

## **EXCERPT FROM THE GRAND TRAVERSE COMMONS DISTRICT PLAN**

The District Plan for the Grand Traverse Commons Planned Redevelopment District was submitted to and approved by the Planning Commissions of the City of Traverse City and Garfield Township to develop a vision for the comprehensive rehabilitation, renovation and redevelopment of the Traverse City State Hospital and its grounds.

The purpose of the District Plan for the Grand Traverse Commons Planned Redevelopment District is to guide redevelopment activities by ensuring that the significant historic characteristics of the site are preserved, and that interim and long-term uses are developed in a coordinated and integrated manner to accomplish the objectives of the Michigan Urban Redevelopment Corporations Act, 1941 PA 250, M.C.L.A. § 125.901 et seq. as amended (Public Act 250). Redevelopment is anticipated to include the following components:

- Conservation and enhancement of the open space and natural systems and rehabilitation of the historic landscape;
- Development of a medical campus at the northern edge of the property to accommodate a skilled nursing care facility, hospital uses, support uses, support parking facilities for institutional uses, medical office, and medically related residential uses for the historic north cottages;
- Rehabilitation and conversion of the main historic State Hospital building (Building 50) into a continuing care retirement community with expanded independent living and an activity and service center located directly west of Building 50 in the area of the existing support buildings;
- Rehabilitation and conversion of the historic south cottages into independent and assisted living residences with support and other ancillary services;

- Continued use and promotion of community services and activities in All Faiths Chapel, Helen's House, and the State Office Building, as well as site management and marketing uses;
- Continuation of the Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District educational, recreational, and conference uses; and
- Rehabilitation and conversion of the historic Farm structures for recreation and/or community uses; and development of expanded recreation and community uses adjacent to the Farm area.

All of the development concepts and plans outlined in the District Plan reflect the redevelopment guidelines established in the 1990 *Adaptive Reuse Feasibility Plan for the Traverse City State Hospital* and Public Act 250 Development Plan Amendment DP-93-1, which constitute the seminal and base controls for the site. The following key aspects regulate development.

- *Acceptable Land Use.* The proposed interim and future medical, residential, community, recreation, and open space uses fall within the guidelines of the Adaptive Reuse Plan and DP-93-1.
- *Development Area and Density.* Allowable density permitted on the site will be limited by existing impervious surface. Development zones will be established so that a system of transferable development rights will allow a balance between areas of high density, such as the Medical Campus, and limited or no density in the open space and conservation areas.
- *Historic Preservation and Rehabilitation.* The State Hospital, its cottages, the Farm and other contributing structures, as well as the landscape, must conform to all historic preservation guidelines.

- *Landscape Preservation and Rehabilitation.* Existing natural features and open spaces will be preserved, rehabilitated and enhanced through a landscape preservation and rehabilitation effort which promotes contiguity of natural and open space areas and minimizes disruption and conflict with vehicular traffic. The Grand Traverse Commons Planned Redevelopment District will be open for community passive recreational uses while offering site residents the therapeutic benefits of its natural and open areas.

The successful redevelopment of the Grand Traverse Commons Planned Redevelopment District will occur over a twenty-year period and will be dependent on solving key technical issues that affect both this site and the surrounding neighborhoods. These issues are addressed in this District Plan and will be specifically addressed in each Subarea Development Plan which will be reviewed by the City of Traverse City and Garfield Township.

Traffic is addressed through a concept of multiple access points terminating into a “loop” system servicing each principle activity within the subareas of the site. Each loop will be separated so as to prevent circulation of cross-through traffic through the site while maintaining a system for emergency and service vehicles. The community concerns regarding the Munson Medical Center existing shift traffic are addressed through the implementation of a west access from Long Lake Road to designated parking lots and decks for the Munson Medical Center staff.

Parking in the Grand Traverse Commons Planned Redevelopment District will be restricted to the specific subareas being served and shall be accessible only from the designated traffic loops. Where the parking requirements exceed the available site area in any particular subarea, parking decks will be constructed.

Stormwater management will be based upon the Grand Traverse County stormwater management ordinance provisions as well as the applicable recommendations from the Kids Creek Watershed Management Plan developed for Garfield Township and the City of Traverse City for new development while also improving existing systems where appropriate. The principal aspects of this stormwater management plan include the use of infiltration and

sedimentation controls, the construction of sedimentation and detention basins and the integration of landscape design into stormwater control facilities to encourage vegetative, wildlife, and aesthetic diversity.

A landscape conservation plan that establishes guidelines to conserve and enhance the major landscape systems of wetlands, meadows, arboretums and forested bluffs as well as the many watercourses, springs, and streams which connect the landscape system shall also be implemented.

## **Background**

The Grand Traverse Commons redevelopment project was initiated by a community effort to preserve portions of the 109-year-old State of Michigan regional psychiatric hospital once known as the Traverse City State Hospital. Located on the western edge of Traverse City, the site is now referred to as the Grand Traverse Commons, and constitutes a campus of hills, wetlands, meadows and historic structures of nearly 500 acres.

Attempts by the State of Michigan to demolish the structures on the Grand Traverse Commons resulted in a successful community effort to preserve the property. Further community action results in the designation of a portion of the property as a Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places, and the adoption of a plan for the adaptive reuse of the Traverse City State Hospital property. Ultimately, the popular grass roots effort to save the Commons caused the formation of a redevelopment corporation under Michigan's Urban Redevelopment Corporation Act (Public Act 20) to acquire the property and oversee its disposition and redevelopment.

On March 14, 1990, the City of Traverse City and Garfield Township adopted the *Adaptive Reuse Feasibility Plan for the Traverse City State Hospital* (the Adaptive Reuse Plan) recommending the acquisition, preservation, restoration, and redevelopment of the Grand Traverse Commons property. To implement the Adaptive Reuse Plan recommendations, the

Grand Traverse Commons Redevelopment Corporation (GTCRC) was created pursuant to Public Act 141.

After adoption of the Adaptive Reuse Plan and the initiation of the Grand Traverse Commons Redevelopment Corporation, the Traverse City State Hospital property was renamed the Grand Traverse Commons signifying the rebirth of the property and the establishment of its identity in response to the Adaptive Reuse Plan recommendations.

In June 1991, the Grand Traverse Commons Redevelopment Corporation was incorporated by the City of Traverse City and Garfield Township, pursuant to the authority granted in Section 6 of Public Act 250, for the purpose of formulating, obtaining approval of, and putting into effect a development plan for the Commons; the acquisition of the Commons; and the construction, maintenance and operation of a development pursuant to Public Act 250.

On January 6, 1993, the GTCRC and the State of Michigan, Department of Management and Budget reached agreement for disposition of the entire former Traverse City State Hospital facility and grounds.

On May 17, 1993, acting Governor Connie Binsfield signed enabling legislation authorizing the transfer of the former Traverse City State Hospital property to the GTCRC as well as to the City of Traverse City and Garfield Township.

In connection with its impending acquisition of the Commons and its responsibility to oversee redevelopment activities for the site as a whole, the GTCRC submitted Public Act 250 Development Plan Amendment DP-93-1 (DP-93-1) to address the comprehensive development of the site in its entirety. This District Plan results from the development control process instituted in DP-93-1.

In December 1993, the State of Michigan commenced transferring a significant portion of the Grand Traverse Commons property to the GTCRC, the City of Traverse City and Garfield

Township. It is anticipated that the remaining parcels of land which comprise the Grand Traverse Commons will be conveyed to the GTCRC by the summer of 1994.

### **Redevelopment Framework**

The redevelopment of the Grand Traverse Commons Planned Redevelopment District is governed by the Adaptive Reuse Plan and Public Act 250. The Adaptive Reuse Plan was incorporated into the comprehensive plans of Traverse City and Garfield Township. Consequently, the Adaptive Reuse Plan is the conceptual land use guide and policy document for the Grand Traverse Commons Planned Redevelopment District. It establishes the development goals for the site. Public Act 250 governs all development in the Grand Travers Commons Planned Redevelopment District and serves as the statutory framework through which the land use policies of the Adaptive Reuse Plan will be implemented.

Under Public Act 250, the GTCRC is responsible for the comprehensive redevelopment of the Commons. Public Act 250 requires that a development plan or amendment to an existing development plan be filed with, and approved by, the planning commissions of Traverse City and Garfield Township prior to the commencement of any development activities on the Commons. In this regard the GTCRC, in 1992, submitted to the planning commissions an initial development plan and two development plan amendments for portions of the Commons.

The Initial Development Plan (DP-92-1) addressed the redevelopment of All Faiths Chapel and Building 80 for community non-profit uses. Development Plan Amendment (DP-92-2) addressed Munson Medical Center's need for access and use of the site for service and assumption of responsibility for the redevelopment of Cottages 27 and 29. Development Plan Amendment (DP-92-3) addressed the relocation of Grand Traverse Medical Care Facility to the Commons. In each case, the Initial Development Plan and Amendments were submitted to address specific issues on the Commons. In connection with its acquisition of the Commons, the GTCRC submitted Development Plan Amendment (DP-93-1) to the joint planning commissions to address the comprehensive development of the site as a whole. On July 14, 1994, DP-93-1 was approved by the joint planning commissions of Traverse City and Garfield Township.

DP-93-1 incorporates the goals and policies of the Adaptive Reuse Plan and establishes the comprehensive development framework for the Grand Traverse Commons Planned Redevelopment District. It calls for the rehabilitation of all historically significant structures and landscape elements on the site; the conservation of open, wooded, hill and wetland areas; the development of a medical campus on the northern portion of the site and the development of a continuing care retirement community in and around the main building (Building 50).

Given the complexity, visibility, and scale of the proposed redevelopment project and the property's location within two municipal jurisdictions, DP-93-1 also initiated an enforceable development control process to be based in zoning via the planned development process to ensure that all development and conservation of the Grand Traverse Commons Planned Redevelopment District will be undertaken in a comprehensive manner consistent with the Adaptive Reuse Plan and DP-93-1. This District Plan is the realization of that development process. The process which is being implemented as a planned development includes the following steps:

- Approval of a planned development application incorporating this District Plan which will result in the rezoning of the Grand Traverse Commons property as a Planned Redevelopment District;
- Approval of Subarea Development Plans for each subarea of the Grand Traverse Commons Planned Redevelopment District that are consistent with the District Plan and an Act 250 Development Plan, as amended, applicable to each subarea, and
- Approval of Site Plans consistent with the District Plan and the applicable Subarea Development Plan.

## **Planned Redevelopment District (PRD) Application / District Plan**

Zoning for the Commons site will be accomplished through the planned development process as indicated in DP-93-1 resulting in a designation as a Planned Redevelopment District. The District Plan, which constitutes the Planned Redevelopment District application, is based on the Adaptive Reuse Plan and DP-93-1. Once adopted, all planning within the Grand Travers Commons Planned Redevelopment District must conform to the District Plan.

The planned development process is being pursued for the Grand Traverse commons because it allows flexibility in accomplishing the objectives of Public Act 250 by creating a land development process which is based on the application of site planning criteria designed to achieve integration of the proposed redevelopment with the characteristics of the Grand Traverse Commons property. It provides flexibility for locating parking, circulation, infrastructure, and other needs of all site users within the planned development, and assures that the redevelopment process will occur in an integrated phased manner.

Additionally, the planned development process will make possible the transference of development rights within the Planned Redevelopment District, and outside the Planned Redevelopment District under certain conditions. The transfer of development rights will induce private investment within the Grand Travers Commons Planned Redevelopment District and stimulate redevelopment by allowing for the creation of denser, and hence, more compact and economical District Plan and the applicable Subarea Development Plans within a 60-day period of time commencing upon their receipt by the Master Developer. Within this period of time, the Master Developer will issue a letter to the preparer of the applicable Site Plan indicating its conformance or non-conformance to the District Plan and applicable Subarea Development Plan.

Once submitted to the City of Traverse City and Garfield Township, Site Plans will require only administrative approval by the appropriate department of the jurisdiction in which the redevelopment project is located. Site Plans which substantially conform with an approved Subarea Development Plan shall be approved as an administrative function.

As with Subarea Development Plans, the review and approval procedures for Site Plans will vary. For those subareas which overlap the jurisdictional boundaries of Traverse City and Garfield Township, the review and approval of the applicable Site Plan will require review and approval, in joint conference, by the appropriate personnel within Traverse City and Garfield Township. For the subareas which are located completely within the jurisdiction of either the City or the Township, the respective personnel assigned the responsibility for review and approval of Site Plans may hold their deliberations and decision making in joint conference with the administrative reviewer in the other jurisdiction.

District Plan relating to Subarea 6 and the allowed uses for the barns

p. 38, IV.A.2 Subarea Descriptions:

*“Subarea 6: Recreational Activity Center*

This subarea, which constitutes nearly 24 acres, is located in the historic farm area. Of the historic farm buildings, the barns (Buildings 204 and 206) are significant and will remain. New uses for this area will include recreational activities in the form of trail system access, group outdoor assembly, and outdoor recreation support. Other uses such as low-intensity administration offices and community programs are also contemplated.”

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p. 12 III.B.3 Proposed Land Uses and Zoning on the Grand Traverse Commons Planned Redevelopment District:

“Recreation Center. It is anticipated that the Farm area will be primarily redeveloped as the recreation center of the Grand Traverse Commons Planned Redevelopment District given its proximity to the trail system and contiguity to the open space areas of the property. Development of this portion of the Commons Planned Redevelopment District is envisioned to include the rehabilitation of the Barns (Building 204 and 206) and possibly some of the ancillary structures for low-density community-related and low impact recreational uses, and the enhancement of the open space segments. The following types of uses are anticipated for Farm portion of the Grand Traverse Commons Planned Redevelopment District.

- rehabilitation of the barn structures to accommodate low impact community and/or low intensity recreational uses, and
- enhancement of the trail systems and recreational amenities.

This type of development is consistent with the Adaptive Reuse Plan and DP 93--1, and is compatible with adjacent land uses. The Adaptive Reuse Plan was amended in March 1993 to address the redevelopment of the Farm area. The Adaptive Reuse Plan recommends that community educational or community recreational uses would be most appropriate for this area and would be compatible with the residential uses proposed for the main portion of the Commons Planned Redevelopment District. DP 93-1 incorporates these land uses and development goals.”

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Appendix D, Interim Use Plan, p. 213-214, Acceptable Interim Uses for Non-Residential Buildings:

#### “Storage/Warehouse Uses

Several of the buildings selected for the IUP are suitable for storage and warehousing uses. They include Buildings 44, 53, 57, 58, 60, 61, 67, 204, 206, 221, 222, and 223. All of these structures have been previously used as storage facilities. From an interim use standpoint, this is an attractive approach to promote because it may obviate the need for the structures to be brought into complete compliance with all applicable requirements of the local building codes during the interim use phase.

According to the Traverse City Building Department (TCBD) as well as the zoning officials of Traverse City and Garfield Township, the continuation of the same uses as in the past for these buildings is not likely to result in their having to be brought into compliance with the current requirements of the building code. Clearly, following this type of approach may serve to minimize the costs associated with making these structures available for interim use.

In addition to the cost factor, these types of uses are suitable for these structures. These structures are located in areas of the site where existing impervious surface will be able to accommodate the parking needs of the users, and existing roadways will be able to handle the traffic. Such uses must not generate excessive trips to the site nor should they result in general public access to sensitive properties (i.e. the historic structures).

#### Seasonal Recreational Uses

Several of the farm buildings (Buildings 204, 206, 221, 222, and 223) may present opportunities for seasonal recreational uses along the lines of the Adventure School Program (ASP), which has been proposed for this area. The ASP proposal requested the use of some of the farm’s structures for active indoor recreation uses such as rope and wall climbing.

Seasonal recreational uses may be a possibility and may not result in the need to bring the buildings into complete compliance with the local building code. As such, it may be feasible as an interim use depending upon the level of improvements that would be required.”