

**MINUTES  
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS  
PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC/REGULAR MEETING  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
March 15, 2018, 7:30 P.M.**

Chair Rae-O'Donnell called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. on March 15, 2018.

Commissioners Present: Brickner, Countegan, McRae (7:34 p.m.), Mantey (left 9:59 p.m.), Rae-O'Donnell, Schwartz (8:42 p.m.), Stimson

Commissioners Absent: Orr (1 vacancy)

Others Present: City Planner Stec, Traffic Engineer Saksewski, Civil Engineer Seewald, City Attorney Schultz, Planning Consultant Arroyo,

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION by Stimson, support by Countegan, to approve the agenda as published.**

**MOTION carried unanimously.**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**A. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN 2018/2019 THROUGH 2023/2024**

ACTION REQUESTED: Adoption of Plan

City Planner Stec gave the background for this agenda item, which was to request the adoption of the Capital Improvements Plan 2018/2019 – 2023/2024.

City Planner Stec explained that the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) was a strategic planning tool for the City's capital needs. It was not a budget, but rather was a comprehensive document that included the major programs and projects the various departments would like to accomplish over the next six years. The CIP was updated annually and was provided to City Council to use as a guide during the budget process.

The CIP included projects and purchases in excess of \$25,000, and also included smaller projects that were part of a larger network of improvements.

The goal of the CIP process was to plan for and guide needed capital improvements and expenditures in a fiscally sound manner and to ensure that those improvements were consistent with the goals and policies of the City of Farmington Hills and the expectations of its residents. The Planning Commission was mandated by State Act 33 of the Public Acts of 2008, Planning Enabling Act, to adopt a capital improvement plan after a public hearing. Per City Charter Sections 3.07 and 6.08 after adoption by the Planning Commission, the City Manager submits the CIP to City Council.

City Planner Stec explained the process thus far: in December 2017 the various departments compiled data and provided it to the Planning Department. That data was then put into a draft CIP plan that was the subject of a study session in January 2018, where projects were presented and questions answered by representatives from city departments. This evening was the public hearing, and in April the CIP would be presented to City Council during one of their regularly scheduled meetings.

The CIP was an extensive document, including the prioritization of equipment purchases, road repairs, sanitary sewer line projects, water main projects, sidewalk construction, and other large projects throughout the various departments in the City.

In response to a question from Chair Rae-O'Donnell, City Planner Stec said that the entire Capital Improvements Plan was available on the City website and copies could be provided through the Planning Office.

Chair Rae-O'Donnell opened the public hearing.

Fran Vallely, 28250 Greening, asked how road projects were prioritized and sometimes unprioritized in the CIP. There were 6 road projects that had changed from last year, some moved down and others moved up within the CIP.

Traffic Engineer Saksewski explained that there were several reports that went into the prioritization process, including PACER ratings, whether there were schools in the neighborhood, volume of traffic, safety issues, etc. The City provided documentation including a table that showed how road projects were rated. While he had not been directly involved in which projects moved up or down on the prioritization list, information regarding the specific projects could be provided.

Ms. Vallely asked when the City last reviewed the PACER numbers.

Traffic Engineer Saksewski said that the City tried to rate the roads biannually. Last year they completed a survey of the entire local road network.

Barb Cripps, Bridgeman Street, said that the Charter required a cost benefit study for major road projects. She asked when the cost benefit studies would be complete for the projects recommended, especially when thousands of residents would be affected by upcoming projects. Ms. Cripps also said the Charter said road projects were approved based on the petition of residents, and Council had decided not to follow the charter and instead force the road projects because the roads were dangerous. Yet Holly Hill, a gravel road with a single lane, blind hills, and no shoulder for 2 cars to use to pass each other, wasn't even on the list. She felt Holly Hills was the worst road in the City. She felt Council had taken away residents' rights, and the City needed to explain why Holly Hill – a truly dangerous road – wasn't on the list.

Ms. Cripps also asked about sanitary sewer projects, in particular the project on Bridgeman Street. They had never received any reports or any information related to environment impacts on the sewers. They had a class 2 sand with a 6% wash. The system should last for centuries; there had been no environmental impact study for this project. Was it generally the City's protocol to complete an environmental impact study before starting a major sanitary project?

Traffic Engineer Saksewski explained that he could not comment on sewer projects. He encouraged Ms. Cripps to come to the Engineering Department for answers to her questions.

Chair Rae-O'Donnell asked Ms. Cripps to give her information to City Planner Stec so that the City could make contact with her regarding her questions.

Commissioner Brickner explained that the City Charter allowed for two ways to begin a road improvement project in the residential sector: by petition of the residents of a subdivision, or by City Council decision.

Mary Newlin, 21645 Lundy Street, was concerned that this was a public hearing on the Capital Improvements Plan, yet answers were not being provided to the questions being asked. She felt this showed a lack of information or transparency on the part of the City. She was also concerned about road and sewer projects. Sewer projects on Bridgeman and Fink had received prioritization, yet the residents in those areas were not aware of the projects or the costs.

City Planner Stec explained that the Capital Improvements Plan was not the budget, and the items in the plan would not necessarily be the items that would be addressed by City Council. The CIP was a planning tool, with each City department putting forth and prioritizing projects that they felt were needed and that hopefully could be funded in the next six years.

For questions regarding specific projects, members of the public were always invited to stop by and speak with the appropriate staff who had the most knowledge on each of the projects.

Ms. Newlin spoke to the safety aspect of City roads. She had traveled approximately 90% of the roads in the City, and she did not understand how some roads that seemed safe were prioritized higher than other roads – especially gravel roads – that were not high on the list or not in the CIP at all. She felt there needed to be more transparency and explanation to the public.

Seeing that no one else came forward to speak, Chair Rae-O'Donnell closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Countegan thanked staff for the fine job putting together this conceptual plan of future possible projects that had not yet been budgeted but represented a part of the planning process. The Planning Commission was responsible for looking at the long term plan of the City as well as the Capital projects and he thanked staff for helping with this charge. He also appreciated the comments made this evening, and noted that as projects got funded, staff would be following up with residents with the information they needed to have in order to know exactly what was going to be involved with the individual projects.

**MOTION by Countegan, support by Mantey, that the Planning Commission adopt the City of Farmington Hills Capital Improvements Plan 2018/2019 – 2023/2024 as published.**

In response to a question from Commissioner Mantey, Traffic Engineer Saksewski said that he didn't know of any gravel roads in the City that had speed limits in excess of 25 miles per hour. Commissioner Mantey said he did not understand how gravel roads could be among the most unsafe, with such a low speed limit.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**A. PUD PLAN 3, 2017 INCLUDING SITE AND LANDSCAPE PLAN 71-12-2017**

LOCATION:	32600 Northwestern Hwy.
PARCEL I.D.:	22-23-02-126-003, 011, 012, 025
PROPOSAL:	New self-storage building and senior living facility in B-2, Community Business District and B-3, General Business District
ACTION REQUESTED:	Set for public hearing
APPLICANT:	NorthPoint Development

OWNER: NWH Holdings LLC

Utilizing overhead slides and referring to his review letter of March 6, 2018, Planning Consultant Arroyo gave the background for this request to set for public hearing this application for PUD qualification and site and landscape plan approval for a new self-storage building and senior living facility at 32600 Northwestern Highway.

The Planning Commission granted preliminary qualification to this PUD plan at its December 14, 2017 meeting. At the January 18, 2018 meeting, the Commission postponed setting a public hearing on final qualification to allow the applicant time to modify the plans and to address concerns regarding the design.

The site was accessible from 14 Mile Road and Northwestern Highway; one connection to each road was proposed. The connection to Northwestern Highway was part of the PUD, but located in an easement on land not owned by the applicant.

Surrounding zoning/uses included single-family homes to the north, an apartment complex to the east, various commercial and vacant properties to the south, and an electrical substation to the west.

Regarding Site Plan and Use: The existing commercial building was proposed to be removed, and two new buildings were proposed: a three-story self-storage facility with 691 storage units, and a three-story 99-bed senior living facility (Stonecrest) that included memory care. Both buildings were proposed on the portion of the site zoned B-2. Neither use was permitted in the B-2 district. Per Section 34-3.20.3.B, the city may permit uses not permitted in the underlying district so long as they were specifically noted on the plan.

Though three existing parcels totaling 11 acres were involved, the plan did not propose to use all the land, instead focusing on a 5.46-acre portion. The rest of the site would remain in possession of the current owner and no plans had been submitted for that portion. Several buildings on the southern portion of the greater site would be demolished as part of the PUD plan, even though those buildings were not on the PUD site.

Planning Consultant Arroyo reviewed the site and landscape plan. Outstanding issues included:

Master Plan: The Master Plan called this area out as Special Study Area #2, and listed specific policy recommendations for the area, including not allowing access from 14 Mile Road, and providing appropriate visual buffering for the residences to the north. The proposed PUD was at odds with the policy of disallowing vehicular access to 14 Mile, although the residential use on 14 Mile, use of the PUD option, visual buffering and overall orderly redevelopment of the site appeared to further other Master Plan goals and policies.

Overall circulation: The Planning Commission had expressed concern about cut-through traffic going to 14 Mile from Northwestern Highway, which the Master Plan discouraged. The Commission should discuss whether the traffic-calming measures now provided adequately addressed those concerns. There were now a series of stop signs and turns through the self-storage area designed to discourage cut-through traffic. However, the Franklin Knolls subdivision to the east had a substantial amount of cut-through traffic, approximately 200 vehicles per hour during peak hours, and there was concern that same thing would happen on this site as well. There was room for exploration of a number of ideas:

- 1) What kind of access might come from the balance of the property to this driveway? Would access only be from Northwestern Highway? If so, that should be very clear and could potentially be a

condition of the PUD approval.

2) What other actions might be appropriate in order to minimize cut-through traffic? Could a gate be installed in front of the self-storage building that would prohibit all but emergency vehicles from traveling from one side to the other? That would provide the self-storage facility with access from Northwestern and 14 Mile because there was parking on either side. The senior living facility would be served only from the 14 Mile access point. The gate would prohibit cut-through traffic from Northwestern to 14 Mile Road and emergency vehicles could have access through the gate.

Rooftop Appurtenances. Any rooftop equipment would need to be shielded per ordinance.

Building materials. The building height had been brought down so a deviation was no longer required. The Stonecrest facility appeared to have high quality design materials, but the self-storage facility was more industrial in appearance. There were some living screen panels that had been removed from the self-storage unit. Why was that?

Lighting needed to meet ordinance standards.

Landscaping and tree preservation. A few trees in the area adjacent to the residential development directly to the east hadn't been catalogued.

Planning Consultant Arroyo explained that a PUD application could request relief from certain standards, including dimensional standards, in exchange for public benefits. The following dimensional standards were not met:

- East setback to residential district: 75 feet required; 64 feet proposed.
- West setback to commercial district: 20 feet required; 10 feet proposed.
- Front setback: 75 feet required, 25 feet proposed. However, only the pointed ends of the senior living facility were protruding into the setback.
- Parking for the senior living facility: 74 spaces required; 54 spaces proposed. The Planning Commission should discuss parking demand for the senior living facility use and whether adjusting the parking requirement as part of the PUD agreement was warranted. What happened during special events? Was there an overflow plan?
- Parking for the self-storage facility: The ordinance did not include a parking requirement for self-storage uses. The plan proposed 11 parking spaces; there appeared to be 2 interior loading spaces, though the plan did not delineate a number. The Commission should discuss parking demand for this type of facility; spaces were provided at a rate of roughly 1 per 63 storage units.
- Screening: A six-foot wall was required to the east; wood fencing with masonry columns was proposed.

Jed Momot, Project Manager, Northpoint Development, 230 S. Berniston, Ste 500, Clayton MO, was present on behalf of this application.

Regarding the access drive and the potential for cut-through traffic, Mr. Momot said they had introduced a number of calming activities to the access drive, including 3 stop signs for left and right hand turns within that road. Additionally, the reconfiguration of the parking to the rear for the self-storage building created a unique pathway for that drive and discouraged cut-through traffic. Also, as already mentioned, they could install a gate blocking the drive from Northwestern Highway. Only emergency vehicles and Stonecrest staff would be able to access the gate.

Regarding the PUD boundaries, the access drive had a small portion of land that would still be owned by the current owner; there would be a cross access agreement. Both NorthPoint Development and NWH holdings were now party to the PUD as co-applicants.

The dumpster had been moved to the rear of the self-storage building.

As mentioned, the height of the senior living facility had been decreased, so that a height deviation was no longer necessary.

Regarding setbacks, Mr. Momot said if they reduced the dimensions of the porte-cochere on the east façade of the senior living facility, they would be able to meet the setback requirement on the east side. They would still be requesting relief on the front yard (14 Mile Road) as well as on the west.

Regarding the landscaping along 14 Mile Road, they were now proposing a large berm that was full of landscaping. While it would not shield the buildings completely it would provide a great buffer along 14 Mile.

They had proposed a double-sided cedar fence along the east boundary, with masonry pilasters to match the building. If necessary they would construct a masonry wall, but they preferred the fence.

Mr. Momot concluded his presentation.

Chair Rae-O'Donnell acknowledged receipt of a letter from Diane Housner, who wondered if there was a need for another senior living facility in the area. The letter would be part of the future public hearing.

In response to a question from Commissioner Countegan, Mr. Momot said they would be razing the old AT&T building, as well as a small retail building along Northwestern that was not part of the PUD. They would also raze all of the existing parking lots on the entire parcel and clean up the entire area as part of this development, not just the portion that would be part of this PUD development.

Commissioner Countegan asked City Attorney Schultz to comment on this arrangement. City Attorney Schultz said that improvements off site could be part of the PUD agreement.

Commissioner Stimson asked if future businesses would have access rights to the drive from Northwestern to 14 Mile Road, including the future installation of additional curb cuts. Mr. Momot said that there was no intention for another curb cut or any other access plan along that drive. If a gate were included, the only access to the senior living facility would be from 14 Mile Road.

Chair Rae-O'Donnell asked if the Fire Department had reviewed the plan for the access road if in fact a gate were installed? Mr. Momot said the Fire Department appeared to be in support of that plan, as long as the gate was wide enough for their equipment to pass through and they had access to the gate per Department standards.

Commissioner Brickner confirmed again with Mr. Momot that future businesses to the south would not be able to use the access road from Northwestern Highway to access 14 Mile Road.

Seeing that there was no more discussion, Chair Rae-O'Donnell asked for a motion.

**MOTION by Brickner, support by McRae, that P.U.D. Plan No. 3, 2018, including Site and Landscape Plan 71-12-2017, submitted on January 31, 2018 by Northpoint Development, be set for Public Hearing by the Planning Commission on April 19, 2018.**

Commissioner McRae said he was supporting the motion in order to move it forward to a public hearing. He still had reservations about this project, and questioned whether the City was receiving appropriate benefit as part of this PUD application. He felt the entire project was being crammed onto the property and he would have preferred a cohesive view of the entire 11-acre parcel.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**B. SITE AND LANDSCAPE PLAN 72-12-2016**

LOCATION:	29141 Twelve Mile Rd.
PARCEL I.D.:	22-23-13-126-002
PROPOSAL:	Banquet Hall for existing Place of Worship in RA-2, One Family Residential District
ACTION REQUESTED:	Approval of Site and Landscape Plan
APPLICANT:	Lubin Ivanouski
OWNER:	Great Martyr St George of Kratovo

Utilizing overhead slides and referring to his March 5, 2018 letter, Planning Consultant gave the review for this request for approval of site and landscape plan for a banquet hall for an existing place of worship at 29149 Twelve Mile Road. This request had originally come before the Commission in early 2017. At that time the Commission felt the plan needed significant reconfiguration.

Outstanding issues included:

- There were fairly significant issues with the lighting plan. The fixtures were shown at a mounting height that was taller than permitted, and the type of lighting proposed was not full cutoff.
- Regarding the screening of the parking area, the plan showed a 20-foot wide, 3-foot tall berm along the southern and western property lines. The applicant was granted a ZBA variance from the minimum berm height standard in May 2017, permitting a 3-foot berm provided the plantings adequately achieved the remaining screening, and they were maintained and replaced as needed. However, the plans did not show a setback from the water main on the west side of the property. Engineering had a minimum requirement of trees planted at least 6 feet from the water main, to prevent root damage. A typical cross section of the berm and screening needed to be provided to confirm the 6-foot tall buffer between neighbors.
- Regarding storm water management, the applicant had pulled back the primary detention area away from the wooded area, but a forebay treatment area had not been provided. Engineering had suggested potentially expanding the detention area to the north, away from the treed area, and then the smaller pond could be converted to a forebay. There were other modifications that would be needed to address other outstanding engineering issues as well.

Commissioner McRae asked if some of the parking could be put in the front yard. Planning Consultant Arroyo said front yard parking was not permitted. Commissioner McRae said he wanted to have that information on the record, as the applicant was going to be basically paving the entire back yard, and the neighbors might question that change.

Commissioner Stimson wondered if the new water main on Greencastle would affect this property.

Adman Al-Sati, A&M Consultants, 835 Mason, Dearborn MI was present on behalf of this application. Lubin Ivanouski was present on behalf of the church.

Mr. Al-Sati said they would revise the landscape plan to show the lighting conforming to city requirements. They would make sure that all plantings were 6 feet from the water main.

Regarding the detention pond, because of lack of space they would like to replace the conventional forebay with a mechanical forebay; that was what they were now showing on the plans.

Regarding parking, Commissioner McRae noted that there was a stipulation that the church and banquet hall would not be used at the same time. However, he was skeptical that there wouldn't be times that both facilities would be used simultaneously. How would parking be addressed when that was the case?

Mr. Ivanouski said the two buildings would never be used simultaneously. Weddings, funerals, christenings, etc., would first occur in the church and then move to the banquet hall.

Commissioner Countegan asked if there were any use issues, should the banquet hall be rented out, especially as the banquet facility was much larger than the church. Planning Consultant Arroyo explained that typically a separate gathering facility was a customary accessory use to a place of worship. The use as described by the applicant appeared to conform to that customary accessory use.

Commissioner Mantey asked how far away from the front door the nearest handicap space was located. Mr. Al-Sati said those spaces were about 50-55 feet from the front door.

Chair Rae-O'Donnell indicated she was ready for a motion.

**MOTION by Countegan, support by Brickner, that Site Plan 72-12-2016, dated February 8, 2018, submitted by Lubin Ivanouski, be approved because it appears to meet all applicable requirements of the Zoning Chapter, subject to the following conditions:**

- **Revised photometric and lighting plan be submitted for administrative review.**
- **Engineering requirements for storm water detention be met. If significant changes result, the plan will return to the Planning Commission for further review.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**Motion by Countegan, support by Brickner, that Landscape Plan 72-12-2016, dated February 8, 2018, submitted by Lubin Ivanouski, be approved because it appears to meet all applicable Zoning Chapter requirements, and applicable Design Principles as adopted by the Planning Commission, subject to the following conditions:**

- **Trees are to be located no closer than 6 feet from the water main along the western property line.**
- **A berm cross section is added to the site plan for administrative review.**

Commissioner McRae said he would oppose the motion because he would like the Commission to see the revised landscape plan showing the changes on the western border.

**Motion carried 5-1 (McRae opposed.)**

Commissioner Schwartz arrived at 8:42 p.m.

**C. SITE AND LANDSCAPE PLAN 51-1-2018**

LOCATION:	32418 Northwestern Hwy.
PARCEL I.D.:	22-23-02-126-027
PROPOSAL:	Gas station and convenience store in B-3, General Business District
ACTION REQUESTED:	Approval of site and landscape plan
APPLICANT:	Tarak Gayed (Gas Town, LLC)
OWNER:	Northwestern Vineyards, LLC

Utilizing overhead slides, and referring to his letter of January 10, 2018, Planning Consultant Arroyo gave the review for this proposal for a gas station and convenience store at 32418 Northwestern Highway. The site was 0.59 acres and zoned B-3 Community Business. Gas stations were a permitted use in the B-3 District, subject to the standards of Section 34-4.28.

The applicant was proposing to demolish the 2,949 square foot portion of the building that extended toward Northwestern Highway, and install 8 gas pump fueling positions in the part of the front yard that was paved and presently used as parking spaces and a maneuvering lane. The total square footage of the building would decrease from 8,056 square feet to 5,064 square feet.

There were some setback standards that currently were not met on the residential side, but those were existing nonconformities and would remain nonconforming for this proposal.

22 parking spaces were required and only 16 were provided. Additionally, this was a very tight site. If a car was parked for fueling, and another car was waiting behind, access to the parking spaces in the rear would be blocked. Also, it appeared that a tanker truck exiting the site would encroach on the highway median. There did not appear to be enough radius for truck turns generally. Also if a truck came when cars were fueling it would not be able to enter the site. There were significant concerns regarding stacking and circulation.

The photometric plan was not complete; photometric values needed to be overlaid on the site plan to show compliance with lighting standards at the property line.

A wall was proposed on the west side at the front of the building that needed to be explained.

Currently there were parking spaces in the rear, apparently located on the residential property to the east. Was there a formal agreement for the use of these spaces?

There were some minor landscaping issues as outlined in the review letter.

Commissioner Mantey asked if the parking spaces at the front eastern part of the site were also on the neighbor's property. Could the applicant confirm their boundary lines?

Architect John Saad, 31786 Clarita, Livonia, MI was present on behalf of this application, as was Tarek Gayar, owner. Mr. Gayar explained that they planned to demolish the front half of the existing building and install a gas station, as already described.

Mr. Saad said they had ordered a survey of the property. They were constructing a wall on the west front property line to hide the back of the neighboring building, which would be visible after the front of the

subject building was demolished. They were also going to build a wall along the residential property to the east, although he was concerned that a utility easement was located there. They would revise the lighting plan to ensure lighting met ordinance standards.

Regarding the site itself, while this was a tough site he had seen other gas stations on Northwestern Highway that had tough, narrow conditions. The loading/unloading could occur in the rear of the building; that was how it was done currently. They could improve the truck turning radius by pulling the pumps back about 4 feet from Northwestern Highway.

Mr. Saad continued that they would never have more than 2 cars stacked at any one time, as cars would keep going to the next available station rather than wait in line. He described how a fueling truck could enter and exit the site; they would discuss this with the traffic engineer.

Landscaping requirements would be met.

Again, a survey of the property was being ordered.

Planning Consultant Arroyo said a boundary survey would help everyone know exactly what they were dealing with. He pointed out that currently the plan showed a turning radius where a turn could not be made, due to the fact that what was shown was not a true radius – there was a kink in the radius there that would have to be adjusted.

Traffic Engineer Saksewski agreed that the turning radius did not allow for a large truck or tanker to get into the site; it would run into the median. The circulation of the site was so tight that if even one vehicle was on the site a tanker could not enter it. The plan showed the truck entering in the outbound lane on a highway that had 20,000 to 30,000 vehicles per day – very heavy traffic.

Commissioner Countegan asked why the pump islands were not configured more due north. Mr. Saad said the pumps were located where they were due to stacking patterns. However, they could move the pumps somewhat, though if they were straightened the situation would be made worse.

Commissioner McRae asked if the pumps were not quite 22 feet apart. Mr. Saad said they had to leave space so that people opening car doors had room to do that. Commissioner McRae wondered if that dimension met industry standard.

Commissioner McRae asked how the dumpster in back could be emptied. Mr. Saad said the rear dumpster was currently being serviced; that situation would remain.

Commissioner McRae pointed out that the parking deficiency would require a variance from the ZBA. He asked about process this evening. He felt the applicants had a long way to go regarding this project. If he had to vote now, he would vote to deny.

Mr. Saad pointed out that people didn't come to gas stations like this one to use their store; they used the store while using the gas pump. He did not think they needed as much parking as was being required.

City Planner Stec said that the garbage truck could access the rear of the site currently because of the parking spaces to the east already mentioned. However, those parking spaces would disappear with the construction of the wall. The turning radius for that area should be shown.

A discussion of process followed. There were several significant outstanding issues, including the lack of a survey, inadequate turning radius, inadequate stacking, etc. The consensus of the Commission was not to send the applicant to the ZBA before these other issues were resolved.

**Motion by McRae, support by Countegan, to postpone this application for Site and Landscape Plan 51-1-2018 to a date uncertain to allow the applicants time to improve upon the plan and submit additional information requested, with the understanding that there is still a parking issue that would have to be resolved through the Zoning Board of Appeals. Outstanding issues included:**

1. Car stacking at pumps.
2. Roof-top unit screening.
3. Lighting and photometric plan.
4. Details on wall proposed in the front yard
5. Site circulation issues.
6. Ensure the plan is based on an accurate survey.
7. Try to minimize the parking deficiency.
8. Mitigate the impact of fuel trucks on Northwestern Highway.
9. Provide accurate truck turning radii for both fuel trucks and garbage trucks.

City Attorney Schultz noted that not every site in a zoning district was large enough for every permitted use. If the applicants were not able to satisfy requirements for stacking, turning radii, etc., the Planning Commission would need to act with that in mind. The only issue that might go before the ZBA would be the deficit in parking spaces.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**D. SITE PLAN 52-2-2018**

LOCATION:	29380 Thirteen Mile Rd.
PARCEL I.D.:	22-23-01-351-009
PROPOSAL:	Replacement of existing Natural Gas Valve Station in RA-1, One-Family Residential District
ACTION REQUESTED:	Approval of site plan
APPLICANT:	Consumers Energy, Joseph Lawson
OWNER:	Consumers Energy

City Planner Stec explained that the applicant had submitted a revised plan along with some additional information; this had not yet been reviewed.

Utilizing overhead slides and referring to his letter of March 6, 2018, revised March 13, 2018, Planning Consultant Arroyo gave the review for this application for site plan approval for the replacement of structures at this existing Consumers Energy site. The site was adjacent to residential to the northeast as well as to the north. The applicant was proposing to remove all existing piping and building, the existing chain link fence, and most of the vegetation in the northern portion of the site. The equipment and buildings would be replaced, and the yard would be re-surfaced with an interior driveway and light gravel yard. A new fence would be installed, and re-grading of the site would necessitate installation of a retaining wall along the northern property line. Pictures of the new equipment had been provided.

Regarding dimensional requirements, setback requirements were not met, as described in the review letter. There were setback issues regardless of whether the actual or proposed right-of-way was used.

There was a gravel loop drive proposed with a paved driveway at the gated entrance. This site would not have employees; no parking was required.

The lighting plan did not provide the average:minimum ratio for site lighting; it appeared that lighting levels exceeded the maximum 0.3 footcandles at the property line in the area near the pole-mounted fixtures and the fixtures shown did not meet ordinance standards. In particular, the building-mounted fixture was not full cut off, and the pole-mounted fixtures were shown mounted at an angle, which would direct glare toward residential property lines.

Walls and fences, and screening, remained the most significant issues. Currently there was significant landscaping along the north and east property lines, including tall trees and brush. The applicant was proposing to remove all the landscaping and not replace any of it, and instead install a fence to surround the property. A landscape plan was not provided because no landscaping was proposed.

This raised the issue of whether a new public hearing should be scheduled for this special land use. If the modification was deemed minor or any changes were effectively mitigated, a special land use hearing would not be necessary. However, if the change were deemed major in that residents would lose screening, perhaps a special land use hearing would be called for. Removing screening next to residential uses was problematic.

Joseph Lawson, Consumers Energy, 1 Energy Plaza, Jackson MI was present on behalf of this application. Doug Scott, 27260 Haggerty, Farmington Hills and Erwin A. Wietrick, 1427 Newport St #7, Traverse City, MI were also present.

Mr. Lawson said they were not intensifying or changing the existing special land use. They were refurbishing the facility, changing the valves and piping, and adding a new building that would look better than what was there now. They would be adding a decorative fence around the perimeter.

Mr. Lawson explained that they were requesting the tree removal because Consumers Energy as a matter of policy did not have landscaping inside their sites. Trees acted as a conductor to their underground gas lines. They didn't want trees over high-pressure gas lines. They were not opposed to mitigating the tree removal, and did have a copy of a concept plan – not yet submitted – that would plant trees off site on the adjacent eastern property.

Mr. Lawson said all lighting would meet ordinance requirements.

They had been in conversation with the neighboring condominium association; it was his understanding that the neighbors would prefer the decorative fence as opposed to a berm.

Regarding setbacks, the proposed building did meet all setback requirements. They believed the pipes, etc., were exempt from local code as an essential service. The valves along 13 Mile Road would remain unchanged. They were applying for a ZBA variance for the 6-foot fence in the front yard.

Commissioner McRae asked why the retaining wall was proposed on the north property line. Mr. Lawson said with the looped driveway, the retaining was necessary to control water run off, especially as the site dropped in that area.

Commissioners McRae and Schwartz spoke to the need to screen this site from the residential neighbors. Commissioner Stimson pointed out that the ZBA hearing would be noticed and a public hearing would be held.

Planning Consultant Arroyo said there were two issues: the 6-foot wall in the front yard, and the removal of trees that were not being replaced. The standards in Section 4.8 regarding a special land use required that a landscape plan be submitted.

City Attorney Schultz advised that if the Commission moved this plan forward, they would have to find a reason to approve the tree removal.

City Planner Stec noted that the ZBA could not grant a variance from special land use requirements.

City Attorney Schultz said that parts of the public utility were exempt under the ordinance; the City was just receiving information this evening as to what was proposed for this site. Pipes and other equipment were described as essential public services.

In response to a question from Commissioner Mantey, Mr. Lawson said for security purposes the location of underground pipes was not shown on the plans.

Commissioner Mantey asked the distance from the furthest tree to be removed from an underground pipe. The Commission needed that information in order to approve the requested tree removal.

Mr. Scott explained that at the northern property line, the site dropped off significantly. To make the loop drive drivable for trucks, and to control the runoff on the site, the northern trees needed to be removed. Most of the trees being removed were Cottonwoods. The roots of mature trees stretched as far as the tree canopy.

Chair Rae-O'Donnell did not think the Commission could move forward without seeing a landscape plan.

Planning Consultant Arroyo asked why a wall could not be constructed. Significant landscape screening was being replaced by a decorative fence.

Mr. Scott said the condo association would rather have landscaping and a decorative fence as opposed to a masonry wall. Mr. Lawson added that the retaining wall along the north was already 6 feet tall, and a decorative fence would be placed on top of that.

Commissioner Countegan asked the purpose of a special approval. Planning Consultant Arroyo said special approvals related to land use. If the site were changing significantly from the originally approved special land use, the Commission might want to have a public hearing. If however the applicants could show significant mitigation, perhaps a hearing was not necessary.

Mr. Wietrick said he had been working with the condominium owners, who were concerned with the old trees, some of which were failing. They were fine with having the trees removed.

Commissioner Brickner said the approval of the condo association regarding the tree removal and then planting replacement trees on their property should be in writing. Mr. Wietrick said that could be provided.

The consensus of the Commission was that the plan should show landscaping, even if it was on the neighboring property. The calculation regarding required replacement trees should also be complete.

Commissioner McRae asked why the fence was decorative and not solid. Mr. Lawson said they preferred a see-through fence for security reasons.

**MOTION by Brickner, support by McRae, to postpone Site Plan 52-2-2018, submitted by Consumers Energy, Joseph Lawson, to a date uncertain to give the applicant time to bring more information to the City, specifically regarding landscape plans and the submission of a letter from the residential neighbors addressing screening and tree removals.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**E. SITE AND LANDSCAPE PLAN 53-2-2018**

LOCATION:	31995 Northwestern Hwy.
PARCEL I.D.:	22-23-02-251-006
PROPOSAL:	Addition to existing Medical Office in OS-1, Office Service District
ACTION REQUESTED:	Approval of site and landscape plan
APPLICANT:	Craig Westrick of Ghafari Associates
OWNER:	Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute

Commissioner Mantey disclosed that his wife worked for the Karmanos Cancer Institute, and asked to be recused.

**MOTION by Rae-O'Donnell, support by Stimson, to recuse Commissioner Mantey from discussion of this agenda item because his wife works for the Karmanos Cancer Institute.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

Commissioner Mantey left the meeting at 9:59 p.m.

City Planner Stec said that a revised plan had been submitted for this application regarding the proposed location of the temporary structure, but that plan had not yet been reviewed.

Utilizing overhead slides and referring to his letter of March 6, 2018, Planning Consultant gave the review for this application for site and landscape plan approval for an addition to the existing medical office at 31995 Northwestern Highway. The addition would provide a permanent home for the MRI unit and also provide additional parking spaces and landscaping. Currently the Karmanos Cancer Institute hosted a mobile MRI unit on an outdoor pad with a screening wall on the south side of the larger building.

The plan was to install two indoor truck bays where the applicant would park the mobile MRI unit and provide additional parking. Most of the proposed addition was to the right along Northwestern Highway, to the east of the site. Residential zoning RA-1 and RC-1 were adjacent to the site.

Outstanding issues included:

- The proposed loading area was behind a retaining wall. It would be helpful to have a cross section starting at the edge of Northwestern Highway and cutting through a section to the staging area with MRI trucks in place, placed through the centerline of the driveway to Northwestern Highway and

extending to the second retaining wall. Also, the applicants should explain the new loading area within the 20-foot rear yard setback.

- The photometric plan did not show lighting levels at the residential property line; it should be confirmed that those would not exceed 0.3 footcandles.
- The applicant should confirm that no rooftop utilities were planned or show the method of screening.
- Details of the dumpster enclosures should be provided to show compliance with Section 34.5.1.3.D.
- A temporary clinic would be used during the renovation of the facility. Details of the temporary clinic had not been provided. Was the applicant applying under a separate permit?

Craig Westrick, Ghafari Associates, 17101 Michigan Ave., Dearborn MI was present on behalf of this application. Justin Clamerus, President of Karmanos Cancer Institute, was also present.

Mr. Westrick explained that the temporary clinic would be a separate permit application. Two temporary buildings would be used for swing spaces, exam rooms, etc. The new submission showed the temporary clinic location basically where the temporary portable MRI unit was currently.

In response to a question from Commissioner McRae, Mr. Westrick said the screening walls for the truck well would be made of a wood-toned screen-like metal panel.

In response to a question from Commissioner Schwartz, City Attorney Schultz said the motion could limit the time the temporary clinic structures could be on site.

City Planner Stec noted that the new location of the temporary clinic had not yet been reviewed; the structures were very close to the residential properties. The applicant had asked if the Commission would be open to approving the permanent construction with the truck well, and allow them to come back for approval of temporary structure location.

Commissioner Brickner noted that had been a similar temporary MRI structure next door; this was not much different.

Commissioner McRae asked the applicant about the timeline for this project. Mr. Westrick said they planned to complete the permanent addition by March 2019. If they could have approval for the temporary structures until September 1, 2019 that should be plenty of time.

**MOTION by Countegan, support by Schwartz that Site Plan 53-2-2018, dated February 16, 2018, submitted by Craig Westrick of Ghafari Associates, be approved because it appears to meet all applicable requirements of the Zoning Chapter, subject to a revised plan addressing the following items being submitted for administrative review.**

- **Revised photometric and lighting plans.**
- **Show rooftop screening.**
- **Show dumpster enclosure details.**
- **Plan be submitted showing the location of temporary medical office trailers. If any issues result the plans will come back to the Planning Commission for further review.**
- **Temporary trailers must be removed by September 1, 2019.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**MOTION by McRae, support by Brickner, that Landscape Plan 53-2-2018, dated February 16, 2018, submitted by Craig Westrick of Ghafari Associates, be approved because it appears to meet all applicable Zoning Chapter requirements and applicable Design Principles as adopted by the Planning Commission, subject to the following conditions:**

- **A revised plan be submitted for administrative review addressing the items in the March 6, 2018 Giffels Webster review letter.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**F. SITE AND LANDSCAPE PLAN 54-2-2018**

LOCATION:	39205 and 39300 Grand River
PARCEL I.D.:	22-23-19-351-015
PROPOSAL:	Vehicle parking and display for existing auto dealer and body shop in B-3, General Business District
ACTION REQUESTED:	Approval of site and landscape plan
APPLICANT:	Bloom General Contracting, Inc.
OWNER:	Tom Holzer Ford, Inc.

Utilizing overhead slides and referring to his letter dated March 8, 2018, Planning Consultant Arroyo gave the review for this request for site and landscape plan approval for vehicle parking and display for an existing auto dealer and body shop in the B-3 General Business District (Tom Holzer Ford).

Outstanding issues included:

- A future car wash area shown on the plans should be removed.
- The proposed parking was intended as vehicle storage for the body shop. Per section 34-4.31, in the B-3 district, vehicles awaiting repair were to be stored in an area enclosed by a wall. The applicant did not note the anticipated condition of the vehicles that will be kept in this storage area.
- The applicant must re-submit a photometric plan that met the standards of Section 34-5.16.
- The applicant was proposing to remove nearly all vegetation in the southern and eastern portions of the body shop site. A Tree Permit must be obtained from the Planning office prior to all tree removal activity involving trees six inches or more DBH in accordance with Chapter 34-.518.
- MDOT approval was required for the 4 trees proposed to be removed within the I-275 right of way.
- The applicant proposed to remove 27 regulated trees and 4 landmark trees. 37 replacement trees were required. No replacement trees were provided on the site. Instead, the applicant proposed to pay \$350 per tree (total \$12,950) into the tree replacement fund. The Planning Commission and applicant should discuss whether any replacement trees could be placed on the dealership site; the intent of the tree ordinance was to preserve canopy, and while paying into the tree fund was an alternative provided by the ordinance, it was not contemplated as the first option. Further, under Section 34-5.18, when replacement or relocation of trees on site or on a one-to-one basis was not feasible and/or desirable, the Planning Commission could substitute greater size for replacement trees or require replacement trees at another location on public property in the city.
- There were minor landscape improvements shown; no landscape plan was provided. A landscape cost estimate was required.

Paul Lewsley, 18620 W. 10 Mile Road, Southfield, was present on behalf of this application.

Mr. Lewsley explained that the future car wash was simply a space saver and would be removed.

Regarding parking requirements, the body shop was before the Commission about 4 years ago. At that time there was discussion about this section of the ordinance and where the damaged vehicles would be stored. They were told the preferred location was behind the building, and that's where they had been stored. Because of additional need for storage, the expanded parking was being shown behind the body shop.

The photometric plan did only show the 4 new light poles; the original body shop plan had shown all the lights. They could add the additional light poles in the photometric and document as requested.

The applicant recognized the approval process for the removal of the 4 trees in the MDOT right of way; that process had been started.

Mr. Lewsley spoke to the general requirement for tree replacement. Over the course of the last 3-4 years, they had been before the Planning Commission several times, and each time they had added more trees to bring the site up to standard. In this case they were willing to contribute the required funds to the City's tree fund. 4 additional parking lot trees would be added to the site.

There was a comment in the review letter about the area along I-275 needing a hedge, small shrub, masonry wall, etc., that would be 2 feet high. In this case they would be continuing a retaining wall, which for safety purposes would have a 3-foot decorative metal rail on top. Hopefully that met the intent of the ordinance.

Chair Rae-O'Donnell asked if the applicant would be willing to substitute trees of greater caliper as replacement trees, as asked by the Planning Consultant.

Mr. Lewsley reiterated that they had been filling in the property with trees, and in this case they preferred to contribute to the tree fund.

In response to a question from Commissioner Stimson, Mr. Lewsley said there was a water main in between the shopping center and the collision shop; they could not put trees there.

Seeing that discussion had ended, Chair Rae-O'Donnell indicated she was ready for a motion.

**MOTION by Schwartz, support by McRae, that Site Plan 54-2-2018, dated February 20, 2018, submitted by Bloom General Contracting, Inc., be approved because it appears to meet all applicable requirements of the Zoning Chapter, subject to a revised plan being submitted for administrative review, addressing the following items:**

- City Engineer requirements.
- Four parking lot trees be added to the plan.
- Removal of "future carwash" notation from the plans.

**And with the following determination: payment into the tree fund for replacement trees is acceptable, at \$350.00 per tree.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**MOTION by Schwartz, support by McRae, that Landscape Plan 54-2-2018, dated February 20, 2018, submitted by Bloom General Contracting, Inc., be approved because it appears to meet all applicable Zoning Chapter requirements, and applicable Design Principles, as adopted by**

**the Planning Commission, conditioned on a revised plan being submitted for administrative review addressing the following items:**

- **Details on 4 parking lot trees added as part of site plan approval.**
- **MDOT permit be acquired for the trees in the right of way.**

**The motion includes the determination that the proposed decorative fence is an acceptable alternative to the required 2-foot wall or hedgerow between the parking lot and freeway right-of-way.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**G. SITE AND LANDSCAPE PLAN 55-2-2018**

LOCATION:	30150 Grand River
PARCEL I.D.:	22-23-35-201-009
PROPOSAL:	Two indoor recreational facilities in excess of 3,300 square feet in B-3, General Business District.
ACTION REQUESTED:	Approval of site and landscape plan
APPLICANT:	Nicholas Shango
OWNER:	West River Shopping Center, LLC

Utilizing overhead slides and referring to his letter of March 8, 2018, revised March 13, 2018, Planning Consultant Arroyo reviewed this request for site and landscape plan approval for two indoor recreational facilities in excess of 3,300 square feet in the B-3, General Business District at the former Kohl's site at West River Shopping Center.

Planning Consultant Arroyo explained that the applicant was proposing to subdivide the former Kohl's site into two tenant spaces. One space would be occupied by Edge Fitness (37,000 square feet) and the other would be occupied by Urban Air Trampoline (39,000 square feet).

There was plentiful parking on site. Exterior alterations would be made to the building, mostly consisting of added windows to the façade.

Outstanding issues included:

- The applicant should confirm that there were no changes to exterior lighting. The Commission could request a full photometric plan and evaluation if they were concerned that the site was substantially out of compliance with the existing ordinance.
- Pedestrian connections. There was an existing pedestrian connection to the 9 Mile Road sidewalk, though not to the Grand River sidewalk. This particular location was fairly far from Grand River.
- Rooftop equipment: The applicant should indicate the method of screening for the existing rooftop equipment.
- Floor plans: The floor plans did not appear to show a bathroom for Edge Fitness, as would generally be required for a commercial operation. The applicant should address this.
- While indoor recreation was a permitted use in the B-3 district, it was subject to the standards of Section 34-4.19, including the following: *In the B-3 district, the zoning lot occupied by such use shall not be located within 300 feet of any residential district, unless separated from the residential district by a major or secondary thoroughfare.* This zoning lot abutted an RC-3 district.

Planning Consultant Arroyo pointed out that this site was the subject of special study in the Grand River Corridor Vision Plan, which called for redevelopment of the site's northern two thirds with residential

development. This proposal carried forward the existing shopping center use by reoccupying a vacant space with two new establishments.

Planning Consultant Arroyo said that a tree survey cataloguing all trees on site should be provided. This application included a landscaping and tree removal plan for the broader site. The applicant was proposing to replace many existing parking lot landscaping trees with new ones. 100 trees were being replaced and 24 were being transplanted. An additional 7 trees were also proposed. The landscape plans were partially intended to bring the site into compliance with a plan submitted at the time that trees were removed.

City Planner Stec further explained that several years ago several large pine trees obstructed the sign on Grand River. Also, the parking lot had been full of ash trees. In 2013 administrative approval was granted for the plan submitted this evening, which helped maintain visibility along Grand River as well as improved the parking lot tree situation.

Nicholas Shango, 38000 Grand River, Farmington Hills was present on behalf of this application. He made the following points:

- They were not adding any exterior lighting to the site.
- No new rooftop equipment was being added, and no HVAC units were visible.
- They would have ADA compliant restrooms for both facilities.

The consensus of the Commission was that no pedestrian connection would be required to Grand River Avenue.

Commissioner Schwartz urged Mr. Shango to become familiar with all the documents regarding the Grand River Corridor Vision Statement for this area.

Mr. Shango said he had been in communication with City Planner Stec. They had already changed the parking lot lights to LED, repaired about 60% of the parking lot, 30% of the roof, and had begun some preliminary layouts for a PUD.

**MOTION by Schwartz, support by Brickner, that Site Plan 55-2-2018, dated February 22, 2018, submitted by Nicholas Shango be approved because it appears to meet all applicable requirements of the Zoning Chapter, subject to the following:**

- **A variance is granted to the requirement that indoor recreation facilities above 3,300 square feet not abut a residential district**

**The Planning Commission also makes the following determinations:**

- **A pedestrian connection to the Grand River sidewalk is not required.**
- **A photometric plan is not necessary.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**MOTION by Schwartz, support by McRae, that Landscape Plan 55-2-2018, dated February 22, 2018, submitted by Nicholas Shango, be approved because it appears to meet all applicable Zoning Chapter requirements and applicable Design Principles as adopted by the Planning Commission, noting that this approval is for the revised landscape plan previously approved administratively as described.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

Commissioner Brickner noted the lights were finally off at the now vacant Burger King.

Commissioner Schwartz suggested that the Commission invite Max Brook realtors, who were listing the old Kendallwood swim pool property on Farmington Road, to a study session in order to discuss possible developments for that property.

Meetings were scheduled for April 12 and April 19. April 12 would be a study session in order to meet with Mayor Massey regarding the development at Harrison High School and the Costick Center.

Commissioner Stimson suggested the discussion on April 12 be broadened to include future land use goals throughout the City. Commissioner Countegan agreed.

Commissioner Stimson said that a joint meeting between Council and Planning Commission should also be suggested.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** February 15, 2018

**Motion by Schwartz, support by Countegan, that the February 15, 2018 minutes be approved as presented.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Seeing that there was no further comment, Chair Rae-O'Donnell adjourned the meeting at 10:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Steven Stimson  
Planning Commission Secretary

/cem