

## **AGENDA**

### **EAST GRAND RAPIDS PLANNING COMMISSION May 10, 2016 Community Center – Commission Chambers 5:30 PM**

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes: January 12, 2016
3. Special Land Use Application (Calvin College)-Informational
4. Set Public Hearing Date for Special Land Use Application (Calvin College)
5. Report of the City Commission
6. Next Scheduled Meeting Date: June 14, 2016
7. Public Comment
8. Adjournment

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**City of East Grand Rapids, Michigan**

January 12, 2016  
East Grand Rapids Community Center – Commission Chambers

Present: Chairman John Barbour, Commissioners John Arendshorst, Kevin Brant, David DeVelder, Jeff Dills, Tom Getz, Mary Mapes and Jeff Olsen

Absent: Commissioner Sara Lachman

Also Present: Assistant City Manager Doug La Fave, City Zoning Administrator Tom Faasse, City Attorney John Huff and Recording Secretary Lynda Taylor

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Barbour called the meeting to order at 5:33 PM

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 10, 2015

A motion was made by Commissioner Dills and supported by Commissioner Mapes to approve the minutes as written.

3. REZONING OF 610 LOVETT AVENUE, S.E. (Coiffeteria)

Chairman Barbour reviewed the proceedings of the November 10, 2015 meeting and reminded the Commissioners that they would be making a recommendation to the City Commission on the rezoning of 610 Lovett Avenue from R3 to C1.

Chairman Barbour opened the public hearing.

Catherine Jacobs, representing Marielle Shuster, owner of 610 Lovett, stated that the property is currently zoned R3 and that they are requesting to have it rezoned C1. At the time Ms. Shuster purchased the property in 2006 it was operating as a beauty salon with a total of six chairs on both the first and second floors of the building. Ms. Shuster was unaware of a variance that had been granted in 1993 to allow the salon with the stipulation that it would be on the first floor only and a maximum of three chairs. Rezoning to C1 would make the property compatible with its operating history and with the adjacent properties in the C1 district.

Commissioner Olsen asked what the net benefit would be to go from R3 to C1. Ms. Jacobs responded that it would put the property and business operations in compliance and would give Ms. Shuster more options if she would ever cease operating as a hair salon.

Chairman Barbour requested Zoning Administrator Tom Faasse explain the safeguards that are in place regarding any future C1 use. Mr. Faasse explained that any substantial change in the building, any new building or any change of use would require a site plan review. It would start out with approval by the Planning Commission and then would go on to the City Commission.

Commissioner Brant arrived at 5:40 PM

Chairman Barbour closed the public hearing.

A motion was made by Commissioner DeVelder and supported by Commissioner Getz to approve the rezoning of 610 Lovett Avenue, S. E. from R3 to C1.

Yeas: Commissioners Arendshorst, Barbour, Brant, DeVelder, Dills, Getz, Mapes and Olsen – 8

Nays: -0-

#### 4. REPORT OF THE CITY COMMISSION

Commissioner Dills reported the following:

- Approval of a lot split at 2119 Lake Drive (Keystone Church). Since the approval, the church has been demolished. The owners had also requested variances, but were asked to come back to the City Commission with plans for the property before consideration would be made.
- Repairs to sanitary sewer using cured-in-place pipe were done at the practice football field underneath the track and at several other locations throughout the city.
- Approximately 8,000 feet of sidewalk were ground to eliminate trip hazards.
- Emergency water main replacements were done on Audobon and on San Jose due to a number of water main breaks that occurred.
- A through lot ordinance interpretation was requested for a lot on Reeds Lake Boulevard just west of Hodenpyl. It was decided the property is a through lot and the owners will have to come back to the City Commission for a variance.

#### 5. NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATE – February 9, 2016

Chairman Barbour noted that the March 8 meeting will need to be moved to another date due to the primary election being held on that day.

#### 6. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was received.

#### 7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynda Taylor  
Recording Secretary



## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** East Grand Rapids Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Thomas A. Faasse, Zoning Administrator  
**DATE:** May 3, 2016  
**RE:** **Special Land Use Application**  
**Calvin College Campus in East Grand Rapids**

**Action Requested:** The Planning Commission is requested to review and comment upon the attached application at the May meeting, and then set a public hearing as required for the next meeting of the Planning Commission on June 14, 2016.\*

**Background:** The purpose of the current process is not to approve a new development or even a major change in an existing development, but simply to recognize the existing situation at the portion of the Calvin College Campus that is situated in the City of East Grand Rapids and bring it into alignment with the zoning ordinance. All of the campus area in East Grand Rapids is zoned R-1 Single Family, but the current and planned uses of the property are not currently allowed in that zone or any other zone, either as permitted uses or as special land uses.

The area now occupied by the ponds and ball fields at the north end of the campus has been in East Grand Rapids since Calvin acquired the Knollcrest Campus in the 1950s. A smaller portion containing the house known as Ravenswood at 3222 Lake Drive came to East Grand Rapids by way of an “Act 425 Agreement” between the college and the cities of Grand Rapids and East Grand Rapids in 2007. In order to avoid straddling the city boundary with Calvin’s planned expansion of their fieldhouse, the cities traded parcels as permitted by state law.

In early 2016, the college inquired about the zoning regulations that would apply to changing the use of the Ravenswood house to theme-centered student group housing for up to eight students and a mentor. Calvin had been using the house as short term housing for visiting faculty, a “guest house” type of use that does not fit the definition of “family” in the city zoning ordinance. The proposed use is also not a permitted use in this zone.

Paul LeBlanc of LSL Planning, Inc., the city’s planning consultant, has analyzed the situation and has recommended that the best option is the “similar use” procedure described in our zoning ordinance (Chapter 50, Section 5.75A). Briefly, if the proposed use is not listed as allowed in any zoning district, this procedure allows the Director of Public Works to use his authority of interpretation of the zoning ordinance. If he finds that the proposed use closely resembles another use that *is* allowed as a permitted use or as a special land use, then certain steps may be taken in order to “legitimize” the proposed use.

\* The Planning Commission’s role is to make a recommendation to the City Commission. Final approval of a Special Land Use Application is up to the City Commission following a required public hearing before that body.

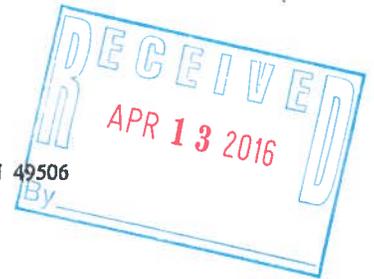
There is also the related issue that the other parts of the campus that are in East are occupied primarily by outdoor athletic facilities. This use is also not an allowed use in the R-1 District, except under public ownership. The housing uses, the ball fields, and other potential college uses can all be classified as typical ancillary uses under the general heading of “Institutional Uses”, and the subcategory of “College Residential Campus”. Staff has determined that this proposed use most closely resembles the “Private and Parochial School” subcategory that is allowed in R-1 as a Special Land Use. The ordinance’s “similar use” procedures then require that “...*the proposed use shall comply with any specific standards or other ordinance requirements that apply to the named use. If the named use is a special land use, the similar use may only be approved according to the requirements of Section 5.94 ...*,” that is, by meeting the standards necessary for approval of a Special Land Use. In addition, the zoning ordinance contains other specific standards for Private or Parochial Schools in a Residential District, found in Article 8, Section 5.73C. When you review the college’s application for Special Land Use you will see that they have provided a thorough analysis of the situation and a complete review of all of the aforementioned standards. City staff agrees with the applicants’ conclusion that all of the standards are either met or are by their nature not applicable. Similarly, the additional zoning requirements and standards provided for “private and parochial schools” are either met, or were meant to apply only to a day school campus, and did not envision a residential post-secondary campus.

Please note that the Site Plan Review which is required in all Special Land Use applications is included here, but it is cursory. This requirement is not really applicable when, as in this case, there is no proposal to overhaul the existing development, which by all reports has been functioning well in the surrounding community for many years.

The “similar use” procedures further require that the Director of Public Works shall initiate an amendment to the zoning ordinance to list the similar use in the schedule of uses for the zoning district. Staff plans to do so following the conclusion of the college’s application for Special Land Use.



**CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS**  
750 LAKESIDE DRIVE SE • EAST GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49506



**Zoning Review Application**

Project Name Calvin College - Ravenswood  
 Property Address 3222 Lake Drive and 3120 Lake Drive, East Grand Rapids, Michigan  
 Project Description Please see attachment

Type of Request (check)	Fee
<input type="checkbox"/> Site Plan Review (Administrative)	\$200*
<input type="checkbox"/> Site Plan Review (Intermediate)	\$300*
<input type="checkbox"/> Site Plan Review (Complete)	<del>\$500*</del>
<input type="checkbox"/> Rezoning Application	\$800
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Special Use Permit	\$500
<input type="checkbox"/> Planned Unit Development	\$1,000*

(attach separate sheet if necessary)

\*Escrow fees may also be required.

Permanent Parcel Number 41-18-02-115-003 (Ravenswood 3.6 acres)  
41-18-03-276-016 (24 acres)  
 Zoning District R.1  
 Current Property Use Institutional/Private School

Contact Information (Please provide email addresses.)

	Company	Address	Contact Person	Daytime Phone
Applicant	Varnum, LLP	Bridgewater Place, P.O. Box 352, (mdzimmerman@varnumlaw.com)	Matthew D. Zimmerman	338-6536
Owner	Calvin College	3201 Burton, S.E. Grand Rapids, MI 49546-4388	Sally VanderPloeg (svploeg@calvin.edu)	526-7112
Developer				
Designer				

See the back of this form for items that must be attached to this application at the time of submission.

Sally VanderPloeg  
 Property Owner Signature  
 Vice President for Administration & Finance, CFO  
4/11/16 Calvin College  
 Date

Matthew D. Zimmerman  
 Applicant Signature (if different)  
4/11/16 Varnum LLP  
 Date

## Attachments Required For Preliminary Review

	Site Plan Review			Rezoning Application	Special Use Permit	Planned Unit Development
	Administrative	Intermediate	Complete			
A narrative describing the overall objective of the proposed project	X	X	X	X	X	X
Site Plan Drawings showing:						
A. Name of Applicant	X	X	X	X	X	X
B. North arrow	X	X	X	X	X	X
C. Legend	X	X	X	X	X	X
D. Scale of drawing	X	X	X	X	X	X
E. A location map w/exact location of project and surrounding area	X	X	X	X	X	X
F. Location, size, appearance of any existing or proposed signs	X	X	X	X	X	X
G. Location and type of exterior lighting	X	X	X	X	X	X
H. Screening and buffering with reference to dimensions and character	X	X	X	X	X	X
I. Dimensions of setbacks, locations, heights and size of buildings and structures	X	X	X	X	X	X
J. Proposed parking areas with lines showing individual spaces – include all barrier-free parking.	X	X	X	X	X	X
K. Highlights of changes made from existing building(s), parking or site plans.	X					
L. Locations of fire hydrants, curbs, gutters, utility lines, easements.	X	X	X	X	X	X
M. Topography of site			X	X	X	X
N. Proposed grading			X	X	X	X
O. Drainage, storm and sanitary sewers			X	X	X	X
Environmental Impact			X		*	*
Fiscal Impact Analysis			X		*	*
Traffic Impact Analysis			X		*	*

\* Depending on the scope of the development, these items may be required.

This list is provided as a summary of ordinance requirements, and additional information may be required in some cases. Please see the appropriate section of the City's zoning ordinance for complete details of all the above.

**ATTACHMENT TO ZONING REVIEW APPLICATION  
FOR CALVIN COLLEGE**

**Project Description:** The northeast portion of Calvin College's ("Calvin's") main campus is located in the City of East Rapids (see Attachment A). It contains the following improvements: a baseball field; two practice fields used for soccer, lacrosse and field hockey; and a house. The house is named "Ravenswood" and is located on the west side of the north access entrance to the campus off of Lake Drive. Ravenswood historically housed the school president and in more recent times was used for out of town visitors having business with Calvin. It has approximately 3,095 sq. ft., with five bedrooms and five and one-half bathrooms on one and a half stories. There is a full kitchen, a dining room, a living room and a completed basement. Calvin plans to renovate the interior of the structure (no external modifications) to configure the bedrooms to allow housing for a total of eight students and one adult mentor. The remainder of the house will be communal space for all students. Ravenswood has a three-stall detached garage and sufficient parking areas to accommodate additional vehicles. There also is a small accessory structure between the house and garage used for storage. After the renovation, Calvin plans to allow eight students to live in the house along with one adult mentor. The number of vehicles will be limited to four. The students would be in their junior or senior years and would be specially selected by the College.

**Compliance with Zoning Ordinance Standards.**

Calvin's current and proposed uses of its property (student on-campus group housing, outdoor sports facilities and accessory storage building) in East Grand Rapids would best be described as institutional or college/residential campus uses. These uses are not specifically listed in the East Grand Rapids zoning ordinance. Article 8, Section 5.75A allows "similar uses" as determined by the Director of Public Works. It is Calvin's understanding that the Director of Public Works has determined Calvin's current and proposed uses of its property in East Grand Rapids to most closely resemble "Public and Institutional Uses," and more specifically "Private or Parochial School" uses. These uses are permitted in the R-1 District only as Special Uses.

While the proposed change in the use of Ravenswood is what prompted Calvin to pursue this special use, following discussions with the City's Zoning Administrator, Calvin agreed to include all of its property in East Grand Rapids within this application. The other current uses (athletic activities on the three existing fields-see Attachments A and C) would continue as has been the case for the past many years. Those fields are quite isolated from the surrounding area in East Grand Rapids. The closest field is approximately 250 feet from Lake Drive and approximately 100 feet from the nearest homes on the east side of Woodcliff Avenue. These fields are screened by heavy tree cover and are substantially lower in grade than the elevation at Lake Drive and at Woodcliff Avenue. The continuation of these activities meets the standards discussed below for much the same reason as the proposed use of Ravenswood.

Attachments A and B will serve as the required site plan. Please let us know if additional detail is required.

I. **Article 11 Special Land Use, Section 5.94, Review Standards**

A. **The proposed use will comply with the general objectives and land use policies of the City of East Grand Rapids Master Plan.**

Both the proposed renovation of Ravenswood and the continued use of the athletic fields on the Calvin property located in East Grand Rapids comply with the general objectives and land use policies of the City's Master Plan. This property is designated in the future land use map as public/quasi-public use. These college activities are quasi-public. The proposed uses are open to the members of the public who applied for and were granted admission to the College.

B. **The proposed use will be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained so it is appropriate and harmonious with the intended character and appearance of the surrounding area; will be compatible with the intent of the zone district; and will not change the essential character of the surrounding area.**

Ravenswood is harmonious with the character of adjacent property in the surrounding area. It is of the same type and size of the closest houses in East Grand Rapids. The closest house located in East Grand Rapids is on the north side of Lake Drive and is approximately 325 feet away (approximately 250 feet to the lot line) (see Attachment C).<sup>1</sup> The entire area in between is comprised of thick tree cover and a portion of a pond. The closest house on the south side of Lake Drive within the City of East Grand Rapids is approximately 575 feet away, and the area in between is also thick tree cover and a pond (see Attachments A and C). Ravenswood is screened from Lake Drive by this heavy tree cover as well. It has never had an adverse effect on the character of the property in East Grand Rapids and after its renovation it will continue to be harmonious with adjacent property in East Grand Rapids. Neither the current athletic uses, nor the proposed renovations to Ravenswood will change the essential character of the surrounding area within East Grand Rapids.

C. **The establishment, maintenance, location or operation of the use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in that zone district.**

All of the surrounding property adjacent to Calvin's property in East Grand Rapids is already developed. If Calvin ever proposes additional development within the City, it will seek to modify the proposed special use approval.

D. **The establishment, maintenance, location, or operation of the proposed use will not be detrimental to or endanger the health, safety, or general welfare of any persons; will not be injurious to or conflict with the use or enjoyment of neighboring property for the purposes permitted; and will not result in any significant adverse impact on the natural environment.**

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<sup>1</sup> The houses directly across Lake Drive from Ravenswood are located in the City of Grand Rapids.

The existing athletic uses and the proposed student residential use of Ravenswood will not be detrimental to the health, safety or general welfare of any current uses of property in East Grand Rapids. On the contrary, the expansive open green space is a benefit to surrounding properties. It enhances the natural environment with its tree cover and other landscaping. The ponds and pervious surfaces provide the best natural storm water management system possible. The facilities have all been developed. They are well maintained and are screened from adjacent properties in East Grand Rapids.

**E. The proposed use will not involve activities, processes, materials, and equipment or conditions of operation that will be detrimental to any persons, property, or the general welfare by reason of excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare, or odors.**

There would be no hazardous substance use in Ravenswood, nor would the residential activity there create hazardous or potentially hazardous situations. Neither the existing athletic uses nor the proposed use in the revised Ravenswood either currently involve or will involve the excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare, or odors. The athletic facilities may currently create some low level of noise, but that it screened by the surrounding wooded area. In addition, these activities only take place during daylight hours.

Any traffic generated by the athletic fields currently exists. While the number of vehicles using Ravenswood might be slightly in excess of the residential properties in the surrounding area of East Grand Rapids, the number of trips generated would probably not be any different, or even less. The students living at Ravenswood would walk to classes and other campus activities. Moreover, even if Ravenswood generated the same number of external trips as a typical residential structure in East Grand Rapids, and even if all of those trips utilized the north access drive from campus (and not the other four campus exit drives<sup>2</sup>), it would add an insignificant number of trips compared to the current use of that access road and Lake Drive. There is ample on-campus parking on Calvin property located within the City of Grand Rapids. The four access roads from the campus are on major roads (E. Beltline, Burton and Lake).

**F. Adequate utilities, highways, streets, access, drainage structures, police and fire protection, refuse disposal, schools, and other necessary services or facilities have been or will be provided to serve the proposed use; the proposed use will not place undue demands on public services or facilities that result in exceeding their capacity.**

The use of Ravenswood for student housing will not increase demands on public services provided by East Grand Rapids. Campus security would handle most of the police functions there. The increased use of public water and sewer would not impact the City

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<sup>2</sup> There are two exits to southbound E. Beltline, one exit to northbound E. Beltline, and one exit to Burton Street. In addition, there is an exit to E. Paris, but a gate on that route is usually closed unless athletic events are taking place.

in any way. The students would not utilize the public school system in East Grand Rapids.

The current athletic activities and proposed residential use for the renovated Ravenswood generally do not involve the utilization of highways, fire protection, refuse disposal, or other necessary services. The athletic fields are nearly 100% pervious surfaces and thus will handle any stormwater through infiltration. In addition, the property has a large pond system that will handle stormwater from the Ravenswood area.

**G. The proposed use will, in all other respects, conform to the applicable regulations of the zone district in which it is located, specific requirements of Article 8, all conditions of approval, and all other applicable provisions of law, ordinance, or statute.**

The existing athletic facilities and the proposed residential use of a revised Ravenswood meet the requirements of Article 8. (See Section II. below.)

II. **Article 8 Additional Use Requirements, Section 5.73 Public and Institutional Uses, Private or Parochial School.**

**1. The minimum lot area shall be one acre.**

The area between Lake Drive, the northern access road to the campus, Knollcrest Circle and the pond is well in excess of one acre (3.6 acres-see Attachment B). The Calvin property within East Grand Rapids totals approximately 27.6 acres.

**2. The minimum lot width shall be 150 feet.**

The portion of the Calvin property that Ravenswood occupies (bounded by Lake Drive to the north, the northern access road to the campus to the west, Knollcrest Circle to the south and the East Grand Rapids boundary north of Lake Drive extended south into the pond to the west-see Attachment B) is over 200 feet wide. The entire parcel in East Grand Rapids is approximately 775 feet wide on the north side and approximately 350 feet wide on the south side.

**3. At least one property line shall abut and have direct access to an arterial or collector street.**

The property abuts Lake Drive on its north boundary. Ravenswood fronts on the College's north access drive which connects to Lake Drive.

**4. All buildings, parking areas and outdoor activity areas (ball fields, playgrounds, bleachers, etc.) shall be set back a minimum of 40 feet from any side or rear property line abutting a residential district.**

The area of campus within East Grand Rapids occupied by Ravenswood has a setback of approximately 150 feet from Lake Drive to the north. The other three directions are campus property and have even greater setbacks from closest

properties in East Grand Rapids. The athletic fields are approximately 100 feet from the closest houses on Woodcliff Avenue, and are screened with heavy tree cover.

**5. A six-foot high fence shall be constructed along any side or rear property line abutting a residential district.**

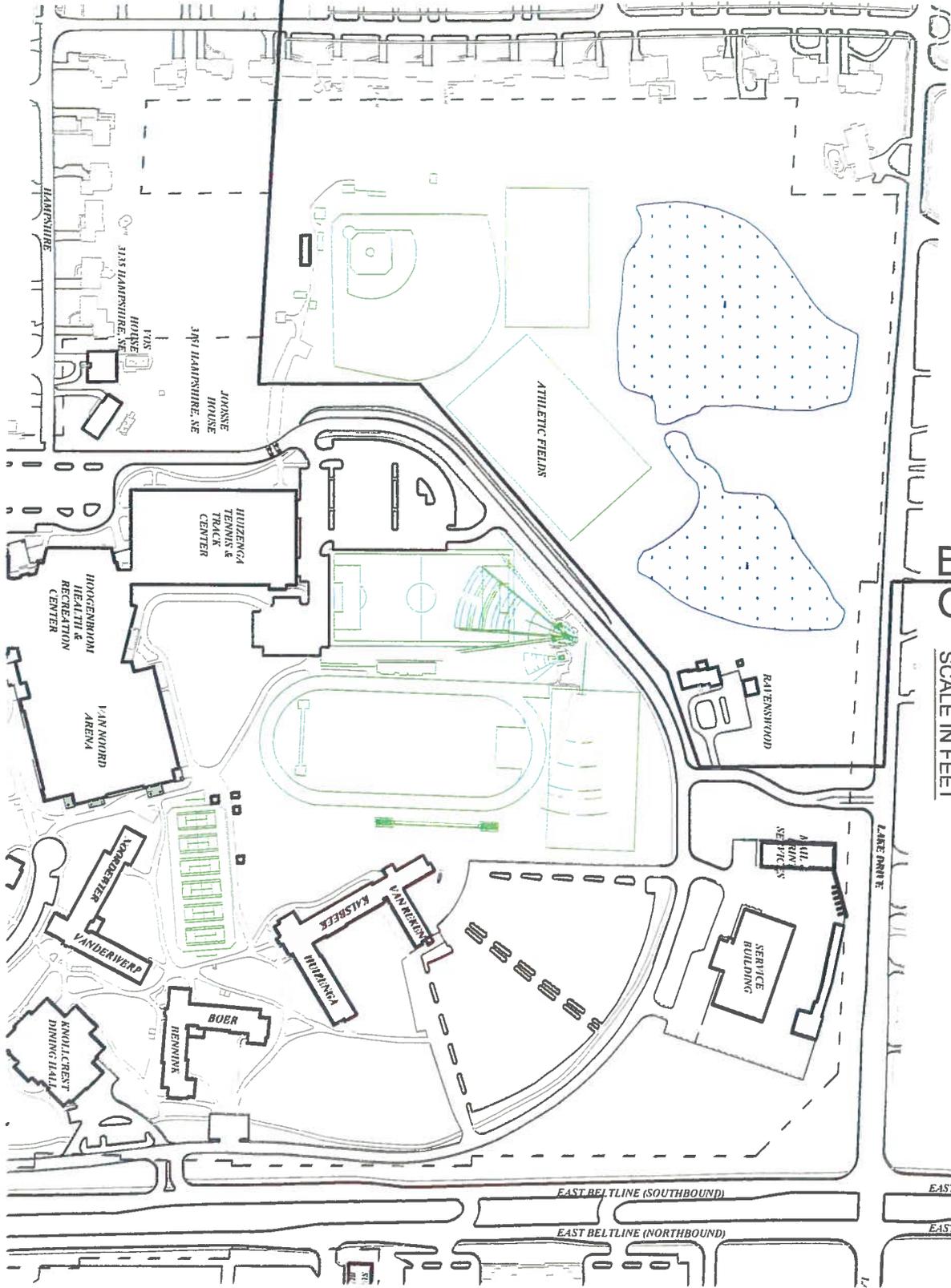
Calvin owns two of the seven houses located on Hampshire Blvd. adjacent to the south boundary of the athletic fields (these are in the City of Grand Rapids). The houses are more than 200 feet away from the baseball field, and are separated by heavy tree cover. The houses on Woodcliff Avenue are approximately 100 feet from the athletic fields. They are separated by heavy tree cover. The grade of the athletic fields is substantially lower than the grade of the houses on both streets. Thus the fencing requirement is unnecessary.

**6. Lighting for night time activity areas shall be directed and shielded so the light sources is not visible from any residential use within 150 feet of the light fixture. All lighting, including building and security lighting, shall be located to prevent glare on adjacent properties and streets.**

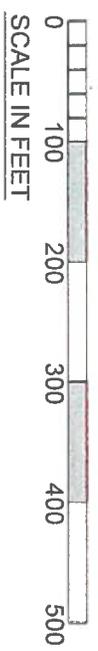
The athletic facilities do not utilize lighting for night time activity. Ravenswood is more than 150 feet from any residential use within East Grand Rapids. Any lighting there is adequately shielded by thick tree cover.

ATTACHMENT A

EGR  
GR



EGR  
GR



EAST BELTLINE (SOUTHBOUND)

EAST BELTLINE (NORTHBOUND)

EAST BELTLINE (S)

EAST BELTLINE (N)



ATTACHMENT C



**CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS  
ZONING ORDINANCE**

**SUMMARY OF PROCESS  
TO ADD AN UNLISTED LAND USE TO THE ORDINANCE**

- Applicant requests a certain land use
- Director determines that the use is not listed in the zoning ordinance for any zoning district, either as a permitted use or as a special land use
- Director interprets that the use is similar to a listed use, but that the proposed similar use is a special land use, not a use permitted by right
  - Options:
    - Apply to amend zoning ordinance – lengthy process and special land use application required after that
    - Apply for a Use Variance – not legally likely to succeed and not flexible in the future
    - Use “similar use” procedure in zoning ordinance, Section 5.75A
- Applicant applies for Special Land Use, which includes Site Plan Review
- Planning Commission holds a public hearing
- City Commission holds a public hearing
- If Special Use approved by Planning Commission and then by City Commission, staff initiates zoning ordinance amendment to include new land use