

SOUTH HAVEN CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

Approved with correction April 2, 2025

1) Call to Order: 7:00 PM

2) Role Call:

Tippman - present
Kiry – present
Odland - present
Meyer – present
Poole – absent
Dibble – present
Nicol – present

Audience:

Zoning Administrator: Tasha Smalley

Applicants

Motion by Nicol to excuse Poole, second by Tippman, 6-0 yes, motion passed.

3) Approval of the Agenda

Motion by Tippman to amend the agenda, remove the public hearing, second by Nicol, 6-0 yes, motion passed.

4) Approval of the Minutes

Motion by Kiry to approve the minutes as presented February 5, 2025, second by Nicol, 6-0, yes motion passed.

5) Public Comment non-agenda items - none

6) Communications / Correspondence - none

7) Public Hearing – Removed from agenda, applicant withdrew application

Samaritas Affordable Living Sunset Grove, Senior Service of Van Buren County have petitioned for a special use to construct a 43-unit apartment at 08729 M-140 Hwy 80-17-015-005-01/80-53-272-002-00.

8) New Business –

- a. Green Door, 09287 Blue Star would like to review and discuss 15.34#10h, no drive-thru window; they would like to have a drive-thru or a walk up window (this would be a text amendment)

Mark Smith, Green Door went over proposal for a drive-thru or walk up window. This is safety need. The online orders have increased. There is an increase of “walk out to get money, then employee walk out with product”. Much safer to drive-thru. The suggested window is approved by the State. Heavy duty window, no need for touching while exchanging money and product. The store in Watervliet has a drive-thru window. Their ordinance has provision for drive-thru window. He will provide for reference. PC consensus to move forward to draft proposed language.

- b. Site Plan Review 22.02#E, excavating over one acre; Mike Geerlings/72nd Ave Farm LLC, 17711 76th St, 80-17-027-014-00&060-00; construct an EGLE approved wetland mitigation, minor grading, installing wetland seed mix and planting trees.

Smalley briefly went over the project: 22.02E, grading, filling and excavating over 1 acre requires site plan approval. The property is approx. 65 acres. Project is to create approx. 38 acres into self-sustaining forested wetlands. Planting over 15,000 trees and seed with native seed mix to promote native plant community. The is an EGLE approved project.

Tyler Smith and Nicole Stewart, Niswander Environmental presented the application. Proposed mitigation bank involves restoration of approx. 38 acres of wetlands to be constructed be per rules of EGLE, the bank has been looking for additional banking opportunities.

Wetland mitigation banking is the process, in advance of any authorized (i.e. permitted) impacts, of making “credits” available based on the acreage of functional wetland that was restored or created. The “credits” can then be sold to entities such as businesses or landowners to meet wetland mitigation requirements determined by the EGLE or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Wetland mitigation in Michigan is administered by EGLE under the Wetland Mitigation Banking Rules established under the authority of Part 303, Wetland Protection, NREPA. Wetland Mitigation Banking supports economic development within the Township and surrounding areas.

There is a need to preserve wetlands, many wetlands are being lost to several factors.

This property is provides good soils and topography, mostly flat, wetland soils. Create an area to hold water so it does not run off to create a wetland.

Odland asked: why is this project good for South Haven Township. Tyler replied: help with road projects, future developments.

Tippman asked about conservation easement and the property taken off the tax rolls. Tyler replied: the property will be out into a conservation easement to not be developed in perpetuity.

Tippman concerns with this being more land taken away for possible future housing. South Haven Township needs housing.

Went through the Site Plan Review Standards 22.06D

1. Surface Water Drainage; approved EGLE project, water will be kept on site to create the wetland.
2. Drives, Parking and Circulation: using existing internal drives, not new drives will be created.
3. Roads, Utility Service and Infrastructure: property abuts main road, no new roads, no utilities or infrastructure.
4. Signs and Lighting: no signs or lighting
5. Screening and Buffering: the property will be trees and flowers

Motion by Kiry to approve the site plan for wetland mitigation as approved by EGLE with conditions: must obtain all required federal, state, county, local permits and submit copies of the permit approvals

to the zoning administrator for the file, second by Dibble. No discussion. ~~Roll Call vote: Dibble Yes; Tippman No; Odland Yes; Nicol No; Kiry Yes; Meyer Yes.~~ 4-2 vote yes, motion passed.

9) Unfinished Business –

a. none

10) Staff & Subcommittee report

ZBA report- Tippman – nothing to report

Board report – Poole – absent, board minutes available

Zoning report – Smalley – nothing to report

11) Commissioner Comments and Public Comment

12) Adjournment

at 8:10pm

Respectfully Submitted by:

Tasha Smalley

Zoning Administrator/Recording Secretary