

**MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
FARMINGTON HILLS CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM
JANUARY 19, 2017, 7:30 P.M.**

Chair Rae-O'Donnell called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. on January 19, 2017.

Commissioners Present: Blizman, Brickner, Fleischhacker, Mantey, McRae, Rae-O'Donnell, Schwartz, Stimson

Commissioners Absent: Orr

Others Present: Department of Planning and Development Director Gardner, City Planner Stec, City Attorney Schultz, Planning Consultant Tangari

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Blizman, support by McRae, to approve the agenda as published.

Motion carried unanimously.

REGULAR MEETING:

Chair Rae-O'Donnell noted that tonight was Commissioner Blizman's last meeting, after 30 years of service on the Planning Commission.

A. 2017 Goal Setting Session

Utilizing a power point presentation, City Planner Stec led the discussion regarding 2017 goals. As the discussion continued, the following goals were set:

- CIA Focus Areas Overlays/Rezoning
 - Target area
- 12 Mile and Farmington area
- Senior/Assisted living areas
- Bank sites that might be vacant in future
- Explore allowing for smaller minimum lot widths in areas with lots that were originally platted at 50' and smaller widths
- 13 Mile Road and Orchard Lake rezone
- Refine sign ordinance
- Sidewalk snow removal requirement
- Revisions to Telecommunications ordinance

Round table discussion included:

- MDOT's plans for any major Grand River Avenue changes in the southeast portion of the City were very far into the future – perhaps 15 or 20 years.

- There were limited funds still available from the original Grand River CIA seed money for the two cities, approximately \$80-\$90,000. Properties had not appreciated in that area. The City's Economic Development Director seemed somewhat in the dark regarding the history of this effort.
- The Target center (West River Centre) was out of bankruptcy and had an owner and should be the focus of the Planning Commission's development efforts.
- There were some other properties that had possibilities for development in the general area of the West River Centre.
- The next Master Plan update would begin in 2018, with possible finalization in 2019.
- The Beaumont/Botsford project was moving forward.
- The area around 14 Mile/Northwestern Highway was already in the Master Plan.
- There seemed to be ongoing requests before the Planning Commission to rezone properties to allow various types of senior living. Rezoning seemed to be inappropriate in most instances. Areas where senior living facilities might be appropriate should be called out. Also, the City needed to think about whether it wanted to be heavily involved in encouraging senior living facilities, when it also needed to attract young families.
- The 12 Mile/Farmington area needed further discussion and planning. There were 3 banks in this area; they might not all survive the trend to bank online. There were other properties for sale/lease in the same area.
- There had been some thought of changing density on 13 Mile Road between Orchard Lake and Middlebelt. There was no consensus regarding this, however, and it was not included in the final goals.
- In order to encourage redevelopment in the southeast portion of the City, perhaps a new zoning district should be formed to allow smaller lots, as originally platted in this area. It was the consensus of the Commission to include in depth discussion regarding this in the 2017 goals.
- MDOT was finalizing its plans for the 13 Mile/Orchard Lake area, and there would likely be action in this area in 2017, so discussion of development in that area needed to be part of the 2017 goals.
- The City was working through enforcement of the new sign ordinance. This ordinance would likely need some minor revisions; these would come before the Commission a little later in the year.
- Revisions to the Telecommunications ordinance would also likely come before the Planning Commission.
- Regarding recent changes in State law allowing cities such discretion, City Council was opposed to allowing the expansion of medical marijuana sales in the City.

Planning and Community Development Director Gardiner said that City Council would be discussing possible areas for mixed-use development at their annual goals session. The Planning Commission would likely be involved in this discussion in 2017.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: December 15, 2016

MOTION by Fleishhacker, support by Mantey, to approve the November 17, 2016 minutes with the following amendment:

p. 14, 1st paragraph, 2nd line, after Commissioners' Comments: bicycle traffic he recently observed in European communities . . .

MOTION carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Planning and Community Development Director Gardiner congratulated Recording Secretary McGuire for receiving one of the outstanding employee awards for 2016.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS:

As this was Commissioner Blizman's last meeting, the Commissioners complimented Commissioner Blizman for his 30-year service, discussed various aspects of his service and noted that he would be missed. Commissioner Schwartz spoke to the respect Commission members had for each other, and this was especially true of Commissioner Blizman.

Commissioner Schwartz mentioned that the State Legislature had recently passed legislation making it more difficult to sue municipalities for slips and falls on sidewalks, etc. Based on this development, he would like to re-open the discussion regarding regulating sidewalk shoveling/snow clearing in the City.

City Attorney Schultz agreed with Commissioner Schwartz' comments. Chair Rae-O'Donnell said this should be placed on the 2017 goals list.

Commissioner Fleischhacker said that the building across the street from his workplace on 12 Mile Road did not have sidewalks because it wasn't on a main road, but was on Stansbury Boulevard and therefore was not required by the ordinance to have sidewalks. He would like to see this ordinance revisited and perhaps changed so that going forward all businesses would be required to have sidewalks.

Chair Rae-O'Donnell again thanked Commissioner Blizman for his service as a forward thinking planner, and for his work on zoning development.

Commissioner Blizman echoed Commissioner Schwartz' comments about the Commission being a body of members that respected each other and respected the residents. He had enjoyed his time with the Commission.

Commissioner Brickner observed that Lee and Paul Blizman had been amazingly integrated with the City for many years. He thanked them for their love for the community and the institutional memory they represented.

ADJOURNMENT:

Seeing that there was no further discussion, Chair Rae-O'Donnell adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Steven J. Stimson
Planning Commission Secretary

/cem