

# **Columbia Charter Township Planning Commission**

## **Columbia Charter Township Hall**

8500 Jefferson Road, Brooklyn, MI 49230

**August 7, 2025, at 7:00 PM**

### **Minutes**

**Call to Order** – Chairperson Wanty called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and the pledge of allegiance was recited.

**Roll Call** – Chairperson Wanty, called the roll: Present: Chairperson Todd Wanty, Vice Chair Bob Jenson, Britt Phenicie, Hollis Jefferys, Rick DeLand, Mike McKay  
Absent: Krissie Barnes

Recognized Guests: Brittany Stein, Blair Huff

**Approval of Agenda** – Motion by B. Jenson and support by M. McKay to approve the agenda. Ayes all. Motion Carried.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes** – Motion by M. McKay and support by R. DeLand to approve the minutes from June 12, 2025, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. Ayes all. Motion Carried.

**Public Comments** – Opened at 7:03pm Closed at 7:04pm - No Public Comments were presented.

**Old Business** – None.

**New Business** –

**a. Public Hearing:**

**Special Land Use Permit and Site Plan Review:**

**Applicant/Owner:** BBH Enterprises II LLC

**Location:** 8875 S. Meridian Rd. Clarklake, MI 49234

**Parcel ID:** 000-19-07-351-002-00

**Request:** Special Land Use Permit and Site Plan Review applications for the establishment of recreational vehicle storage, watercraft and watercraft trailer storage, sale and rental of new and used cars, boats, and other similar motor vehicles.

Mr. Blair Huff (applicant) spoke and summarized the request. Primarily for boat sales and boat storage.

Brittany Stein, Planning & Zoning Manager of Columbia Charter Township, presented her report to the commissioners.

There are a few uses proposed for the 7-acre parcel as part of this application, including recreational vehicle storage, sale and rental of new or used cars, boats, mobile homes, farm machinery, and other vehicles and items intended for tow, and watercraft storage and sales. Each use proposed is classified as a Special Land Use in the I-1 Zoning District according to the Columbia Charter Township Zoning Ordinance. Further, this means that the use can be allowed within the I-1 Light Industrial Zoning District upon approval of a Site Plan Review by the Township Board with recommendation by the Township Planning Commission. Although this proposed use does not entail construction of new buildings nor are there proposed changes to the building footprint, the applicants proposed minimal updates will fit the character of the community and fulfill the commercial/industrial needs of the community, in particular storage of boats, watercraft, watercraft trailers, and recreational vehicles, as well as offering sales of new or used boats, watercraft, recreational vehicles, and other motor vehicles or machinery. No motor vehicle repair or maintenance is proposed from the site. There are little to no impacts to the natural environment. No new buildings or building expansions are proposed at this time. Storage of boats and other vehicles for the use is intended to be in the grassy cleared area to the south and rear of the building on site.

The existing development and future use of the property shall not negatively disrupt average traffic on Meridian Road (US 127) and the surrounding area. There are no changes proposed to lighting, landscaping, or off-street parking, however further in this report are recommendations to improve security while seeking compliance to the standards required by the Township Zoning Ordinance.

The applicant is proposing to remove some of the existing vegetation from the site. The proposed site plan for the renovation of the building on the property is most ideal at this time. The use shall not be impactful to the environment and natural features.

Maximum allowable lot coverage for an I-1 zoned parcel is 50%. The existing lot coverage is 3%. With the change in use, there is no increase in lot coverage proposed. The project proposed for the property shall not adversely affect adjacent properties, nor negatively impact other drainage in the area. No change in the existing landscape is proposed, no change in grade, no paved or gravel areas are proposed. The storage area on-site is intended to be kept grassy and natural with basic seasonal mowing as necessary. Included in the packet (and copied below) is communication from Geoff Snyder the Jackson County Drain Commissioner, which include comments and suggestions for the site to manage stormwater properly due to existing County Drainage systems nearby.

From Geoff Snyder's office (County Drain Commissioner):

- The Sanford County Drain exists along the south line of the property with a 100' wide easement (50' both sides as measured from the drain's centerline). If there is tree clearing to be done within 50' of the drain, extra care should be taken to keep the open ditch unobstructed...no trees or limbs in the drain. The side-slope of the ditch bank and 20' of the "top-of- bank" of the drain should be left undisturbed (allowing the existing ground cover to prevent erosion of the banks and siltation of the drain), unless other specific measures are specified within the site plans and approved by this Office.

- The Meridian County Drain (12” diameter clay tile) exists in the northwest corner of the property (south of the north property line, in the area of the 978-contour interval...north of the entrance drive), running north parallel to the east line of Meridian Road to the Grand River. While tree cutting in this area is acceptable, the trees should not be pushed as the “root ball” could easily disrupt the storm sewer.

Access to the property is directly from S. Meridian Road (US 127), which is a State maintained highway (MDOT). There is minimal impact this proposed use will have on traffic. There is no expansion of parking proposed and no additional drives or curb cuts proposed from the existing public road. There is minimal impact this proposed use will have on traffic. – Although no review or comments from MDOT was provided to the Township.

The change in use may not require changes in utilities. There are no new utility connections proposed at this time.

There are no new buildings proposed at this time. There is minimal site work proposed. Renovations have begun on the existing structure on the property. The project does not have phases.

No proposed sign at this time. A Zoning Permit is required for all signs. No signs were included as part of this site plan review application. Signs are reviewed administratively.

Brittany suggested the following conditions of approval:

*Site Plan revisions should be completed prior to Township Board review. Revisions to the site plan as requested by the Planning Commission shall include the following:*

- ❖ Include both of the County Drainage Easements on the site plan.
- ❖ If a dumpster will be on the property, please indicate that location on the site plan. If there is a dumpster on-site, it shall be adequately screened from surrounding residential uses to the greatest extent possible. The dumpster should have a 6-foot tall privacy fence around it, on at least 3 sides. Placed in a secure and lit area on-site.
- ❖ Revise/update driveway – new driveway and parking lot area that will be paved entirely within property boundaries, not within public right of way or easement.
- ❖ Show that the driveways and parking areas will all be paved surfaces to be compliant to the Zoning Ordinance Section 10.3 (C).
- ❖ Show that all driveways are at least 25 feet wide. The existing driveway and parking lot shall be paved and meet the standards from the Zoning Ordinance Article 10.
- ❖ Parking lot shall have at least 1 ADA accessible space that meets those standards.
- ❖ Parking lot shall have at least 12 spaces in total.
- ❖ Each parking space must be 10’ x 20’. Zoning Ordinance Section 10.3.

- ❖ Show fence location on site plan. Be sure that it is not within the drainage easements.
- ❖ Show style of fencing proposed, including height (6 feet tall), gate locations, and any pavement or other ground surfaces within.
- ❖ Include a picture of the new lighting that is proposed to be installed.
- Communication from MDOT would be appreciated to understand their concerns if any.
- Permits are required for any new signs, which shall be compliant to the Zoning Ordinance Article 9.
- The front yard buffer area shall be well maintained. The landscaping/trees which are outside of the property boundary shall not be counted towards the required buffer area, because these public right of ways are maintained by MDOT generally. The front yard buffer shall have at least 10 trees within 10 feet of the front property line / right of way.
- All on site lighting on the building and in the parking lot area or on other areas of the property, shall be fully shielded and directed downward. Existing lighting may need to be replaced if light is not fully shielded and faced downward.

Discussion was had among Planning Commissioners. M. McKay stated that all commercial and industrial uses shall have paved parking and driveway surfaces for the site.

*Motion: Commissioner M. McKay Motioned to recommend approval of the Site Plan and Special Land Use with the suggested conditions of approval as noted in the Staff Report (copied above). Support was supplied by T. Wanty;*

*Roll Call Vote: B. Jenson: Yes; M. McKay: Yes; T. Wanty: Yes; R. DeLand: Yes; B. Phenicie: Yes; H. Jeffreys: Yes. Motion carried.*

**Public Comments** – Opened at 7:53pm Closed at 7:54pm - No Public Comments were presented.

**Member Comments** – None.

**Announcements by the Chairperson or Zoning Administrator** – Next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 11, 2025, at 7:00pm.

**Adjournment** – Motion by T. Wanty to adjourn the meeting, supported by R. DeLand.

All in favor, Motion Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55pm.