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HOLLAND CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

July 1, 2025

Chairman Randy Kortering called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm and asked for a roll call of members present.

Present: Chairman Randy Kortering, Vice-Chairman/Secretary Jack VanderMeulen, Members, Doug Becker and Gretchen Molotky. Also present were Community Development Director Corey Broersma, Assistant Planner/Zoning Administrator Kate White and Recording Secretary Tricia Kiekintveld.

Absent: Leo Barajas, Angela Huesman, and Evan Sharp.

Public Comment: None.

Minutes:

** It was moved by Becker and supported by Molotky to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of June 3, 2025. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – 4, No – 0, Absent - 3. Motion carried.

Public Hearings

Chairman Kortering opened a public hearing for consideration of a special land use permit for “Outdoor Display and Sales.” The petition is submitted by Lowe’s Home Centers LLC on behalf of Geenen DeKock Properties LLC for property located at 12635 Felch St., Suite 10, described specifically as Parcel Number 70-16-16-100-074. The property is zoned C-2 Community Commercial.

There was no one present to speak to this request. Director Broersma noted that he had received communication from the applicant requesting to table the application.

Chairman Kortering opened up the hearing for public comment. There was no one in the audience present to speak to this request.

Director Broersma noted that an email was submitted by Troy Koops of 12692 Felch Street, stating he is not supportive of the request for additional outdoor storage and his concern is that the business has outgrown their current location which has caused them to already move more and more storage and equipment outdoors which, in his opinion, violates several ordinances. Mr. Koops also feels that due to the condition of Lowe’s it has caused his property value to decrease significantly.

** It was moved by Becker and supported by VanderMeulen to table the request and keep the public hearing open. All in favor. Motion carried by voice vote.

Chairman Kortering opened a public hearing for consideration of a Special Land Use Permit for “Major Vehicle Repair” use. Petition is submitted by James Cobb of Corvus Automotive LLC

on behalf of SDG Assets LLC for land located at 12220 James St., described specifically as Parcel Number 70-16-21-200-003. The subject property is zoned C-2 Community Commercial.

Present for this request was James Cobb of Corvus Automotive LLC, 11951 Seven Pine Dr, Holland, 49424.

Mr. Cobb stated that he is looking to lease space in the building to open a family-owned mechanic shop. As a master certified mechanic, his goal is to run an automotive repair shop that has reasonable prices that the average person can afford.

Mr. Cobb indicated that he does not plan to make any changes to the outside of the building. He noted that previously this part of the building had been used as a mechanic shop so to bring it back to that use he would just need to install lifts in the bays. He said that originally there were 4 bay doors on the west side of the building, but the previous lessee had removed one of the bay doors and also constructed an interior wall separating a single bay from the other two. Mr. Cobb does not plan to reinstall the bay door and he intends to utilize the single for diagnostics, while reserving the remaining two bays for repair work.

Chairman Kortering asked how many parking spaces they have. Mr. Cobb answered that they have 10 spaces available for this business on the property, and they would be required to have 9 spaces per Township requirements. This includes 1 accessible space along the west side of the building and 3 spaces on east side of the building.

Mr. Cobb then addressed landscaping concerns. He noted that the previous owner did remove some trees and landscaping on the property and that their neighbors both to the west and east have also removed landscaping between the buildings that was not on this property. Mr. Cobb has spoken with the current owner regarding adding some shrubs to make the property look better. The owner is good with this as long as he does not block access to the oil separator.

Mr. VanderMeulen said that he drove past the property and noted that the landscaping is quite overgrown and messy looking and would like to see it cleaned up. Mr. Cobb said due to property lines and the fact that he does not own the property, he is very limited as to what he can do. He is able to maintain the section around the front section of the building that he will be utilizing, but he is not able to change anything in the back of the building.

Chairman Kortering asked if this request is for major repairs. Mr. Cobb said that around 80% of the repairs will be minor. However, he doesn't want to be limited to just minor work—he plans to offer a full range of automotive services, including major repairs like engine swaps.

Chairman Kortering asked if they will need any outdoor storage. Mr. Cobb said that part of his lease agreement is that there will not be any overnight parking, therefore he doesn't need any outdoor storage.

Ms. Molotky asked whose responsibility it is to maintain the landscaping. Staff responded that ultimately it is the landowner's responsibility.

Chairman Kortering noted that they will need a monitoring manhole and an oil interceptor. Mr. Cobb said that he will take responsibility for that. Staff also noted that it would be in Mr. Cobb's best interest to talk to an architect and the Township building inspector to verify that the building meets all necessary requirements for a vehicle repair business.

Chairman Kortering opened up the hearing for public comment. There was no one from the public present to speak to this request.

** It was moved by Becker and supported by Molotky to close the public hearing. All in favor. Motion carried by voice vote.

The Commission then reviewed the Special Land Use Standards of Approval

- 1. The use will be harmonious and appropriate with the existing or intended character and land uses in the general vicinity.**

The Commissioners stated that they are changing the use back to automotive service again.

- 2. The use will be served adequately by public services and facilities, including, but not limited to, streets, police and fire protection, drainage structures, refuse disposal, water and sewer facilities, and schools.**

The Commissioners feel the use will be served adequately with existing facilities since it used to be a vehicle repair facility.

- 3. The use will not involve operations, materials and equipment that will be detrimental, hazardous, or disturbing to any persons, property or the general welfare due to traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare, vibration, or odors.**

The Commissioners stated that the owner will utilize an oil separator and obtain necessary permitting. They also do not feel there will be heavy traffic with this use.

- 4. The use will be consistent with the intent and purposes of this ordinance and the Holland Charter Township Comprehensive Plan.**

The Commissioners feel the use is consistent in the C-2 district and the intent and purpose of the ordinance.

- 5. The use will ensure that the environment shall be preserved in its natural state, insofar as practicable, by minimizing tree and soil removal and topographic modifications, which result in maximum harmony with adjacent areas.**

The Commissioners noted they are using a building that is already existing and the site is already developed. The bringing a portion of the site closer to compliance with current landscaping requirements would be consistent with previously Special Land Use permit approval conditions to bring nonconforming sites closer to compliance.

- 6. The use will not result in traffic congestion, have an adverse impact on roads, nor cause hazards.**

The Commissioners noted no concerns with traffic congestion given the proposed nature of the use.

- 7. There is need for the proposed use within the township and the use will not be detrimental to the community.**

The Commissioners agree that there is a need.

The Commissioners discussed adding landscaping to the front yard. Staff stated that code would require 1 tree and 3 shrubs for each 40 feet of frontage. The Commissioners agreed that they would like to see some sort of landscaping in the front yard but are concerned that any new landscaping does not interfere with sightlines for vehicles trying to turn onto James Street.

** It was moved by Becker and supported by Molotky to approve the Special Land Use Permit for "Vehicle repair, major" use with the condition that they will work with Staff to bring the front yard landscaping up to code and will not have any outdoor storage. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – 4, No – 0, Absent - 3. Motion carried.

Chairman Kortering opened a public hearing for consideration of a Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment to amend Section 9.14 – Keeping of Farm Animals, Chickens, and Bees to permit chickens on non-farm properties in the AG, R-1 and R-2 Zoning Districts under certain conditions. Petition is submitted by Marissa Latchaw and Nicholas Omron.

Present for this request was Marissa Latchaw and Nicholas Omron, owners of 12860 N. Bellwood St., Holland, MI 49424.

Ms. Latchaw stated they are here to present an amendment to allow chickens in Holland Charter Township. She noted that this will be the third time this issue has come before the Commission.

Mr. Omron stated that no changes have been made to the sections on keeping farm animals or bees, except that chickens now have their own separate section. The only amendments being made are specifically related to the keeping of chickens. He noted that they have added some verbiage from the City of Holland's chicken ordinance.

Ms. Latchaw said that if the Commission does not like the verbiage "non-farms" they would be very willing to change that phrase to "single-family dwellings".

Mr. Omron noted that the language they are proposing indicates that all chicken coops will need to follow accessory building guidelines.

Ms. Latchaw said that there currently are no permits required for the keeping of bees so they are proposing the same language for the keeping of chickens. They are trying to minimize the impact this change would have on the Township and eliminating the need for a permit cuts down on the amount of work that the Township needs to do. The change in code enforcement would change from the enforcement of not allowing chickens to enforcing the guidelines of the chicken coops and other stipulations in the amendment.

Mr. Omron noted that the most common illness in the handling of chickens is salmonella; he pointed out that this can greatly be reduced by the proper handling of the chickens, including washing hands after handling chickens or eggs, watching children around chickens, and not kissing or snuggling the chickens.

Ms. Latchaw said that a lot of people are excited about the possibility of the Township allowing chickens, whereas there are others that will not want chickens living next door to them. This can also be the case with dogs. In comparison dogs are louder than chickens (dogs 80-90 dB vs. chickens 60-70 dB), there is a much greater chance of harm to others with a dog versus chickens.

Ms. Latchaw asked that if the Commission chooses not to approve the amendment as presented that they table the request to allow them the opportunity to reword the amendment.

Chairman Kortering asked if the City of Holland has requirements for the coops. Mr. Omron said there is a minimum sq. ft. requirement per chicken. Ms. Latchaw said that there are also setbacks for how close to the property line the coops and fences can be.

Ms. Molotky indicated that having a permitting and licensing structure in place can help the Township regulate the chickens and also help with any complaints that come into the Township. Ms. Latchaw stated that they would happily add permit language to the amendment.

Mr. Becker stated that he would like to make sure that these coops look nice and are not just scraps of wood nailed together. Mr. VanderMeulen agreed with Mr. Becker. Ms. Molotky indicated that building elaborate chicken coops is a big thing amongst chicken owners.

Staff noted that this issue was discussed a few years ago when the school came before the Commission asking to allow chickens and goats on school land. This new wording takes away the right of schools to have farm animals on their property and we do not want to eliminate what was done just a few years ago. Chairman Kortering agreed with Staff that the Commission wants the schools to be able to have the chickens and farm animals. Ms. Latchaw said their intent was not to take that right away from schools. They are willing to go back and make sure that the correct verbiage is in the amendment.

Ms. Molotky stated that she is uncomfortable with what the coops will look like. She is also uncomfortable with adding more jobs to staff.

Chairman Kortering opened up the hearing for public comment.

Tyler Stewart, 346 James St. – He said he lives close to Rose Park Christian Elementary School and loves seeing the animals. Mr. Stewart said that he also had chickens but was in violation and had to get rid of his chickens. He presented a petition that was signed by a “few hundred” people that are in favor of the Township allowing chickens in residential areas. Mr. Stewart is recommending that the Township require larger coops for the chickens as what is typically recommended is actually too small. He noted that chickens also eat left-over food so there is no waste.

Margo Walters, 14174 Fox Trail Dr. – Ms. Walters said that she previously ran for a Board of Trustees position in the Township. She stated that she would like to see chickens allowed in the Township, she said they are helpful as they eat bugs, they help reduce food waste and they provide eggs.

Meghan Johnson, 10548 Northfield Dr Zeeland – Ms. Johnson is very interested in the educational value of families having chickens and being able to teach their children first hand where our food comes from.

****** It was moved by VanderMeulen and supported by Molotky to table the request allowing the applicant time to revise their request, per their request to table the matter. The Commission will keep the public hearing open. A voice vote was taken. All in favor. Motion carried.

Other Business

0 (vac) Perry St – Final Development Plan, Eagle Meadows – Parcel Number 70-16-24-300-038 – Submitted by Tom Witteveen on behalf of Bauvan Co. LLC for final development plan approval of the Eagle Meadows Planned Unit Development consisting of a 32-unit residential condominium development.

Present for this request was Tom Witteveen on behalf of Bauvan Co. LLC.

** It was moved by Molotky and supported by Becker to approve the Resolution and Report recommending approval of the Eagle Meadows Condominium Planned Unit Development Final Development Plan and directing Staff to distribute the document to the Board of Trustees. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – 4, No – 0, Absent – 3. Motion carried.

Planning Commission Discussion

2025 McKenna Housing Analysis

Chairman Kortering reported to the Commissioners that the Ottawa County Housing Needs Assessment has been published. He summarized the over 200-page document for the Commissioners, highlighting that the age group 65 years and older is growing at a much larger rate than any other age group and that needs to be taken into consideration when approving new housing.

He noted that McKenna will look at this analysis and verify that it is in line with their report before they come back before the Commission at the next meeting. Staff noted that, due to the rescheduling of the next meeting, McKenna requested that the meeting time be moved to 5:30 p.m. to accommodate a prior commitment.

Meeting Date and Time Change

The Commissioners approved moving the August 5 meeting to August 12 at 5:30 pm, due to a Special Election on August 5, 2025.

Prospective Text Amendment

Staff noted that there have been some discussions with applicants that may require the Township to have an ordinance regarding wetland mitigation banks. Staff explained what these are and why something like this could be utilized within the Township. Staff would like to have something in place before a need arises and provided the Planning Commission with a draft text amendment for input at a future meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tricia Kiekintveld
Clerk's Assistant