Ignazio Cuccia, Planning Commission Chairperson, asked if there were any citizens who wished to address the Commission.

A concerned citizen (Jeff McBee) owns properties south of Fedor Steel. Supports the rezoning and considers Fedor Steel to be a good neighbor, has no complaints.

Mr. Cuccia asked three times if there were any citizens who wished to address the Commission.

**Motion**

Moved By: Dennis Staelgraeve

Supported By: Paul Thoma

A motion was made to close the public hearing at 7:40 pm.

MUC

The Commission further discussed.

**Motion**

Moved By: Brian Dotson

Supported By: Paul Thoma

A motion was made to recommend to the Township Board that they grant the proposed request to rezone Parcel #5807-079-005-10 (2833 N. Telegraph Road) from A – Agricultural to LM - Light Manufacturing. The 1.24-acre parcel requesting to be rezoned is located on the west side of N. Telegraph Road, north of LaSalle Road.

Roll Call: Cuccia – Yes, Staelgraeve – Yes, Yoas – Yes, Calkins – Yes,  
Dotson– Yes, Thoma – Yes, Venier – Yes.

MUC

7 - Yes votes, 0 - No votes

**Item No. 4 Public Hearing – Rezoning: request to rezone a 2.02-acre portion of Parcel #5807-020-015-00 (2815 N. Telegraph Road) from A – Agricultural to C-3 Highway Commercial. The property requesting to be rezoned is located on the west side of N. Telegraph Road, north of LaSalle Road.**

Jim Jacobs, James S Jacobs Architects, PLLC, representing 2815 N Telegraph, along with Jeff McBee, property owner, approached and presented their case for the requested rezoning approval from AG - Agricultural to C-3 Highway Commercial. Mr. McBee answered the Commissioners questions regarding his proposed use.

Mario Ortega, McKenna Associates, Township Planner, presented the Planner’s report dated April 7, 2020. Mr. Ortega recommends that the Planning Commission recommend denial of the rezoning to the Township Board based on the items listed in his review. C-2 Commercial would be more appropriate, more compatible with property in the area and is more fitting with the Master Plan. Special Use approval would be required for his proposed use in a C-2 zoned district.

Mr. McBee is agreeable to the C-2 zoning if the Planning Commission is as well.

Mr. Mathe, Mannik & Smith Group of Michigan, Township Engineer, presented the engineer’s report dated June 10, 2020. Mr. Mathe states in his review that the Planning Commission use his review as a supplemental resource to the Township Planning Consultant’s report when making a recommendation regarding the proposed rezoning.

**Motion**

Moved By: Paul Thoma

Supported By: Dennis Staelgraeve

MUC

A motion was made to accept and place on file the following correspondence:

- Mario Ortega, McKenna Associates, dated April 7, 2020
- Mark Mathe, Mannik & Smith Group of Michigan, dated June 10, 2020
- Josh Maddox, Fire Inspector, dated April 13, 2020
- Affidavit of Mailing on May 21, 2020 of which 8 property owners were notified
- Submittal Documents

**Motion**

Moved By: Fred Calkins

Supported By: Dennis Staelgraeve

A motion was made to open the public hearing at 8:12 pm.

MUC

Ignazio Cuccia, Planning Commission Chairperson, asked if there were any citizens who wished to address the Commission.

A concerned citizen (Mark Adrian) owns properties on Hurd (North of Fedor Steel), supports Mr. McBee and the rezoning. He considers Mr. McBee to be a good neighbor, has no complaints.

Mr. Cuccia asked three times if there were any citizens who wished to address the Commission.

**Motion**

Moved By: Dennis Staelgraeve

Supported By: Paul Thoma

A motion was made to close the public hearing at 8:14 pm.

MUC

The Commission further discussed.

Commissioner Paul Thoma stated that the Fire Department has recommendations and concerns that need to be brought up when applicant returns for Special Use approval.

**Motion**

Moved By: Paul Thoma

Supported By: Fred Calkins

A motion was made to recommend to the Township Board that they grant the request as amended by the applicant and rezone a 2.02-acre portion of Parcel #5807-020-015-00 (2815 N. Telegraph Road) from A – Agricultural to C-2 General Commercial. The property requesting to be rezoned is located on the west side of N. Telegraph Road, north of LaSalle Road.

Roll Call:           Staelgraeve – Yes,           Yoas – Yes,           Calkins – Yes,           Dotson– Yes,  
                           Thoma – Yes,                Venier – Yes,           Cuccia – Yes.

MUC

7 - Yes votes, 0 - No votes

**Item No. 5 Tentative Site Plan Review: Parcel ID# 5807-071-008 00 (1790 N. Dixie Highway), for an automobile filling station which is located in the C-2, General Commercial zoning district.**

**Motion**

Moved By: Hillary Venier

Supported By: Dennis Staelgraeve

MUC

A motion was made to accept and place on file the following correspondence:

- Mario Ortega, McKenna Associates, dated March 24, 2020
- Mark Mathe, Mannik & Smith Group of Michigan, dated June 10, 2020
- Josh Maddox, Fire Inspector, dated June 9, 2020
- Submittal Documents

Mr. Hatem Hannawa, H & H Designs, representing Simon Z Gas Station, approached and presented the site plans to the Commission. Mr. Hannawa explained the addition of a lighthouse feature and sail boat sculpture.

Mario Ortega, McKenna Associates, Township Planner, presented the Planner's report dated March 24, 2020. Mr. Ortega recommends the Planning Commission grant tentative site plan approval contingent upon the items listed in his review. Mr. Ortega advised the applicant that he must obtain and provide proof that he has applied for drives from the Monroe County Road Commission, needs to provide verification on canopy height and lighting and certain calculations need to be provided on final site plan.

Mr. Mathe, Mannik & Smith Group of Michigan, Township Engineer, presented the engineer's report dated March 12, 2020. Mr. Mathe recommends the Planning Commission grant tentative site plan approval subject and contingent upon the items listed in his review. Mr. Mathe thought that there was a utility easement on the property back toward Durocher Ave. – something to look into prior to final.

Mr. Cuccia asked three times if there were any citizens who wished to address the Commission.

**Motion**

Moved By: Paul Thoma

Supported By: Brian Dotson

A motion was made to grant approval for the Tentative Site Plan Review: Parcel ID# 5807-071-008 00 (1790 N. Dixie Highway), for an automobile filling station which is located in the C-2, General Commercial zoning district conditioned upon the recommendations from the Engineer, Planner, Fire and pending the approvals from the Monroe County Road Commission and the Monroe County Drain Commissioner.

Roll Call: Yoas – Yes, Calkins – Yes, Dotson– Yes, Thoma – Yes,  
Venier – Yes, Cuccia – Yes, Staelgraeve – Yes.

MUC

7 - Yes votes, 0 - No votes

**Item No. 6 Tentative Site Plan Review: Parcel ID# 5807-017-024-00 (6585 N. Telegraph Road) for the proposed use for a landscaping nursery and garden center business, which is located in the A – Agricultural Zoning District.**

**Motion**

Moved By: Paul Thoma

Supported By: Dennis Staelgraeve

MUC

A motion was made to accept and place on file the following correspondence:

- Mario Ortega, McKenna Associates, dated March 25, 2020
- Mark Mathe, Mannik & Smith Group of Michigan, dated June 10, 2020
- Josh Maddox, Fire Inspector, dated April 22, 2020
- GAAMPs Document, dated June 2020
- Clark Hill Letter from Mr. Stephon Bagne to Kerry Bondy
- Submittal Documents

Stephon B. Bagne, Attorney representing James Upton, via Zoom presented the case to the Commission.

Kerry Bondy, Township Attorney, clarified the GAAMPs issue and questions.

James Upton and Jessica Eggenton, Landscaping Business at 6585 N Telegraph Road, approached and presented their case to the Commission.

The Board discussed GAAMPs and how that ruling would change the Boards approval process.

Mario Ortega, McKenna Associates, Township Planner and Mr. Mathe, Mannik & Smith Group of Michigan, Township Engineer, answered questions.

Applicant requested to have this item Tabled.

**Motion**

Moved By: Kraig Yoas

Supported By: Paul Thoma

A motion was made, at the request of the applicant, to **TABLE** Tentative Site Plan Review: Parcel ID# 5807-017-024-00 (6585 N. Telegraph Road) for the proposed use for a landscaping nursery and garden center business, which is located in the A – Agricultural Zoning District in order to request a statement from Michigan Department of Agricultural and Rural Development (MDARD) to determine whether the use qualifies as a Farm Market in compliance with the new GAAMP which was issued June 2020 so that the Township can determine what if any review authority it has going forward .

MUC

**Item No. 7 Tentative Site Plan Review: Parcel ID# 5807-015-049-00 (803 Nadeau Road) for the demolition of current building and replace with a building for retail spaces.**

**Motion**

Moved By: Paul Thoma

Supported By: Dennis Staelgraeve

MUC

A motion was made to accept and place on file the following correspondence:

- Mario Ortega, McKenna Associates, dated March 24, 2020
- Mark Mathe, Mannik & Smith Group of Michigan, dated June 10, 2020

- Josh Maddox, Fire Inspector, dated April 13, 2020
- Submittal Documents

Vullnet “Billy” Nuhaj, Carleton Farmers Plaza, LLC, approached and presented his case and site plans to the Commission.

Mario Ortega, McKenna Associates, Township Planner, presented the Planner’s report dated March 24, 2020. Mr. Ortega states that additional information is required regarding how the buildings currently on site are not being redeveloped will be used in relation to the new commercial spaces. While temporary site plan approval may be granted, we advise the Planning Commission to table temporary site plan approval and allow the applicant to submit a complete plan and consider temporary and final site plan at that time.

Mr. Mathe, Mannik & Smith Group of Michigan, Township Engineer, presented the engineer’s report dated March 12, 2020. Mr. Mathe states in his review that the site plan provided is substantially nonconforming to the tentative site plan requirements of Frenchtown Township. A revised site plan should be provided for further review, and any approvals conferred by the Planning Commission should be conditioned upon receiving a site plan which addresses the aforementioned requirements and review comments.

Applicant requested to have this item Tabled.

**Motion**

Moved By: Paul Thoma

Supported By: Dennis Staelgraeve

A motion was made, at the request of the applicant, to **TABLE** Tentative Site Plan Review: Parcel ID# 5807-015-049-00 (803 Nadeau Road) for building for retail spaces to the August 20, 2020 Planning Commission meeting.

MUC

**Item No. 8 Old Business.**

There was no old business to discuss.

**Item No. 9 New Business.**

There were no citizens remaining to open the floor for questions, comments or concerns to the Planning Commission.

**Item No. 10 Administrative Reviews Update/Chairperson.**

Ignazio Cuccia, Planning Commission Chairperson, informed the Commission of the items proposed to be on next month’s agenda.

- **No meeting July 2, 2020**
- **Mini Committee:** Gabby’s Ladder – gazebo
- **ZBA:** no meeting

**Item No. 11 Adjournment.**

**Motion**

Moved By: Hillary Venier

Supported By: Fred Calkins

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 10:31 p.m.

MUC