

**MINUTES  
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS  
PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING/REGULAR MEETING  
FARMINGTON HILLS CITY HALL – COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
November 19, 2015, 7:30 P.M.**

Chair Topper called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. on November 19, 2015.

Commissioners Present: Blizman, Fleischhacker, Mantey, McRae, Orr, Rae-O'Donnell, Schwartz (8:44 p.m.), Stimson (7:31 p.m.), Topper

Commissioners Absent: None

Others Present: Staff Planner Stec, Staff Engineers Darnall and Nelson, City Attorney Schultz, Planning Consultant Arroyo

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION by Rae-O'Donnell, support by Orr, to approve the agenda as published.**

**Motion carried 7-0 (Schwartz, Stimson not yet present).**

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

**A. SPECIAL APPROVAL 72-10-2015**

LOCATION: 24723 Crestview Court  
PARCEL I.D.: 22-23-19-326-033  
PROPOSAL: Indoor gymnastics training over 5,000 square feet in LI-1, Light Industrial District  
ACTION REQUESTED: Special land use approval  
APPLICANT: Scott M. Leibovitz  
OWNER: 24711-24723 Crestview Court LLC

Scott Leibovitz, 29355 Northwestern Highway, Suite 301, Southfield, MI was present on behalf of this application, which was for a special land use approval for a 6,552 square foot space within an existing industrial building for the gymnastic studio of Tatiana Gutsu, LLC. Ms. Gutsu was also present.

Mr. Leibovitz said that Ms. Gutsu had signed a five-year lease. Because she was not aware of any special use requirement she had signed without any contingency. Per the lease agreement, the responsibility for obtaining any governmental approvals fell to her. However, as landlord's agent, he was here tonight to help her through the process. When Ms. Gutsu sought a certificate of occupancy from the City, it was determined she had to obtain a special use permit because the space was greater than 5,000 square feet.

Mr. Leibovitz showed before and after pictures of the property, taken since they had acquired it last July. They had invested a significant amount of capital in the property in order to correct maintenance issues and upgrade the façade. They were fortunate to enter into the five-year, 6,500 square foot lease agreement with Ms. Gutsu for her gymnastics training facility, an approved use under the LI-1 Zoning District. However, because the space exceeded the 5,000 square feet by approximately 1,500 square feet, they were required to come before the Commission to seek special use approval. They had received favorable responses of support from their neighbors.

Mr. Leibovitz said that he had received the November 19 Clearzoning review letter and had provided a response on November 17, 2015.

Utilizing overhead slides, Planning Consultant Arroyo gave the background for this application. As Mr. Leibovitz had indicated, this was a special approval application primarily because the size of the proposed gymnastics studio exceeded 5,000 square feet in the Light Industrial Zoning District.

Planning Consultant Arroyo showed the location of the property on Crestview Court, north of Grand River Avenue between Halsted Road and I-275. He reviewed the floor plan that had been submitted as a response to the review letter, along with updates to the site plan.

Planning Consultant Arroyo addressed items called out in the November 9, 2015 review letter as follows:

The most recent submittal had addressed and met Existing Conditions: 3: *The survey should be drawn to an accurate scale and parking spaces, landscaping, refuse enclosure and other similar improvements should be reflected on the plan in accordance with the City of Farmington Hills site plan standards.*

In terms of parking requirements, if this were an industrial use only 12 parking spaces would be required. However, in general, a fitness studio demanded a higher number of parking spaces. The Planning Commission might wish to review the letter of intent and discuss with the applicant the maximum number of participants attending class at any given time and peak parking demand in determining the compatibility of the use with existing and future building utilization. It was likely that this use would peak after the peak parking time of any industrial uses. For this use, parking was generally driven by class size; the applicant had provided supplemental information regarding class sizes. This use would require more parking than a normal Light Industrial use, and they were planning to operate during the day and evening. Right now, without significant occupancy of the rest of the building, parking would not be an issue. Also, as the gymnastic studio was one of the first tenants in this redeveloped building, as other tenants came in they would have to be fully aware that the studio was there. Planning Consultant Arroyo said that as a result, the parking would be somewhat self-regulating and did not provide a huge reason for concern.

Regarding loading/unloading, this use would not require much loading/unloading. The Planning Commission could accept the existing condition or it could require a designated loading/unloading area.

Regarding the dumpster requirement, there was a small unenclosed dumpster in the back of the parking lot and presented a pre-existing condition. This use did not normally generate a substantial amount of waste. This situation should be addressed by the Planning Commission.

Regarding landscaping, there was some landscaping that had been removed as part of the renovation of the property. Since then there had been code enforcement regarding the landscaping, and a landscape plan had been submitted to the City earlier this year and was accepted. The applicant was therefore planning on installing landscaping to meet the ordinance requirement.

Regarding lighting, the applicant had provided existing fixture locations and provided a description of existing lighting. This use was not adjacent to residential districts. The Planning Commission should review what the applicant had provided.

The review letter had also included Special Approval requirements on page 4.

Planning Consultant Arroyo concluded his comments.

Chair Topper opened the public hearing.

Genevieve Taylor, 59 North Walnut Street, Suite 201, Mt. Clemens MI said she was an attorney here to help out Ms. Gutsu and would help answer any questions that might arise.

Chair Topper acknowledged receipt of letters from Andy Sallan, Millennium Cabinetry, 24746 – 24748 Crestview Court, Farmington Hills MI and David Birdsall, President of Birdsall Tool and Gage, 24735 Crestview Court, Farmington Hills MI. Both were in full support of this request.

Seeing that there was no other comment, Chair Topper closed the public hearing.

Ms. Taylor introduced the owner Tatiana Gutsu, a 1992 Gold Medalist who represented the first Ukrainian flag ever lifted at the Olympic Games. Ms. Gutsu would be the only gold medalist gymnastic instructor in the State of Michigan and would be an asset to Farmington Hills. Her goal was to teach children to reach their goals and dreams and she hoped to work individually with each child. The daytime classes would be small, emphasizing parent and child involvement. Most of the use would be in the evening, from 5:00 p.m. and later.

In response to a question from Commissioner Rae-O'Donnell, Ms. Gutsu said there would be no tournaments at this facility. Ms. Taylor further explained that any meets at the property would be "fun meets" for the students themselves – no one outside would be invited. The facility was not large enough to handle tournaments. Any sponsored tournament would be held elsewhere, for instance at a local school.

In response to a question from Commissioner Orr, Staff Planner Stec said the landscape plan had been administratively reviewed as a part of prior code enforcement on the site.

**MOTION by McRae, support by Orr, that Special Approval No. 72-10-2015, submitted by Scott M. Leibovitz, be approved, subject to all applicable provisions of the Zoning Chapter, for the following reasons:**

- 1. The use would not be injurious to the district and environs.**
- 2. The effects of the use would not be contrary to the spirit and intent of the Zoning Chapter.**
- 3. The use would be compatible with existing uses in the area.**
- 4. The use will not interfere with orderly development of the area.**
- 5. The use will not be detrimental to the safety or convenience of vehicular or pedestrian traffic.**

**And subject to the further conditions:**

- 1. Items called out in the Clearzoning letter of November 9, 2015 be resolved.**
- 2. Fire Marshall approval.**

**And further, the motion acknowledges that the Planning Commission accepts:**

- 1. A landscape plan was submitted and previously approved by staff.**
- 2. The existing lighting and dumpster location.**

**Motion carried 8-0 (Schwartz absent).**

**REGULAR MEETING:**

**A. LOT SPLIT 5, 2015 (Preliminary)**

LOCATION: 22588 Whittington St.  
PARCEL I.D.: 22-23-25-376-013  
PROPOSAL: Split one (1) existing parcel into two (2) parcels in RA-1,  
One-Family Residential District  
ACTION REQUESTED: Preliminary Land Division approval  
APPLICANT: Dennis A. Park  
OWNER: Dennis A. Park

Utilizing overhead slides and referring to his November 9, 2015 review letter, Planning Consultant Arroyo gave the background for this application, which was for a preliminary lot split review, to permit two lots. He noted that a preliminary application could include a hand-drawn sketch of the proposed split, as long as it was drawn to scale, and that was what was provided this evening.

Planning Consultant Arroyo reviewed the Master Plan and zone designation for this area, which was low to medium density. The property was zoned RA-1 Single Family Residential as were the surrounding properties. The 2,286-acre parcel was currently vacant, and was accessed from a 30-foot wide gravel road – Whittington Street – that did not meet current City standards.

The lot split did have some ordinance deficiencies. The proposed land division did not comply with the minimum lot width required. Also the Engineering Division noted in their memorandum dated October 21, 2015 that a property turn-around would be necessary at the north end of Whittington Street and the right of way would need to be increased from 30 feet to 60 feet. A turnaround and increased right of way width would likely result in an increase to the overall lot width, which could address deficiencies in the lot width.

Planning Consultant Arroyo noted deficiencies on the preliminary drawing including:

1. Labels for parcels A and B.
2. Some of the property lines were missing.
3. Any easements should be identified.
4. The location of any wetlands, flood plains, or water bodies.
5. A signed statement that the drawing was for the purpose of gaining preliminary approval and should not constitute the submittal of a final plan. Therefore, the city was not required to grant final approval on this proposal within 45 days of its submittal.

Commissioner McRae wondered why the applicant would be responsible for the entire 60-foot width of the street. Shouldn't the neighboring property share that responsibility?

Staff Engineer Nelson said that as the process moved forward, sharing the road width with the neighboring property could be considered. Since the applicant did not own the neighboring property, this became more difficult.

City Attorney Schultz added that the road improvement was the responsibility of the applicant, since without the improvements the road simply did not meet ordinance standards.

Commissioner Orr noted that it would probably be necessary for the applicant to go the Zoning Board of Appeals to address some deficiencies.

Dennis Park, 1954 Long Lake Shore Drive, Bloomfield Hills MI was present on behalf of this application. Wynn Berry, 5285 South River Drive, Commerce Township, MI was also present.

Mr. Berry called the Commission's attention to the sketch of the lot split, noting that there was a line showing the edge of the creek. Everything to the west of that would be buildable. The plat was developed in 1949, at which time only half the road was put in. He acknowledged consultant's and staff's comments, and he affirmed that they would be able to meet all requirements when they made a final site plan submission.

City Attorney Schultz said that the Planning Commission could not approve the preliminary lot split this evening, as width and turnaround requirements were not met.

In response to a question from Chair Topper, Mr. Berry said they did not own the property to the west. They would be unable to widen the road but they would be able to put some type of turnaround at the north end.

Commissioner Fleischhacker confirmed with Mr. Berry that they were saying they could meet the lot width requirements after altering the submission. He explained that the Commission could not approve this application tonight. They could deny or they could table.

Mr. Berry said that they were fine with any procedure that would allow them to proceed at a later date. They had made the preliminary submission knowing that there might be some requirements of which they were unaware.

City Attorney Schultz said that the applicant needed to request or concur with tabling the application, since this would mean the proposed lot split would not be acted upon with 45 days of the original application. Mr. Park said they did concur.

Commissioner Mantey said that as he understood it, every lot was buildable in Michigan. If the Commission split the lot when it did not meet standards, the City would be forced to permit building on the resultant lots.

Mr. Park said that each lot was approximately an acre, and even with wetlands, etc., there was plenty of room to build on each one.

City Attorney Schultz said that even when all dimensional standards were met, the applicants would still have to meet Engineering Division requirements in order to proceed with a building permit.

Commissioner Rae-O'Donnell asked for clarification regarding the 45-day approval/denial timeline. City Attorney Schultz explained that under State law the applicants were entitled to a decision within 45 days of submittal, unless they waived that right. If the applicants had not waived this right, the Commission would have to deny the request this evening.

Commissioner McRae encouraged the applicant to reach out to the neighboring property owner to see if something could be done regarding sharing the burden of widening the road.

Commissioner Blizman also encouraged the applicants to work with the Engineering and Planning Departments in order to resolve the issues before returning to the Planning Commission.

**MOTION by Stimson, support by Fleischhacker, that Preliminary Lot Split No. 5, 2015, submitted by Dennis A. Park, be tabled to a date uncertain to allow the applicant time to review the submission to address issues in the Engineering Division and Clearzoning reviews.**

**Motion carried 8-0 (Schwartz absent).**

**B. SITE AND LANDSCAPE PLAN 71-10-2015**

LOCATION: 38042 Twelve Mile Rd.  
PARCEL I.D.: 22-23-07-400-027  
PROPOSAL: Day Care in RA-1, One Family Residential District.  
ACTION REQUESTED: Approval of Site and Landscape Plan  
APPLICANT: Rod Blight  
OWNER: Margaret G. Palacky Trust

Utilizing overhead slides and referring to his review letter of November 9, 2015, Planning Consultant Arroyo gave the background for this application, which was for the approval of a Site Plan, Landscape Plan and Tree Removal Permit for the construction of a child day care center at 38042 Twelve Mile Road. The property was located on the north side of 12 Mile Road, between Halsted and Haggerty Roads. The 1.85 acre property was zoned RA-1, Single Family Residential.

Planning Consultant Arroyo reviewed the surrounding area in terms of land use and zoning districts. Day care centers were a principal permitted use, but did require review and approval of the site plan by the Planning Commission. The day care center would employ 10 people with an estimated 100 clients.

All dimensional requirements (setbacks, lot area, width, lot coverage, maximum building height) were met by this site plan.

The Engineering Division, in their memorandum dated 10/23/15, had requested that the applicant meet with the Road Commission of Oakland County and the City's Traffic Engineer to identify an appropriate location for the proposed access drive.

The applicant had provided the setbacks, building dimensions, etc., as required by ordinance. Other special requirements under Section 34-4.5 were met, except that the applicant should show the setback of the dumpster enclosure on the site plan for administrative review. In addition, the applicant should revise the location of the enclosure, locating it within the interior side yard.

Off-street parking requirements had been exceeded. However, the Planning Commission might wish to discuss vehicle maneuvering and turnaround(s) within the site. Consideration should be given to striping the northwest and/or southwest parking spaces so that the vehicles could use them as a turnaround when accessing the parking spaces to the west.

No loading/unloading spaces had been identified on the plan. The Planning Commission might wish to discuss the number and type of deliveries to determine the need for a dedicated loading/unloading space.

The ground mounted sign along with a façade sign needed to be removed from the plan, as those signs were not part of site plan review.

The Engineering Division should provide an opinion/review regarding the necessity and location of any acceleration-deceleration passing lane.

Corner clearance from the access drive should be reflected on the plan.

In order to comply with Section 34-5.1.3.D, the dumpster enclosure should be relocated to north of the front building line.

The site plan identified a 5-foot high interior fence that enclosed the outdoor play area. Sheet LS 3 fence detail (height) should be revised to be consistent with Sheet SP 2. The applicant proposed a white PVC privacy fence and retaining wall. The plans did not provide construction details on the retaining wall and thus compliance with this standard could not be determined.

Exterior lighting standards appeared to be in substantial compliance. However, the illumination levels along the south property line exceeded the maximum allowed by ordinance, and the plans needed to be revised to show the necessary information and comply with ordinance provisions.

Regarding pedestrian connections, per the recently enacted Section 34-5.19, pedestrian access through the parking lot from the public sidewalk to the building entry was required. The applicant had provided a walkway from the public sidewalk to the back of the drive aisle curb, south of the center drive approach. Based on the Engineering Division's memorandum, the drive approach might need to be relocated. The Planning Commission might wish to discuss the optimal location for a pedestrian connection from the public sidewalk.

A floor plan should be included as part of the site plan.

Regarding the tree removal permit, 43 regulated trees and 2 landmark trees would be removed. The applicant was showing a total of 48 replacement trees. However, 53 trees were required. The Planning Commission might wish to discuss location for the additional 5 trees.

Regarding the landscape plan review:

1. The method of irrigation should be identified.
2. An additional 5 replacement trees were required.
3. A detail of the retaining wall must be shown.

Additionally, the proposed Norway Spruce did not meet the minimum size requirement of 10 feet. The canopy tree requirement had been met.

Sec. 34-5.14.5 required a landscaping separation between a public thoroughfare and parking, defined as a planted hedge of small shrubs or a minimum 2-foot masonry wall or berm. The plans called for a row of Amur privet along the majority of frontage between the parking spaces and the public sidewalk. The applicant proposed to retain some of the existing trees in the southeast corner of the site. The Planning Commission might wish to discuss with the applicant options to enhance the front yard landscaping. The current front yard open space was limited to grass with a row of privet bushes. Since additional trees were required to satisfy the replacement tree requirements, the opportunity existed to install trees along with understory planting to create visual screening and produce a more visually attractive planting area.

Planning Consultant Arroyo concluded his review.

Chair Topper noted that some trees labeled crab apple on the plan were really apple trees. Staff Planner Stec said the diameter of the trees would determine whether or not they were regulated.

Patrick Fenton, 1732 Crooks Road, Troy, MI was present on behalf of this application. He offered to answer questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Orr asked about a final grading plan. The submitted plans all showed the grade as currently existing. He felt the Commission would need a full grading plan in order to see the elevation of the retaining wall.

In response to a further question from Commissioner Orr, Alexander Orman, Orman Engineering, LLC, 5476 Vivian Lane, Waterford, MI 48327 said water would be removed via the swales shown on drawing SP 2.

Commissioner Orr said he was looking for topographical lines and that was what he would like to see on this site because of the grade changes, especially because there was a lot of water on the site. Mr. Orman said he could provide this.

Discussion followed. Commissioner Fleischhacker thought the grading was an engineering determination. Tonight was an approval for a preliminary site plan; final grade levels were not submitted at this level. Commissioner Orr said that the Commission was being asked to approve the location of retaining wall, but they were not being given enough information regarding grading to actually do this. Staff Planner Stec said that the drainage and the retaining wall would have to receive Engineering Division approval. If any changes occurred that compelled a change in plan, the site plan would return to the Planning Commission. Commissioner Blizman said that the Commission often saw topographical plans where the numbers were there. Commissioner Orr reminded the Commission of another site plan recently submitted that showed trees that would be a problem. However, without topographical information the Commission would never have realized this. He thought the Commission needed a topographical plan before approving tonight's request.

Commissioner McRae asked the applicants to address the placement of the 5 additional required trees.

Kenneth Weikal, Landscape Architect, 33203 Biddestone Lane, Farmington Hills MI said that they would prefer to add the additional 5 trees at the north of the property.

Commissioner McRae asked Mr. Weikal to address Planning Consultant Arroyo's comment regarding screening along 12 Mile Road. Mr. Weikal responded that they would defer to the Commission. They had enough parking lot trees and if the Commission desired, they could add the five additional trees along the front of the property.

Commissioner Blizman confirmed that state requirements were met with 10 employees for 100 children.

In response to a question from Chair Topper regarding saving the existing apple trees, Mr. Weikal said those trees were in very poor shape and belonged to an old orchard. There would be some remaining apple trees on the property to the west.

Commissioner Orr asked about the two apparent property lines on the south side of the property. Mr. Orman explained that while this was one parcel, it contained two legal descriptions.

Seeing that discussion had ended, Chair Topper brought the matter back to the Commission.

**MOTION by Rae-O'Donnell, support by Fleischhacker, that Site Plan No. 71-10-2015, dated October 19, 2015 submitted by Rod Blight be approved because it appears to meet all applicable requirements of the Zoning Chapter. This approval is subject to the following condition:**

- 1. A revised plan be submitted for administrative review addressing the items identified in the Clearzoning review report.**

**Motion carried 7-1 (Orr opposed, Schwartz absent).**

**MOTION by Rae-O'Donnell, support by McRae, that Landscape Plan No. 71-10-2015, dated October 19, 2015, submitted by Rod Blight, be approved because it appears to meet all applicable**

**Zoning Chapter requirements and applicable Design Principles as adopted by the Planning Commission. This approval is subject to the following conditions:**

- 1. A revised plan is submitted for administrative review addressing the items in the Clearzoning review letter, including:**
  - An additional 5 replacement trees be added.**
  - Replacement trees be revised to meet minimum caliper size.**

It was noted that the motion did not require the trees to be planted in any location. Commissioner Mantey said that his understanding of the Commission's viewpoint was that they preferred to have trees planted in the front, however there should not be so many in the front that they obscured the facility. Commissioner Blizman said that his preference also was that the trees be planted in the front. The proposed building was big enough that additional trees would not obscure it.

**Motion carried 8-0 (Schwartz absent).**

**C. SUBDIVISION OPEN SPACE PLAN 1, 2015**

LOCATION:	34275 Oak Forest Rd. (former Wooddale Elementary School)
PARCEL I.D.:	22-23-09-251-009; 252-001, 002 & 003; 255-019
PROPOSAL:	Subdivision Open Space Plan (18 detached single-family homes) in RA-1, One-Family Residential District
ACTION REQUESTED:	Set for Planning Commission Public Hearing
APPLICANT:	Forest at Wooddale LLC
OWNER:	Farmington Public Schools

Utilizing overhead slides and referring to his review letter dated November 9, 2015, Planning Consultant Arroyo gave the background for this request, which was to set for public hearing a site condominium, open space plan and tree removal permit for Forest at Wooddale, a single family detached condominium project with an open space option.

Planning Consultant Arroyo explained that this was a former school site that was proposed for redevelopment. The site was just over 11 acres, and was heavily wooded. The site was currently improved with a paved parking lot. The existing grades sloped from south to north and east to west.

The City's Master Plan designated the majority of the property as School. The Residential Density Plan designated the property as low-medium, which was consistent with the current RA-1 zoning of the property. The RA-1 District required a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet (minimum average), with the smallest lot size of 18,000 square feet.

Under the Subdivision Open Space Plan, the City could permit the modification of the above District minimum requirements as follows: Density permitted was 1.7 units per gross acre (18.5 units), lot width was 90 feet, lot depth 120 feet, front yard setback 35 feet, side yard setback 8/20 feet, and rear yard setback 35 feet. Corner lots were required to have an additional 10 feet of width; the corner lot appeared to meet this requirement.

The proposed density of 18 units met the maximum allowed under the Subdivision Open Space Plan. Other dimensional requirements were met.

The applicant proposed a sidewalk adjacent to the roads, with an eyebrow cul-de-sac at the turn and two north/south sidewalks; one connecting to an area designated as open space and the other to Kendallwood Subdivision located to the south.

In reviewing a Subdivision Open Space Plan, the City must consider the following objectives:

1. To encourage appropriate relationships in orientation and size of yards and open spaces with other developed parcels in the area. *The units had a rear yard to rear yard relationship with abutting residential developments continuing a similar development pattern, which was appropriate.*
2. To provide a more desirable living environment by preserving the natural character of wetlands, stands of trees, brooks, hills, and similar natural assets. *The area identified as open space was located at the northwest corner of the project area. The site was heavily wooded along the perimeter of the project area. The Commission might wish to discuss methods of requiring tree preservation as part of the individual condominium unit development. Perhaps a conservation easement might be considered.*

Note: Commissioner Schwartz arrived at 8:44 p.m.

3. To encourage developers to use a more creative approach in the development of residential areas. *The subdivision design had a conventional layout but included an open space not typically found in conventional subdivisions.*
4. To encourage the provision of open space within reasonable distance of all lot development of the subdivision and to further encourage the development of recreational facilities or preservation of natural environmental assets. *The area designated as open space on the plan was consistent with its designation as Private Recreation and was contiguous with existing open space located to the north of the property. The location of the detention area and the open space created a natural north/south corridor.*
5. To encourage a more efficient, aesthetic, and desirable use of open area while recognizing a reduction in development costs and by allowing the developer to bypass natural obstacles on the site. *The open space area had expanded from the first submittal that was administratively reviewed. The heavily wooded 1.13-acre area together with the 1.07-acre detention area with fountain provided a natural resource with aesthetic benefits to this site and adjacent properties.*

Planning Consultant Arroyo noted that modifications of City standards could be made in the RA-1B, RA-2B, RA-1 and RA-2 Districts, when certain conditions were met. These conditions did appear to be met, as outlined on pages 3 - 4 of the review letter.

Planning Consultant Arroyo noted that consideration should be given to preserve as many existing trees on the lots with condominium bylaw restrictions regarding the removal of trees.

Regarding the tree removal permit, the Tree Removal Summary only addressed trees removed for streets, detention and utilities. The applicant was proposing the woodland replacement on a lot-by-lot basis as the lots were cleared and built. Planning Consultant Arroyo had concerns as to how a lot could be improved independent of the adjacent lots regarding grading. The applicant should provide additional details outlining lot development and general methods to preserve trees on lots. Replacement trees as noted were provided on the plan.

Regarding the landscape plan, Planning Consultant Arroyo noted that the applicant was proposing larger sized trees to meet the replacement requirement of 262 trees. Planting fewer larger sized trees was allowed with approval from the Planning Commission.

Planning Consultant Arroyo explained that the unit costs for replacement trees were priced too low in the landscape cost estimate; the cost estimate should be revised.

Planning Consultant Arroyo concluded his review.

Commissioner Mantey asked if the detention area should more properly be labeled *retention area*. Discussion regarding the definitions of retention and detention areas followed. Staff Engineer Darnall said that this detention area was designed for the continual slow release of water. Mr. Darnall further explained that storm water management on the site would have to be approved by the Engineering Division.

Commissioner Stimson asked the average lot areas to the south and to the east. Planning Consultant Arroyo said this could be provided at the public hearing.

Commissioner McRae wondered how many homes could be developed on this parcel under the RA-1 Zoning District, if an Open Space Plan was not requested. Planning Consultant Arroyo said that the applicant had not provided a parallel plan. However, the application as presented did fall within the maximum density for the site.

Commissioner Orr noted that parcel 55-014 appeared to be landlocked. Staff Planner Stec said that parcel shared ownership with its neighbor, and thus was not landlocked.

Stuart Mickelson, a partner in the Windmill Group and a principal in Forest at Wooddale, LLC, was present on behalf of this application. He affirmed that they did meet qualifications, though some tweaking – including final engineering review – was necessary. This development represented an infill within older, nice communities – Kendallwood and Colony Park. They had experience with this type of development, including several in Farmington/Farmington Hills. They found that many of the homeowners in the developments actually came from the surrounding community. The homes would have 3-car side entries, be energy efficient, and they were already getting calls from interested people who lived close by. This development would add formerly tax-free property to the tax rolls. Additionally they were providing homes for families with children, and this added to the school system. Over the years, their group had developed five communities within Farmington Hills. Right now they were developing the old Flanders school site in the City of Farmington, and those 30 lots were almost sold out.

Commissioner Orr asked how the water would get to the detention pond.

John Thompson, Engineer, PEA, Inc., 2430 Rochester Court, Suite 100, Troy MI, said that the water would travel via a standard Farmington Hills curb and gutter system.

**MOTION by McRae, support by Fleischhacker, that Subdivision Open Space Plan No. 1, 2015 dated October 7, 2015, submitted by Forest of Wooddale LLC for 34275 Oak Forest Road, be set for Public Hearing on December 17, 2015.**

**Motion carried 9-0.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Gary Brown, Oak Point Drive, said that Wooddale School had been at this location for approximately 50 years and had existed with one entrance. He was concerned about opening up an access to the north.

Michael Deegan, Colony Park, had the same concern regarding opening up an access to the north. In response to a question from Mr. Deegan, Staff Planner Stec explained that a copy of the proposed plan was available in the Planning Office. Additionally, Commissioner Mantey gave Mr. Deegan his packet copy of the plan.

Bill Kennedy, Colony Park, said that the developers had been in touch with association board members, including his wife, and the board members had not been opposed to the plans shown them. However, he was

surprised that the Commission had only seen one type of plan. He noted that these developers had developed the Flanders school property in Farmington, and that development only had one entrance. He was also concerned with the additional access to the north, which would direct all the traffic to the new development through their subdivision.

John Wells, Oak Point Drive, said that he shared the same concerns as his neighbors regarding adding the access to the north.

Michael Banks, Oak Point Drive, said that in addition to the access concerns already mentioned, he was concerned that the heavy runoff on the back of the site was addressed. He also encouraged the retention of trees around the entire boundary.

Paul Goldsmith said that he had recently moved into the neighborhood. As an architect he affirmed that this plan presented a reduced impervious area and would help runoff issues. He supported this development, and felt the engineers had done a good job.

Chair Topper thanked the residents who had commented and invited them back to the Commission for the public hearing on December 17<sup>th</sup>. She also encouraged the developers to continue talking with the neighbors in this area.

### **COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS**

Commissioner Orr said that he was pleased that the developers for the site plan at 38042 12 Mile Road presented this evening had not tried to save the old farmhouse on the site and force it in as part of a redevelopment plan. He thought the development as presented was a positive step forward and fit well on this property.

Commissioner McRae noted that there were rope lights around the windows on two properties near 8 Mile Road and Grand River Avenue.

Commissioner Blizman asked that the Traffic Engineer take a look at the impact on traffic resulting from the proposed Forest at Wooddale subdivision in time for the public hearing. Staff Engineer Darnall said he would speak to the Traffic Engineer about this.

Commissioner Schwartz said the Grand River Corridor Improvement Authority had engaged 3-4 interns from the University of Michigan to look at how to incorporate the river in the redevelopment there. The Authority was turning its attention to how to market the area and how to use the Botsford/Beaumont renovation to good effect.

Chair Topper asked staff to look at trees that were overhanging the sidewalk on 12 Mile Road west of Inkster on the south side.

Commissioner Fleischhacker asked staff to address a flashing open sign at the new Urgent Care on the west side of Orchard Lake Road south of 13 Mile Road.

Commissioner Orr noted a flashing sign at the auto dealership on Grand River on the old Cedar restaurant site.

Staff Planner Stec said that the next Planning Commission meeting was the public hearing scheduled for December 17.

January 15, 21, 28 were available for January meeting dates. Staff Planner Stec said he would verify Commissioner availability via email.

Commissioner Blizman said he would be gone January 28.

Commissioner Orr said he would be gone January – March.

Commissioner Stimson said he would be absent December 17.

Commissioner Fleischhacker said he would be gone all of January.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Seeing that there was no further discussion, Chair Topper adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Schwartz  
Planning Commission Secretary

/cem