



City Manager
Elaine Leven
City Clerk
August Gitschlag

City of Fraser

CENTENNIAL COMMUNITY

MAYOR
Michael Lesich
MAYOR PRO-TEM
Dana Sutherland
COUNCIL
Amy Baranski
Patrick O'Dell
Kenny Perry
Patrice Schornak
Sherry Stein

**CITY OF FRASER
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 5, 2024 @ 7:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 33000 GARFIELD, FRASER, MI 48026
AS APPROVED**

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the City of Fraser Zoning Board of Appeals was held on Thursday, September 5, 2024 at 7:00 pm in City Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Farina at 7:00 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Farina led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Burley, Chimenti, Farina, Green, Menendez, Stasek
ABSENT: None

OTHERS: City Attorney Alyssa Ericson, City Planner Lauren Sayre, Deputy Clerk Greenia

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – September 5, 2024

Motion by Menendez supported by Burley to approve the agenda as submitted.

AYES: Burley, Chimenti, Farina, Green, Menendez, Stasek
NAYS: None

Motion Carried

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES –August 15, 2024

Motion by Menendez supported by Green to approve the minutes as submitted.

AYES: Burley, Chimenti, Farina, Green, Menendez, Stasek
NAYS: None

Motion Carried

VI. FORMAL STATEMENT BY CHAIR

Chairman Farina gave a formal statement relative to the powers of the Zoning Board of Appeals and the facts and conditions for granting appeals.

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 5, 2024 @ 7:00 P.M.**

VII. NEW BUSINESS OF THE BOARD

A. Public Hearings

There were no public hearings at this time.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS (POSTPONED CASE)

a. ZBA #24-04: Variance Request – Meijer/ Location 34835 Utica Road

To obtain a variance from zoning ordinance standards to reduce the number of required off-street parking for a commercial business from 1,079 parking spaces to 999 parking spaces, with the current requirement being 1,608 parking spaces.

City Planner Lauren Sayre reviewed the request for the variance. She indicated that this was a request for a reduction for parking at the site. This site had a history of approved reductions and these examples were included in the written review by the City Planner. The request was to reduce the parking from its current 1,079 spaces to 999, which is a reduction of 80 parking spaces. She then stated that if this variance were granted tonight, the applicant would need to amend the current sight plan for approval by the Planning Commission.

This property was the largest CG (Commercial General) zoned property in the City. The applicant felt that they already had far more parking than was necessary for their use. In reviewing this against the standards for variance approval, she indicated that while the applicant did not provide any evidence that the variance was requested for this reason it would financially benefit them. Approval of this, however, would be something that had been done with other variance requests in the CG District by other businesses. They did not find any evidence that a reduction in required parking spaces would negatively affect adjacent properties. She stated that if the variance were approved, it would not be so general or recurrent in nature as to create a general rule for such conditions or situation – she reminded that this was such a large property that there would not be others this size, thus it would not be general or recurrent. Planning Commission did not sponsor the proposal. Ultimately, they recommended granting this variance based on the facts above.

Discussion was had on what other communities required for parking for a business like a Meijer store. Attorney Ericson indicated that there are some communities that are starting to shy away from a required minimum number of parking spaces. It was very different everywhere.

Farina asked if the ZBA could get some data regarding how other communities handle the parking requirements.

At this time Chairman Farina asked the applicant to address the variance request. Joe Paluzzi, MHB Companies and Reid Cooksey with Stonefield Engineering and Design were present on behalf of the applicant.

Discussion was had on the “grey” area on the plan. Mr. Paluzzi indicated this would be employee parking as well as parking for the Garden Center. Mr. Paluzzi gave the history of

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 5, 2024 @ 7:00 P.M.**

their involvement with the site. They planned to put a Mr. Carwash there. He further explained that if the variance is granted tonight they would be coming before the Planning Commission for a Special Land Use and Site Plan approval. Discussion was had on the amount of parking that would be required now to build a Meijer store of the same size. Mr. Paluzzi

Indicated that 500 parking spaces would be required.

He then indicated that top priority for Meijer was customer experience. They would never put that in jeopardy or sacrifice anything that might alter the experience. Mr. Paluzzi stated they had a traffic study completed. The results would be included with the Planning Commission submission. Ms. Ericson assured that since they held the Public Hearing on this already they did not have to do so again.

Board Member Menendez asked about the reserved/banked parking and if that would affect the request on the agenda tonight. Ms. Ericson stated "No", but at some point her office may need to look at the original documents.

Board Member Stasek asked if they owned the property at this time. Mr. Paluzzi stated they did not.

Motion by Chimenti supported by Menendez to approve ZBA #24-04 variance request for Meijer located at 34835 Utica Road., to obtain a variance from Zoning Ordinance Standards to reduce the number of required off-street parking spaces for a commercial business from 1079 parking spaces to 999 parking spaces with the current requirement being 1608 parking spaces based on the following reasons:

1. The property is much larger than surrounding properties and based on the fact that historical observation on this site indicates that there is more than sufficient parking for the use of the Meijer and a reduction of 80 spaces for this out-lot, will not be a detriment to the use and development of this piece or the adjacent property in the vicinity;
2. The Applicants have met the standards for obtaining a variance;
3. The current approved site plan will have to be amended.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Chimenti, Menendez, Burley, Farina, Green, Stasek

NAYS: None

Motion Carried

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF THE BOARD

None

X. MONTHLY REPORT

a. August Monthly Report

Ms. Sayre gave her monthly report including action items on the following matters:
Hockeyland Outlot, Strip Mall at 32660 Utica Road, Sheetz, Foundation Solutions 360, Sunbelt Rentals, Divergent Strip Mall at 16000 15 Mile Road, and Meijer.

b. Action Items Update

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 5, 2024 @ 7:00 P.M.**

XI. PLANNING COMMISSION LIAISON REPORT

Chair Farina updated the Board regarding the current start of review of Our Zoning Ordinance. There would be a survey going out soon before work is started in earnest on this project. They would meet next time in December, hoping to work on it through 2025 and adopt it late in 2025.

XII. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

Board Member Chimenti stated there was a fish fry Friday night at John F. Kennedy K of C. Chair Farina added this was a great meal and a really good price.

Board Members Stasek, Menendez, Burley, and Green had nothing.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Menendez **supported** by Chimenti to adjourn at 7:34 p.m.

All Ayes

Motion Carried

Respectfully Submitted:

Cindi Greenia, Deputy Clerk
City of Fraser