

HOLLAND CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Special Meeting
May 16, 2023

Chairman Randy Kortering called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and asked for a roll call of members present.

Present: Chairman Randy Kortering, Vice-Chairman/Secretary Jack VanderMeulen, Members, Leo Barajas, Steve Darrow, and Russ TeSlaa. Also present were Community Development Director Corey Broersma, and Assistant Planner/Zoning Administrator Kate White.

Absent: Members Doug Becker and Evan Sharp

Public Comment: None.

Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Federal District Overlay Zoning:

Chairman Kortering opened the floor to Mr. Christopher Khorey, West Michigan Manager for McKenna Associates. Mr. Khorey noted that Township Staff and his team had conducted a site visit of the 8th Street corridor in March. Mr. Khorey remarked on the general condition of the 8th Street corridor.

Mr. Khorey then provided some overarching comments residents had noted at the stakeholder meeting held at Russ' Eastown restaurant in April. Residents voiced concerns about redevelopment occurring within their neighborhood north of 8th Street. Additionally, Khorey stated that residents wanted to protect the old Federal District school.

Mr. Khorey discussed the purpose of the overlay zoning district to act as an umbrella over the existing zoning district. He recommended that the proposed overlay district be gentle on non-conformities while requiring new construction to follow the rules of the overlay district. Mr. Broersma noted that the zoning ordinance contains provisions for non-conformities already and that non-conforming properties in the overlay district may simply use the Zoning Board of Appeals to address any expansions of their non-conforming building or use.

Mr. Khorey and the Planning Commission discussed permitted and special uses within the overlay district. Commissioners discussed not requiring a mixed-use component throughout the entirety of the overlay district, however, could require some percentage of the front-facing, first floor of the building be designated for a "non-residential use", which could include community lounge, or other residential amenities. Staff noted that a drive-through use may not be appropriate in the overlay given it promotes vehicle use over walkability; Commissioners agreed that drive-throughs should not be permitted. Staff also raised concerns about uses that have a high influx of visitors, which may not be appropriate in the overlay district; Commissioners noted that uses such as funeral homes should not be permitted by right as the high influx of visitors would be detrimental to the parking issues in the area.

Staff asked Mr. Khorey about the proposed minimum residential density of 6 units per acre. Mr. Khorey noted that the minimum density requirements may provide opportunity for the former Hart & Cooley property if it were to redevelop. He noted that the density may help create a smaller, denser, walkable, and more affordable neighborhood in an area that needs more housing stock.

Mr. Khorey then discussed dimensional requirements in the overlay district. Commissioners discussed the front setback and the possibility to add quasi-street parking along 8th Street. Staff mentioned the varied right-of-way along 8th Street and how that may impact consistent building setbacks along the corridor. Commissioners decided to explore the maximum 20-foot front yard setback.

The majority of Commissioners noted they liked keeping the minimum building height to 2 stories and not detailing how tall two stories would need be (e.g., 25 feet). Commissioners did not like the idea of possibly allowing for 5-6 story tall buildings in the overlay district. Commissioners also noted that a building setback after the third story should be a minimum of 10 feet, not 15 feet and further chose to explore developing a list of architectural amenities (e.g., balconies) each building must have.

Mr. Khorey discussed signage options for the overlay district. Commissioners and Staff noted that the sign ordinance is likely sufficient to cover the needs of the overlay district, however, including language to allow for projecting signs and possibly prohibited ground signs and electronic changeable message boards may be needed.

Commissioners then discussed lighting and landscaping requirements of the overlay district. Commissioners liked the idea of consistent light pole designs. Conversations should be had with Holland Board of Public Works relating to their light pole designs. Street trees and front yard landscaping would be difficult with the proposed front yard setbacks and existing utility lines; however, Commissioners want some greenery to provide visual interest and beautification to the area.

Mr. Khorey reviewed the proposed overlay district map with Commissioners and received feedback on which properties should be included and how far the overlay district should extend along 8th Street.

Other Business:

Planning Commissioners discussed the next meeting for continued discussion on the Federal District overlay. Commissioners agreed that another special meeting will be held to review McKenna's draft ordinance for the overlay district on June 20th, 2023 at 6 pm.

The special meeting adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate White
Assistant Planner & Zoning Administrator