

**FINAL
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

Monday, February 7, 2022
2009 Township Drive
Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

A. CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Parel called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

ROLL CALL: Present:

Brian Parel, Chairperson
Brian Winkler, Vice Chairperson
Chelsea Rebeck, Secretary
Bill McKeever
George Weber
Sam Karim
Joe Loskill

Also Present:

Dave Campbell, Township Planning Director
Paula Lankford, Planner
Jay James, Engineer/Building Official

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Rebeck, supported by Winkler, to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Agenda of February 7, 2022, as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Loskill, supported by Karim, to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of January 10, 2022, as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

D. UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES

George Weber – Township Board of Trustees

- We had two Board meetings since our last Planning Commission meeting.
- At the January 11th meeting, a couple items of note for this Commission.
 - We are moving forward to apply for a grant to build a pathway from Long Park to the trailway that runs along M-5, connecting the park and some of southwestern Commerce Township to that. Right now, there's no way to get there unless you ride along 14 Mile Road, which might not be the safest thing.
 - We established a resolution to put in place an SAD for our sanitary sewer system on Lagoon and Point Streets.
 - We updated Ordinance 1.058 for the Commerce Township Residents' Poverty Tax Exemption.
 - We decided to extend the Township's COVID policy for employees through the end of April. Basically, that says if they are, and if our Fire Department employees are out ill due to COVID, being that they're frequently in harm's way, that we will continue to pay them for time off during those 5 days, and then another 5 days of mask wearing is required.
 - We met with Wolverine Lake to discuss the improvements to Hickory Glen Park, which is primarily parking related.
 - The Fire Department has now moved into the new fire station on Welch Road, with the exception of a few items on the punch list.

- At the quarterly discussion meeting held on January 26th, the Planning Commission was in attendance. It was the first joint meeting we've had with the Township Board in quite a while. We discussed the kickoff of the Master Plan. We're updating the 2015 Master Plan, and that will probably be going on for most of 2022. For the Planning Commission, it's on the agenda for later tonight.

Bill McKeever – Zoning Board of Appeals

- We had an agenda last month.
- We elected the Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary, which have remained the same.
- They also passed along a couple of items they would like us to delve into as we're looking into our Zoning Ordinance. I've made a list we can go over at our next discussion; maintenance, paving, directional signage, et cetera.

Chairperson Parel – When you say next discussion, this board or the Zoning Board of Appeals?

McKeever – Next discussion of the Planning Commission, when we're going over our Zoning Ordinance.

Brian Winkler – Downtown Development Authority

- The January 18th meeting can be summarized as follows.
- The DDA welcomed Elizabeth Bulat as the newest member of the DDA Board.
- Steve Matta was appointed as Vice Chairperson of the DDA Board.
- Both of the above actions were due to Dan Lublin's resignation from the DDA Board effective December 31, 2021.
- Five & Main Quarterly Update: Bruce Aikens attended the ICSC convention in Las Vegas in December and met with 20 retailers, some of which were previously signed up for the project pre-pandemic. All are still on board. Options for financing the residential and commercial portions of the project were discussed. Significant work on infrastructure analysis has been completed.
- Insite Commercial Report:
 - Parcel C (Pontiac Trail and Haggerty): A proposal was received for this property that is currently being reviewed.
 - Parcel L (1.8 acres on Haggerty Road): The Board approved the purchase agreement and execution of the same. The buyer is moving forward in their due diligence.

Jay James – Building Department

- This time of the year is usually quiet, but just to update you on a couple projects that you'll see more action on.
- Oak Hill subdivision, at the corner of Wixom and Glengary; that one is really starting to ramp up.
- We've got Townes at Merrill Park across the street; their first building is starting to go vertical.
- The Space Shop is moving along and you can see the progress on that.
- The Rolling Hills development on Crumb and Haggerty, the senior facility; that is getting very close to completion. We've allowed them occupancy in one portion of the building so they can start leasing. The rest of it should be done within the next two months.

E. PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Chairperson Parel opened to Public Discussion of Matters Not on the Agenda.

Chairperson Parel – We don't have a public hearing scheduled tonight...

Dave Campbell – We do have a public hearing scheduled, but I don't think it is for what a lot of folks are here to hear about. It has to do with a text amendment.

Chairperson Parel – Thank you for correcting me on that. So we do have that public hearing, but this is an opportunity if people from the public would like to come up and speak on an item other than that. Maybe it would be a good time for you to go through some of the ground rules.

Dave Campbell – I think a lot of folks are here because they're interested in the Valvoline project. The step that the Planning Commission is at right now is a Conditional Rezoning. Any time you have a rezoning, conditional or otherwise, we're obligated by State law to hold a public hearing. The Planning Commission held a public hearing at their meeting on January 10th. So that was the public hearing portion, but we always offer public discussion at the top of all of our agendas. So, the public discussion would be the only opportunity to speak to Valvoline, or any other agenda item, other than the one agenda item that we have this evening for which we do have a public hearing scheduled.

If anyone does want to speak during the public discussion, we ask that you step up and use the podium. The microphone is on. The Planning Commission typically limits any public comments to two minutes or less. We ask, to the extent possible, that public comments aren't repeated. Again, if public comments are meant to be on the Valvoline project, the public discussion portion of the agenda would be the only opportunity to speak to that.

Chairperson Parel – I'd like to see if anybody here would like to come up and speak. I see a gentleman here. Please step up to the microphone. Again, let's limit to two minutes and let's not repeat ourselves and be cognizant of people's time. Let's all remember that we're professionals and neighbors. I would appreciate that.

Klint Kesto – Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do have something if I can approach.

Chairperson Parel – Please.

Mr. Kesto provided handouts to the Commissioners.

Chairperson Parel – Name and address, please.

Mr. Kesto (Attorney, Fraser Trebilcock, Detroit, MI) – I am a former resident of Commerce Township. I live right on the other side of Haggerty currently. I represent Top Lube Center, affectionately known as TLC in this matter, so let's have a little tender loving care on this matter. I handed you some sheets of paper. They're just maps. The first four are maps of Costco's; Auburn Hills, Livonia, Northville, and the one we are talking about presently. The other four maps are surrounding areas of the Costco; one to the west, which essentially encompasses Walled Lake and into Commerce, one to

the north of the location, one farther north of the location, closer into Waterford, and one to the south on Grand River in Novi.

The last time we were here, because this is a rezoning – let's not forget that, this is B-2 going to B-3. This type of project is not allowed in a B-2 district, so Valvoline is obviously here to amend to a B-3. Still, they would need some sort of substantial need in the community. At the last hearing, many of you indicated that you had not seen a substantial need. You have given Valvoline a second opportunity to come back and show whatever they wanted to show, which is fine, it's fair.

What I wanted to do is present to you those maps that indicate how many locations of oil change places, within essentially 10 minutes of this location. One thing I do want to tell you is we presented you with many signatures of people against this proposal. I'm sure you received many emails. One thing I will say is that this is not about competition. If you think we're just trying to limit competition one way or another, competition is great. But, let's remember this is B-2 going to B-3, so if they have come to you to say, we want this prime piece of location, now please bend over backwards for us, and do it because we are Valvoline.

I understand the concept. I've worked in politics, I've been there, done consulting. I understand why they're here. At the same time, let's not forget that there is no substantial need. How many times have we driven by Walmart, Belle Tire, TLC, Volcano, go up and down Pontiac Trail where you see a line of cars waiting because they cannot get an oil change? Never. I would submit to you never.

The other issues we discussed last time, things about the environmental issues because we're near wetlands and woodlands, issues with traffic, and perhaps there aren't any, and issues with the need.

Chairperson Parel – I hate to interrupt you, but you're coming up on more than two minutes, but...

Mr. Kesto – I'll wrap it up. If you look, the maps are indicative. They show all the locations.

Chairperson Parel – And not to extend this, but can I ask a question? I must be missing something. The first map is a map of Livonia, the second is a map of Auburn Hills, and the third map is Novi. You're showing around other Costco's?

Mr. Kesto – Yes, and here's why. There was a comparison to other Costco's. If you look around these, there are no oil change places because there is something in the deed that indicates you can't put this type of facility.

Chairperson Parel – At these other locations.

Mr. Kesto – Including the one that we're talking about. There was some intent by the landowner, and some intent by the Township to put in their Master Plan, that this was zoned a certain way so you cannot do an oil change facility. The landowner deeded it as such, and today they're here to say, make an exception. But that would create an unequal playing field. It would essentially be saying, okay, we'll give you a gift here to do that. It would be completely unfair, because otherwise my client can say, I want to do that here and can you rezone it for me?

Chairperson Parel – I'm going to have to cut you off, but I do appreciate it.

Mr. Kesto – Thank you. On behalf of my client, we request that this be denied.

Robin Peck (Valvoline LLC, 100 Valvoline Way, Lexington, KY) – I'm from Ohio, but I'm representing Valvoline as Preconstruction Project Manager. We were here last month. I just wanted to take the opportunity to introduce our team again. They're here if you have any questions that might have come up over the past month from our meeting, or anything that has transpired in the meantime. If you have any questions for us, we'd be happy to answer them now, or later on.

Chairperson Parel – I appreciate it, and I think there would...

Dave Campbell – When we get to that agenda item, that would be an opportunity to have dialogue with the Valvoline team.

Mr. Hamady, Owner, Top Lube Center, 2205 N. Pontiac Trail, Commerce Township – It's no secret that I definitely oppose the Valvoline project. We're here because of a few things. One, because there are several business owners that could not make it the first time around to oppose it. Letters weren't mailed to them. Some of their locations didn't coincide. Getting a hold of them was difficult. I listened carefully to Valvoline's initial conversation, especially in some of the questions you asked, Mr. Parel, and Mr. Weber, and the rest of the board.

I went out and did some research. The concept is call shadowing. Basically, Valvoline, Take 5, Jiffy Lube, they shadow these big box stores because it draws in so much traffic that it's extremely profitable for them to be here. I found a company out there called Strive that goes out there to sell these properties to them. I started searching on some of the properties that Strive had sold to Valvoline. In most cases, it was taken by Take 5 or Jiffy Lube, they had beat Valvoline to the punch. It was nearby. It wasn't right next to the gas station. It wasn't within about 50 yards of the Costco. It was always outside of that perimeter. They do generate a lot of traffic that way.

They can't argue the fact that we're doing this because there's a need for another lube center in Commerce. We now have Jiffy coming in. We have Volcano. Believe it or not, Belle Tire sells more oil changes than all the oil changes combined in this area, if you actually look at their numbers. That counts as a lube center. Just in that one specific area, there's four locations now. We definitely want to talk about...

Chairperson Parel – I'll give you an opportunity to finish up. You're past your two minutes.

Mr. Hamady – Well, just thank you and give the other residents a chance to speak. I appreciate you guys and everything that you've done for the city. Thank you again.

Wayne Schmidt, 1801 Hampshire Ct, Commerce Township, MI – I want to be a voice for the small business owner, and oppose the Valvoline project. As a former local business owner who got snuffed out by a large national chain, I just want to be a voice for the small business owner so that we can protect them. Thank you.

Chairperson Parel – Appreciate it, sir. Thank you. Yes, ma'am?

Marcie Everly, 2521 Grove Circle, Commerce Township – I just wanted to touch on one thing. I know at the first meeting we had in January, I kept hearing Valvoline, with all due respect, with this statement of “immediate need”. I must tell you, I came to support all of the small businesses just because I know what they’ve done for our community. What I really was curious to know is, this immediate need, it just kept ringing in my head. I thought I'm going to open my eyes a little bit more. Since January, I've kept an open eye and I've taken pictures of several of the local oil change places. I have 6 photos, the Oil Exchange, 2490 Union Lake, Volcano Quick Lube, 1857 Haggerty, Meadows Auto Repair, about a 10-minute drive in Waterford, 90's Quick Lube at 7585 Highland Road, and Pennzoil; all of these, I've got pictures to show different times and days. I haven't seen one of these locations that have more than one car in them. So, again, with this immediate need, I'm thinking is this just coincidental that in the last month that there's not a whole lot of people getting oil changes? With all due respect to the Valvoline folks, this immediate need I just don't see. I was hoping, for their sake, that there would be a line at every single place. Thank you.

Chase Comer, 3250 Welch, Commerce Township, MI – I want to support small businesses around here. I did see the Valvoline sign up and I'm really opposed to it. I'm a car guy, my family is, my friends are. You go to the same place over and over because you trust them, you believe in them and believe they're doing the right thing and we're doing right for our car, because we love our cars. We end up becoming family, going there for so long. Just want to keep it that way, keep it in the family, keep the businesses going.

Michael (Kakoz) 1857 Haggerty, Commerce Township, MI – I am the owner of Volcano Quick Lube, the one where you guys okayed the Jiffy Lube next too. Like the gentleman said here, we never received any papers, anything in the mail that said, hey, we are building something next door to you guys which is too close. It's close to restaurants. There's a lot of cities that they don't approve anything like that close to the restaurant. I don't know how you guys did it. It's sad that I didn't make it because I didn't get anything in the mail, and that place is too close to me. I mean, what am I supposed to do as a small business? I've been there for 20 years. You guys allowed somebody like that to come in next door. That's not fair, to me or to any small business owner that's been doing this for a long time. I'm just here, very disappointed that that was allowed, and then we are allowing another coming into this neighborhood. Like the gentleman said, how many more oil changes are we going to have within 5 miles? If we're going to EV cars in the next 5 years, what's all this all about? We're just going to hurt each other for no reason, and we're all going downhill in the next 5 or 6 years. I don't see any point of approving other oil change shops around this neighborhood because there's too many of them. I think you guys might want to look into it again. That's a little bit too much.

Chairperson Parel – We appreciate that. Sir, in the back?

Tony Buttacavoli, 3816 Ranya Dr., Commerce Township, MI – I can't match the eloquence of Mr. Kesto, but basically his points hit home about the request for the rezoning. That's a big thing. What's the need? Also, I support all the small businesses in Commerce the best I can, and Sam's business has been fantastic. He's probably the best around. I'm here as a citizen because I want to see him succeed. Thank you.

Chairperson Parel – Thank you. Is there anyone else who would like to speak at this time? Sir, in the back?

Jim Allen, 1985 Wild Bird, Commerce Township, MI – I'm just speaking on behalf of Sam, opposing Valvoline. A couple points; I know the small business, I am a small business owner, and they support the community, they support the schools and help out. A lot of times I know that bigger corporations don't do the same. Like everybody else said, I think there's plenty of oil change places around.

Chairperson Parel – Thank you, sir.

Drew Clayborn – Can I speak?

Chairperson Parel – Absolutely. Can I get you a microphone? We'd be happy to bring one over to you.

Drew Clayborn – I run a local nonprofit, The Drew Crew. Many of you may know, I had my injury at Walled Lake Central back in 2010. I can't really speak on the actual business side of it, but I can absolutely speak on my experience, and other people's experiences as far as local businesses owners, especially Sam at Top Lube, and at other local mechanics. For me, I have an MV-1 vehicle, same as many of you know, Scarlet. Her and her family, they also have an MV-1, a vehicle that has since been discontinued since we bought them.

When that happens, parts become much more difficult to find, and finding mechanics that specialize in those things. Every single time I've gone into TLC, or other mechanics locally, they've always given me the best care possible to try to find the parts I need and try to find things to help manage my ramps, things to get in my vehicle. If my vehicle shuts down, I no longer can do any of the things I do. I can no longer leave my house and there's no other vehicle that allows me to do stuff. Local small businesses like that is what allows me to do what I do on a daily basis.

Chairperson Parel – Thank you. Would anyone else like to speak? I want to thank everybody for coming out and helping with the process, and letting us know how you feel. Dave mentioned a lot of the cadence and rules when he first spoke, but I do want you to know that we hear you, we listen to everyone. There's not enough time to respond to everyone, but we do listen to all the comments and we take them into consideration. We've had a lot of conversation on this topic. I believe that all of the comments were in relation to this one topic. We do take this seriously and it's important to receive your comments and we take them to heart.

That said, we heard a lot of words, phrases and catchy words, such as *what's the immediate need?* Some people touched on competition a little bit. My hope is that over the next few minutes, when we do get to this item that we're going to pull off the table, hopefully the Commission will be able to do a good job to share with you how we're coming to those conclusions, what those words mean, and what our responsibility is as a Commission to address those items. With that, Dave, I'm going to formally close the public hearing.

Chairperson Parel closed Public Discussion of Matters Not on the Agenda.

F. TABLED ITEMS

MOTION by Rebeck, supported by Loskill, to remove Item PCZ21-02 from the table.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ITEM F1. PCZ21-02 – VALVOLINE – CONDITIONAL REZONING – TABLED FROM 1-10-22

Valvoline LLC of Lexington, KY is requesting a Conditional Rezoning of a parcel of land consisting of 1.2 acres from B-2 (Community Business) to B-3 (General Business) for a new Valvoline instant oil change facility located on an undeveloped outlot at 600 Loop Road. Sidwell No.: 17-36-200-031

Dave Campbell, Planning Director, gave a review of the Planning Department's report, the steps within this process, and where the Commission is currently.

Chairperson Parel – My guess is, the next step is that we're going to ask Valvoline to come up and explain...

Weber – Specific to the Conditional Rezoning.

Chairperson Parel – Yes. They're going to have an opportunity to further explain what they've brought in today.

Dave Campbell – Correct. The focus does not need to be on the conversation of documented and immediate need. That's a conversation potentially for a later date.

Chairperson Parel – I think the documented and immediate need is an important point because we've talked about that a lot. I think that we need to make sure we don't focus on that. The other thing as far as the cadence goes, Dave, you mentioned it but I want to make sure it's clear for everybody here. The cadence is, they're here today for a Conditional Rezoning. If that's approved, it will go to the Township Board, and if they approve it...

Dave Campbell – The Planning Commission makes a recommendation. The Township Board has final approval authority on the Conditional Rezoning.

Chairperson Parel – If that happens, then it has to come back to us for Special Land Use.

Dave Campbell – The Planning Commission can take action on the Special Land Use and the site plan.

Chairperson Parel – Then would it go back to the Trustees again after that?

Dave Campbell – No. If Township Board approves the Conditional Rezoning, then it would come back to the Planning Commission. From that point forward, it is the decision of the Planning Commission.

Chairperson Parel – The next opportunity for a public hearing on the matter would be...

Dave Campbell – The next formal public hearing would be if Valvoline gets to the point that they are applying for Special Land Use approval. What that date would be, it's too early to say. If I had to speculate, Valvoline would potentially be on the Township Board's agenda at their March 8th meeting for action on the Conditional Rezoning. If the Township Board approves Valvoline's Conditional Rezoning, then conceivably, they could be back in front of the Planning Commission at either the April or May meeting, seeking Special Land Use and site plan approvals.

Chairperson Parel welcomed the Valvoline team.

Robin Peck, Preconstruction Project Manager, Valvoline LLC, 100 Valvoline Way, Lexington, KY, 40509, was present to address the request, along with the Valvoline team.

Ms. Peck – Do you have our original submittal that we presented back in December?

Dave Campbell – I do.

Ms. Peck – I'm just wondering if you have any questions pertaining to the building, to Valvoline, or to their Conditional Rezoning at this time? We've gone above and beyond with some of the standards that we're invoking on the building, if I can speak for the building itself and the area with the rezoning. We've upgraded from our typical prototype to a stone and brick façade, flat roof so that we can hide all of the mechanicals, of which there aren't many.

We felt this type of building would fit into what is there, with Bar Verona and some of the other established retailers and restaurants in the area. It can help with setting future standards for future tenants. We want to enhance the landscape to go above and beyond our typical requirements. We take a lot of pride in the building and the landscaping being professionally maintained. We're proposing to enhance it to add some character, maybe provide a break between Bar Verona and the Costco gas station. Our hours are typical 8-8. When it does get dark, any lights will be facing the Costco station vs. Bar Verona. Those are a few of the things we kept in mind. What type of questions can we answer? We have a whole team here.

Chairperson Parel – Sure, I think we're going to go down the line. I'll start with you, Sam.

Commission Comments:

Karim – We talk a lot about competition, and there was additional about small businesses. We really appreciate the small businesses. I take my car to a small business. I don't intend to change because a Valvoline is there. If you had an established business in there and people are coming to you, I don't think they're going to change because of Valvoline. That's my side. I know that business right now is going down because we are not driving a lot. I'm one of the people, I haven't changed oil more than once in the last 6 months. I don't drive anymore because of COVID. I expect business to get back, and if you have a client, your client will stick with you.

Winkler – For the purposes of what's been mentioned thus far, I'm a small business owner as well. My business has 14 employees and we are repeatedly challenged by

larger companies that perform the same business and being in competition. I don't always like competition, but at the same time, sometimes competition can be healthy. The way I have overcome competition in my business dealings, whether it's fair or unfair, is simply building relationships with my customers, the people who use the services that my business provides. Sometimes competition is healthy, but at the same time, I also think there's probably plenty of business to go around for everyone in the oil change business. I just wanted to make those statements clear, because I understand some of the challenges that people have spoken of, particularly the local business owners.

Rebeck – Thank you to all of you from the community who came out to support Sam. I think it's really a testament to the community that we live in. I want to make it very clear that this is one step in a process that still has some things that need to be done. I think that my fellow Commissioners will realize that I am, in the legal world, the rule of law person. So, we're just going through the steps and I think that Valvoline has met all of them for this step in the process.

That being said, those of you from Valvoline, I can't promise that you're going to make it through the rest of this process. I really urge you to think about the reaction from this community, the things they're saying and how they feel about you guys coming in, and think about a way to bridge this disagreement that we're having because we have a business owner who does something similar to what you do that has a very large support system that feels very strongly about how important he is to the community. If you're going to come into Commerce Township and open this business, I urge you to think of a way that you can form a relationship with him rather than causing a rift in the community.

I don't know how it's going to look when we move forward. I don't know if you will make it to the final phase of the process. I appreciate all the work that you've put in. I personally think that you've done everything that you need to do to get through this step of the process. We all know there's another step. The tone of your letter was very clear that you think we overstepped. I understand that. I'm sure Mr. Tennant sees there are two steps. We all know that. We were just trying to give you a heads up that we also see that there's two steps, and this is the first of those two. We didn't want you to waste your time if you couldn't overcome the other ones. You really have gone above and beyond to give us the information to try to meet our requirements and the things that we've asked for. We really appreciate that, but we all live here, and these guys all live here. The last thing I want to do is go to Costco and see Sam, and hear Sam say, *Chelsea, why did you let Valvoline come in here?* We live here. If you guys end up opening that Valvoline, think about a way that it can be better for the community.

Loskill – Chelsea summed it up succinctly. I believe they've met the criteria for the step we're at currently. We should proceed based on what we're looking at and not bring in extraneous arguments at this time. It's just not the appropriate time.

Weber – I have no further questions at this stage.

McKeever – I don't have any questions.

Chairperson Parel – We've been through this. We have spoken a lot on the matter and I don't know if there's much more I can add. Dave made it very clear that we're looking at

a different set of criteria than what we looked at in the past. Actually, the last two meetings, we've looked at criteria for the Special Land Use. A few people have mentioned it, that's not under consideration right now. What's under consideration is the Conditional Rezoning. The criteria for Conditional Rezoning are the three items that Dave mentioned; the benefit to the public interest, ensuring integration of the proposed development, and not adversely affecting the public utilities, environment, drainage, or any infrastructure.

My personal opinion aligns with a lot of people up here. I do think that Valvoline has met those criteria. I think when we speak of public benefit, we have a lot on a very prominent road that's very close to undevelopable. There's not many options there. I think Valvoline has come with improved landscaping, and approved building materials.

Weber – I will make a motion. Before I make the motion, I have a couple of comments. First, I was perplexed and disappointed in the tone of Valvoline's submittal. In my opinion, I did not appreciate the saber-rattling with the citing of case law.

For the public, I'm going to say some words like public interest. In this regard, I want to reiterate what we've heard. This is a very narrow discussion. The heavy lifting is going to take place in the go-round where we address immediate need, as well as there are 8 criteria for Special Land Use. The first one is immediate need, and there are 7 others that must be met to satisfaction of this Commission before it can move forward. I do want to thank Mr. Hamady, not only for rallying his supporters and the community, but also in causing us to look at things a little deeper and maybe a little differently. It is always beneficial, and this truly is the beauty of local government. This is of the people, for the people. This level of community and these candid discussions are critical and much appreciated.

This is going to be longwinded, but again, understand that this a very narrow discussion and the next couple of months I think is where the real decision making is going forward. All of us think that maybe this process is a little illogical in the steps we're going through now, but it is required and it's what we're bound to do.

MOTION by Weber, supported by Rebeck, to recommend approval, with conditions, to the Commerce Township Board of Trustees, of Item PCZ21-02, Valvoline, Conditional Rezoning, the request by Valvoline LLC of Lexington, KY for Conditional Rezoning of a parcel of land consisting of 1.2 acres from B-2 (Community Business) to B-3 (General Business) for a new Valvoline instant oil change facility located on an undeveloped outlot at 600 Loop Road. Sidwell No.: 17-36-200-031

Move to recommend the Township Board approve PCZ#21-02, a conditional rezoning petition by Valvoline LLC for the development of an instant oil change facility at 600 Loop Road, an undeveloped 1.2-acre outlot along the east side of Loop Road. The property is proposed to be conditionally rezoned from B-2 (Community Business) to B-3 (General Business). Presently, this is zoned B-2; however, our Master Plan is very clear on this, that the Township has contemplated this parcel moving to B-3. That's a key element of the decision making at this narrow point in time.

In making this recommendation to approve, the Planning Commission has considered the factors within Section 3.03.D.3 of the Commerce Township Zoning Ordinance, and has made a finding that the conditional rezoning petition meets the Minimum Standards within Section 36.04 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Pursuant to Sec. 36.04, the Planning Commission makes the following findings:

1. The proposed rezoning from B-2 to B-3 will benefit the public interest, in a way that expected benefits of the rezoning, subject to the conditions offered, outweigh a reasonably foreseeable detriment. Public interest in this is looking at the 43,000 Commerce residents and whether it would be convenient to get your oil changed next to the Costco gas station. Public benefit is not looking at a business owner, or if there is immediate need, but in this case, a convenient location for this kind of service. Whether I like it or not, it is a convenient location.
2. The proposed rezoning includes conditions sufficient to assure the integration of the proposed Valvoline facility with the surrounding land uses, and to protect public health, safety, and welfare.
3. The Valvoline facility proposed in conjunction with the rezoning does not adversely affect the public utility or traffic systems, drainage, or the environment.

The Planning Commission further finds that the conditional rezoning petition is consistent with the subject property's designation of "General Commercial" for the Future Land Use map within the Commerce Township Master Plan.

The Planning Commission recognizes that the proposed Valvoline facility is a special land use in the B-3 zoning district, and will consider the Standards for Special Land Use Approval contained within Sec. 34.08 of the Zoning Ordinance, as well as the Use Standards specific to an Automobile Service Center contained within Sec. 26.304, if approval of special land use is applied for by Valvoline subsequent to the Township Board's approval of the conditional rezoning petition. Approval of the conditional rezoning petition by the Township Board shall in no way constitute or infer approval of the special land use for an Automobile Service Center in the B-3 zoning district.

This recommendation of approval is conditional upon the following:

1. The property owner enter into a conditional rezoning agreement with conditions volunteered by the applicant and acceptable to the Planning Commission and the Township Board, and the executed conditional rezoning agreement be recorded with the Oakland County Register of Deeds prior to any formal consideration by the Planning Commission of the site plan for special land use.
2. The applicant shall apply for approval by the Planning Commission of a site plan and special land use consistent with the terms of the conditional rezoning agreement subsequent to approval and recording of an agreement.

AYES: Weber, Rebeck, Loskill, Parel, Winkler, Karim

NAYS: McKeever

~~MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY~~

MOTION CARRIED 6-1

Dave Campbell – I would like to reiterate what we've heard from the Planning Commission. We do appreciate the participation from the public, not just tonight, but at our January meeting, and all of the emails and phone calls that we received in the Planning Department. Keep an eye on the Township's website and upcoming meeting agendas. This will now, I presume, proceed to the Township Board where they will have the opportunity to make a final decision on the Conditional Rezoning. If approved by the Township Board, as you've heard us say, it will come back to the Planning Commission where they will be seeking approval of a Special Land Use, and a corresponding site plan. Feel free to call the Planning Department with any questions you have. We're always happy to have those conversations.

Weber – Dave, just to clarify, it would be likely that the next time we will see this will be either April, or potentially May.

Dave Campbell – The Conditional Rezoning would have to be approved by the Township Board, potentially at their March 8th meeting. If approved by the Township Board, it would come back to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission meeting dates are April 11th and May 2nd.

Mr. Hamady – The landowner, it's really vague when we try to find out who that person is. It goes into LLC's. Do we have any clue on who that person is?

Dave Campbell – You're correct, it is an LLC. We have the name for the registered agent. I don't know that we have a phone number necessarily. They did sign the application for the Conditional Rezoning petition, which is required. A property owner has to provide their signature.

Mr. Hamady – Okay, thanks.

Mr. Kakoz – Within a mile road, we have six oil changes. I guess everybody is forgetting that in the very near future, none of these will exist as we're going into electric cars.

Chairperson Parel – I do appreciate it. We have taken that into consideration. Thank you for coming out.

G. OLD BUSINESS

None.

H. SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS:

ITEM H1. PZ22-01 – COMMERCE TOWNSHIP – TEXT AMENDMENT – PUBLIC HEARING

An amendment to the Commerce Township Zoning Ordinance No. 3.000, to amend Article 27, Building Form & Composition, to amend the language for allowance of vinyl siding within the residential zoning districts and EIFS within all non-residential zoning districts.

Dave Campbell, Planning Director, gave a review regarding the EIFS portion of the proposed text amendment.

Weber – Jay, any feedback from conversations you've had with anybody, between initially discussing it and now?

Jay James – Not with EIFS, no.

Dave Campbell continued his review on the vinyl siding portion of the text amendment.

Commission Comments:

None.

Chairperson Parel opened the public hearing.

No comments.

Chairperson Parel closed the public hearing.

MOTION by Loskill, supported by Rebeck, to recommend approval, to the Commerce Township Board of Trustees, of Item PZ22-01, Commerce Township, Text Amendment, an amendment to the Commerce Township Zoning Ordinance No. 3.000, to amend Article 27, Building Form & Composition, to amend the language for allowance of vinyl siding within the residential zoning districts and EIFS within all non-residential zoning districts.

Move to recommend the Commerce Township Board approve PZ# 22-01, an amendment to Article 27, Section 27.02 Non Residential Districts & Section 27.03 Residential Districts of the Commerce Township Zoning Ordinance.

The Planning Commission's recommendation is based on a finding that the proposed amendment provides reasonable standards to the building form & composition requirements to preserve the visual environment and maintain the Township's attractiveness and economic vitality. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

I. NEW BUSINESS (2):

ITEM 11. EASTERNMOST GRAVEL PIT – CONCEPT PLAN

Ryan Hoppe of Commerce MI is requesting a concept review for a proposed single family residential development located on the north side of Sleeth Road on the easternmost of the three properties commonly known as the Sleeth Road gravel pits. Sidwell No.: 17-08-400-003

Dave Campbell, Planning Director, gave a review, explaining the hypothetical nature of the conceptual review and that these are non-binding discussions.

Winkler – Is the entrance road to the development on the east side, onto Sleeth, is that far enough away from the intersection of Sleeth and Bass Lake Roads?

Dave Campbell – That's something we would want to get confirmation of from the RCOC. I'm not sure if you have heard from the Road Commission.

The petitioners indicated they had not.

Dave Campbell – Per International Fire Code, there needs to be two points of access to any residential development of 30 homes or more. The developers are aware that they have to provide two points of access. It's still up for discussion where those two points of access would ultimately land.

I know they have asked whether one of them could be gated, emergency only access. I know the Township's Fire Marshal has concerns about gated emergency access, especially in weather like this. That's where a lot of people tend to pile up the snow from snow plows, and a lot of times people are tempted to park their cars in those gated emergency road stubs. I know the Fire Marshal always prefers full access driveways.

Winkler – One question for the petitioner, do you plan on filling in part of the lake?

Mr. Hoppe – Correct, yes. There's a chance we may need to get rid of a lot there. Just for the concept, we filled every angle. Brian might be able to discuss it better than me. There may be a basin that needs to go there. It works for the building envelope. There's

probably about 25' there to fill in. If we can get those lots, we'll certainly try to, but it's definitely here for discussion.

Winkler – Thank you.

Dave Campbell – If I may, and Mr. Hoppe can speak to this as well, they're envisioning uncurbed roads for this development. The roads would not have curb and gutter, and instead would be drained with a ditch system. That's something that the Planning Commission has not seen a lot of lately with new residential developments, although it has been a while since we've seen a straight R-1A zoning as well with 100' wide lots. The developers are aware that it's the Planning Commission's discretion whether to require internal sidewalks with any new development. One of the discussions that we've had with Mr. Hoppe is, how are those going to relate to each other? If you have an uncurbed road, a ditch, and then potentially a sidewalk with presumably street trees as the Township typically requires, how are those going to lay out relative to one another? Are you going to be pushing the sidewalk into someone's front yard if there is a ditch between the road and the sidewalk?

Chairperson Parel – Dave can you explain the benefits to us, the Township, and to the developer of doing a non-curbed system? Or detriment?

Dave Campbell – The benefit to the Township, I guess I'd have to think on that one. Jay, from an engineering standpoint, is there any detriment to having a ditch system as opposed to a drain system?

Jay James – My subdivision does not have curbed roads and they have ditches. I would say that one of the benefits is it gives you more storm water storage. The water that runs off from the roads and our yards go to the ditches. Ultimately it can make its way down, but if things back up, there's somewhere for the water to go. As far as a detriment, you have to deal with the water in your ditches. They go hand in hand. For the Township, there is an aesthetic look to each of them that I think is something important to the Township. Other than that, I can't think of anything else.

Dave Campbell – I guess as a guy who lives on a lot with a ditch, if your neighbor doesn't do good job keeping their culverts cleared out under their driveways, then you get to adopt all their water and that's not always fun.

Chairperson Parel – Ryan, what was your idea with uncurbed?

Mr. Hoppe – I reached out to a lot of Commerce Township residents, on Facebook, etc. On a selling side, we need to know what people want. I feel like Commerce is smaller lots, tighter communities. I cannot find any R-1A that has been built in Commerce Township in a very long time. I've lived here, born and raised, off Benstein Road. I feel like Commerce really wants something more like this. I'm not here to ask for any PUDs or cluster developments.

I want a development that if you can dream it, you can do it. Most of these, you have four options. These Pulte developments, this is what you've got. Here, other than some guidelines, I think you could really do your dream home, compared to the Robinson

Brothers' developments and things like that. You really have options, that's it. You don't have a whole lot of say to what you want built.

I did some driving around, went through a lot of Milford, into White Lake, some in South Lyon. Every development that was a ditch development, that's newer, they look beautiful. It's got an up-north setting to it, which is our goal here. There are a lot of mature trees here, and our goal is to keep as many as possible. I don't know that we are compared to a lot of other developments that have gone on, in at least the last five years. I think Commerce Township will really like this one. I've had a lot of good feedback with people I've spoken with who live here in the community. In trying to meet everyone's guidelines here, I think we're doing a pretty good job. I'd love to hear your thoughts, because it is different. I have Brian here, and I have John.

Chairperson Parel – One question, you mentioned sidewalks. What is your preference or your thought on internal sidewalks?

Mr. Hoppe – I don't know that I have an answer for you quite yet on that. A lot of the developments I drove through, that I want to mirror, they don't have sidewalks and they're all sold out. I'm not opposed to doing some kind of sidewalks in here, I just want to find something that fits this development. It's not what Andy is building down the road. It's completely opposite. I feel like to do this development properly, it needs to fit the development. It's not your normal cookie-cutter subdivision. I'm not against anything, I just don't know that I have the answer for what fits this development quite yet on the sidewalk side.

Dave Campbell – Keep in mind too, this development is on the north side of Sleeth Road. What's shown in our non-motorized master plan is a pathway along the south side of Sleeth Road. The rationale there being that the south side of Sleeth Road is the State's Proud Lake Recreation Area. It seemed more logical to have the pathway on the south side.

With the Reserve at Crystal Lake development, what they agreed to is rather than building a pathway along their north side Sleeth Road frontage, they're instead going to make a contribution to the Township pathway fund in a proportionate amount to what they would spend to actually build it. That might be the approach.

Chairperson Parel – Yes, but we're talking about two different sidewalks; the interior and the exterior pathway.

Dave Campbell – Correct.

Chairperson Parel – I think that makes sense. Would there be access to the sidewalks on the south side?

Discussion continued regarding the pathway system in the area, connections that need to be made along the south side of Sleeth Road, and accessibility when crossing from north to south.

Brian Biskner, Powell Engineering – Good evening, Planning Commission members. Just a couple quick things regarding the pond and open ditch construction. The open ditch construction is certainly a remnant from the past. They still do it when you see a lot

of private roads go in, gravel roads, with open ditch construction. When you get into sidewalks, it is going to push the sidewalk up onto the lot. I have done them in the past where we would shallow up the ditch to 1-foot or ½-foot deep, depending on where you were, and the sidewalk would naturally slide back into the road right-of-way. In this case, that's a private road. A lot of those creative things we used to do, sometimes when it was a private road, designed to public standards, we worked with the Township Engineer to do that. Here, we will be at the discretion of the Road Commission.

Also, in an effort to save trees where there are trees, open ditch construction makes a bigger path as you go through. If you have curbs, you can save more trees that way if we were in a situation like that. I've done that before too, where you go from open ditch, then to a stretch of curb, then back to open ditch. Those are flexibilities we would look to the Road Commission to give us. We don't know if we would get them, but we know the Township is going to require sidewalks.

As far as the pond, they're currently mining the property, and they will be reshaping the pond over time. They'll be taking some material off that little peninsula and moving that over to 13 and 14 to expand those yards. That will end up being a retention basin, part of the drainage system.

Dave Campbell – At the corner, there's some pretty heavy duty overhead utility poles. Have you looked at these? Would those stay in place or would they have to be relocated?

Mr. Hoppe – Most of what are there are all in the right-of-way in the southeast corner. None of those should be in the backyards, that's all in the 60' right-of-way, other than where the power goes into the pole barn that's currently there. Those would be the only poles that would end up being removed.

Jay James – Currently, along Sleeth Road, there's a large berm just outside the right-of-way or along the right-of-way line. Is that intended to stay, or are you going to be dropping that berm down so you can see into the site?

Mr. Hoppe – Running east and west, the long portion of Sleeth, I wanted to keep a lot of that berm because we're not building houses on that portion of Sleeth Road. When you come back around in the southeast corner, most of that berm is going to be completely gone. It's in the building envelope.

Chairperson Parel – We can go down the line to see if anybody has any questions or comments. Bill?

Commission Comments:

McKeever – No questions.

Weber – For me, I get your vision and what you're trying to accomplish. It's a little premature for two reasons. One, with the development down the road from you, during this process and specifically at the Township Board, a lot of concern has been expressed over the traffic that the site will generate. I would want to see what that traffic impact is. We expect a significant portion of that traffic is going to head east and go down Benstein.

Two, the other key piece is the future land use on this which is rural residential. As we are just in the early stages of going through our Master Plan, I would really want to find out where we settle on that land. Does it stay R-1A? Or, is the vision of the Master Plan to take it to something else? That's why, to me, it's just early.

Loskill – Nothing from me right now.

Rebeck – I love this. I think it's exactly what a lot of people in Commerce Township have been looking for. To address a few things that George said. Yes, we have traffic concerns down the street, but the fact is that you are not trying to increase the density, and you're leaving the zoning the way that it is, so you're doing something that a lot of our residents have asked for, which is to maintain the rural feel of this. I love that. As far as sidewalks, I think that if you do something that increases walkability without traditional sidewalks, that might be something we're interested in. What is your timeline for breaking ground and building?

Mr. Hoppe – Probably two to three years.

[Unidentified Speaker] – Maximum three years. We have a lot of land balancing to do out there.

Mr. Hoppe – These have all been mines. I'm actually currently working in Andy's mine, so I'm very familiar with the ground over there. Unfortunately, they're just not your big time gravel pits anymore. That future is not there. It's heading in the direction of development, and this is what we see fit for this one.

Rebeck – I personally love it. I think this is something that we don't see a lot here, and I think it is needed in this area. I think if you do it correctly...

Mr. Hoppe – If I could, maybe Dave or Jay could help me, on the traffic concerns. It's hypothetical, but with this pit possibly going, and Andy's already going, the middle ... there is a stub road at Lake Sherwood. Whether there will be a connection there or not, I'm not sure, but it I would imagine that it would relieve some traffic because that would take you right out to Commerce Road. My guess is that with the other two getting developed, someone will want to develop the middle gravel pit.

Dave Campbell – While we're talking about traffic, the intersection of Duck Lake, Sleeth and Wixom Roads, which is that oddly configured double traffic signal; I think in 2024, the RCOC is saying that's going to be a roundabout, or maybe a double roundabout which they call a peanut roundabout.

Winkler – My issues were the sidewalks and the density. Both look okay.

Karim – I have to agree with Chelsea's comments. I want to add that there is a proposal for development on the west side which we already discussed. I would like next time, when you submit your proposal, to get a drawing of the other side. Maybe you just make it as a block and see how your area will connect to that area. I'm looking at all three gravel pits as one piece in the future. They need to all work all together, somehow, with connecting roads or services as we want the two sides homogenous.

Chairperson Parel – Jay, I know we're bringing utilities out there for Crystal Lake. Are they robust enough to support this?

Jay James – Yes. They're being designed to service everything along that route.

Chairperson Parel – To do it R-1A, which it is currently?

Jay James – Yes, and it is R-1A.

Weber – The future would be less dense.

Dave Campbell – The future land use designation is rural residential, which is two units per acre. R-1A requires 20,000 square foot lots, so that's a little bit more than two units per acre. The R-1A is the most consistent with the rural residential land use designation.

Chairperson Parel – Got it. As Chelsea said, I love that somebody is coming to us with what we've heard, that we want a cottage feel and an up-north feel. I get that we need to get through some of the traffic concerns. Can I ask your experience with building?

Mr. Hoppe – I'm not a developer. I know how to work the ground really well; I definitely can balance. We have John Babcock here with Powell Engineering. I think with our whole core group team, it will not be a problem, especially with a 55-lot subdivision. I'm really familiar with development, but I've never built a sub yet. I know Commerce really well, though. I feel like our team can make something really nice here.

Dave Campbell – Ryan, knowing the land the way you do, this area up in here where you have a cul-de-sac, is any of this vegetation worth preserving in terms of offering wooded lots in that area?

Mr. Hoppe – There are a lot of good oaks. My first plan would be to only put the roads in, and then look at each lot individually. I don't want to cut down a tree unnecessarily. Pulte developments take every tree.

Loskill – I know you have a couple lots that are undesirable. Are there any thoughts to putting some smaller homes in those areas?

Mr. Hoppe – I didn't want to come in and ask for anything less than 20,000 square feet.

Loskill – I'm saying ...

Mr. Hoppe – Oh, price-point wise? Yes, definitely. John, you could speak better.

John Babcock – We've done developments in Commerce Township in the past, and I've known Ryan for quite a while. I think there is opportunity on some of the less desirable lots and we could probably offer a minimum home. We've been talking about mid-2000s square feet to low-3000s. That's certainly the ones you would be approaching as base lots which would be under \$500,000. Although, in this day, who knows what lumber prices will be.

Weber – Are you going to have any lots with community access for the non-waterfront homes to have a pavilion or greenspace?

Mr. Hoppe – Yes we are, at the north side of the lake. The plan is to shape that area out to some type of park setting.

Weber and Mr. Hoppe discussed accessibility to the park area.

Chairperson Parel – Are there any questions we can answer for you?

Mr. Hoppe – No. I think the goal was to come in here and check your pulse to see what you think. I think it's different than what you've seen in the recent past. I definitely want to leave here...

Mr. Babcock – On the right path. Part of the reason I wanted to get involved as well is I enjoy building the non-monotonous homes. We customize all the time.

Dave Campbell – And no vinyl siding, right?

Mr. Hoppe – No vinyl siding.

Chairperson Parel – Well, I think you've heard mostly positive comments here. I think there is some hesitation on traffic implications, and maybe the timing of the deal. Hopefully we gave you what you needed.

Mr. Hoppe – Yes. For the path forward, Dave, would I go to you?

Chairperson Parel – Absolutely.

Mr. Hoppe – The next time I come in front of you, I'd really like to have every duck in a row.

Dave Campbell – We can talk about what that entails. I presume this is going to be a site condominium.

Mr. Hoppe – Correct.

Dave Campbell – There needs to be a master deed and the condominium site plan to go along with it, with preliminary engineering. We can talk about what that entails. At best, it's a two-step process. You need approval from both the Planning Commission and the Township Board any time you have a new condominium in Commerce Township.

Mr. Hoppe – Okay. I really appreciate your time and feedback on this.

ITEM 12. MASTER PLAN REVIEW

Chairperson Parel – Dave, I think your thought in leaving this on the agenda is to continue the conversation. We had a great joint meeting with our Trustees. We talked

about going down the line with our Commissioners, and maybe addressing some of the items addressed in that meeting that were unexpected. For me, more than 90% of what we heard was what I expected. They're items that we address and I think we're on the same page as the Trustees.

Weber – What were the surprises?

Chairperson Parel – For me, it was the talks on the topic of developing the Village more, and how that led into the sidewalk conversation. We didn't go too deep into it. I know in the past, we did some rezoning in the Village because people were having some issues obtaining mortgages. The concept behind that was similar to Milford with parking behind the buildings, but I think there were challenges with some of the homes getting mortgages because of that.

Dave Campbell – There were. Some of the homes in the Village area were zoned Neighborhood Business, and I think the rationale was because they were directly behind the businesses that fronted along West Commerce Road, and the thought was those businesses would have the opportunity to expand, with parking behind the building. That's why those existing homes were zoned the way they were, but you're correct, some folks had challenges getting refinancing. Lenders don't like giving loans to properties that are nonconforming as far as zoning. It was a few years ago, but we did rezone a strip of houses along Ponderosa to single-family to help the homeowners.

Chairperson Parel – It's interesting the topic came up and it's obviously on their minds, but I feel not a lot has been done to support it. It's the first time we've heard of it. And then the conversation came up about sidewalks. It's a chicken or egg situation. What comes first? You build the sidewalks so people can access these businesses, or do you build the businesses and then have to build the sidewalks? That has always been of interest to me in trying to get more mobility and access to these businesses. Personally, I would visit these businesses a lot more often if I could take my kids on a bike or walk there. You can walk up Bogie Lake Road, it's 50mph and it's dangerous. We try to avoid that.

We knew that the big parcels would be a topic of conversation, the high visibility properties that we're dealing with, and with Beaumont coming down the line. I think we're handling them accordingly. I would open it up to you guys.

Winkler – I did have one question. I haven't seen minutes from that meeting yet. Are they going to be issued?

Dave Campbell – The draft meeting minutes are available. In hindsight, I wish I had included them with your agenda packet tonight. The Board will be looking at those minutes at their meeting tomorrow night and probably approving them. I will get those to you.

Chairperson Parel – Is it the plan to leave this item on our docket going forward throughout the year?

Dave Campbell – I think we're going to spend some time on the Master Plan on every agenda. One of the thoughts I had, and I will discuss this with Jill and Giffels Webster, maybe the focus is on a series of sub-area plans for the large developable properties

that we continue to talk about, Beaumont, Bay Pointe, Long Farm, etc. and what could be the vision for those properties to guide development on those properties. Maybe that could be the focus of this Master Plan effort.

Chairperson Parel – I think it's an interesting place to start, and I think it could lead us into talking about some of the middle ground, maybe a medium sized development area like the gravel pits.

Rebeck – I would like to sit down with that map of Commerce at a table, and compare it to the Master Plan overlay, and look at the development that has happened since then.

Weber – What if we took that map, and then you overlay a clear sheet with the Master Plan drawn over top of it, so you can see the actual parcels and where they are with what the Master Plan is, and you can actually do...

McKeever – Superimposed on an aerial?

Rebeck – That's exactly what I was thinking, and maybe also do color coding for the new part.

Dave Campbell – Are we saying literally plastic overlays, or are we talking the digital equivalent of that?

Rebeck – I want the real map with the real overlays, but I'll defer to everyone else.

Chairperson Parel – I think we have to look at how we're going to address this. Are we going to sit in a room? Are we going to sit around a table with a map and open it up, or is it easier to view up on a screen?

Weber – I think digitally would be better, but with the ability to peel the onion back in a highly visual way, so that as we discuss it with the community or with the Board, you can layer it easily to see where we've been, where we are, and where we think we want to go.

Rebeck – I would be fine doing the process digitally, but I really would like a big version of the map of Commerce.

Discussions continued regarding historical aerial shots of the community, utilizing NearMap for recent views, and colorful map overlays for the Master Plan process.

Dave Campbell – How would we do this, when you're talking about layers? In my mind, some of the layers are; future land use designations, zoning, parcel lines, municipal boundaries, topography...

Weber – Not topography.

Chairperson Parel – It's an area.

Dave Campbell – Existing land use.

Weber – There are certain areas we just talked about here, so one filter laid over top is, cut out all the rest of the noise and just look at the large parcels and where they are. We also have a ton of wetlands that we don't have to worry about because they're not going to be built on. How do remove that?

Chairperson Parel – I think you also made a great point in the meeting about the State Land and how we don't control it, and somehow I think that should be incorporated into this, because the goal is to show this to the public.

Weber – Yes, so that could all be dark green, whether it's State Land, our parks, wetlands, virtually not buildable ever. Maybe that helps focus us on what we need to work on.

Dave Campbell – I can certainly work on that with Giffels. If there's a digital equivalent of this, they're going to have the capability to do that better than we do. We can continue the conversation at the March meeting.

Weber discussed the historical and current views of sidewalks in Commerce Township as they relate to liability and maintenance, and the drafting of a sidewalk ordinance, along with walkability, non-motorized trails and connectivity within the Township. The Planning Commission needs to be cognizant of these concerns and the stress it can cause on the Township, the budget, manpower, et cetera. It is a complex subject. Chairperson Parel felt that the Township is not ready to have sidewalks in every neighborhood, but connectivity is important between the subs. Discussion continued regarding promoting complete transportation systems; safe roadways, bike ways, walkways, trails, and offering local and regional connections. That's up to the Planning Commission to define currently, and in the future land use map as well.

Dave Campbell – Right now, the majority of where our non-motorized pathways come to reality is with new development. We require developers to put them along their frontages, and with new neighborhoods, put them internally in the development, but then we end up with a lot of gaps.

Chairperson Parel – But you've got to start somewhere, and I think that's the right thing to do. If it's not the proper place to put a sidewalk, funds can be banked in the Pathway Fund.

Weber – Previous iterations of the pathways were part of the Parks Master Plan. They did work on designing those and we can get those to see what has been planned, and incorporate it. Dave and Ms. England, Parks and Senior Director, agreed that this should not be in Parks and it should be in the Township's Master Plan.

Discussion continued regarding utilization of the Pathway Fund to bridge the gaps and connect pathways, inaccessibility of the Township Library, the need to refine walkability in the Master Plan, even with gravel pathways in some areas as opposed to sidewalks, and potential funding sources. Dave Campbell discussed an example of a recent sidewalk connection that was made at On The Dunes, which serves as a trailhead, and connects to the Michigan Airline Trail, and was funded by a contribution from the Rolling

Hills development. Weber and Dave discussed a pending grant from the DNR to make a potential connection from Long Park to the M-5 Metro Trail. Parel, Rebeck and Weber discussed prioritizing connections to be made on the existing Township Trailways Map.

J: OTHER MATTERS TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION:

None.

K: PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dave Campbell discussed the following with the Commissioners:

- The property on the north side of Commerce Road, west of Union Lake Road, is owned by Walled Lake Consolidated Schools. They are in the early stages of looking to sell that for single-family development. The Township has an interest in that, from the perspective of traffic and public utilities, but also because it's directly adjacent to Victory Park, which is on the south side of Wise Road. On the north side of Wise Road is Wise Woods Park. We've been in conversations and we may attend one of their upcoming board meetings. It is zoned R-1B, which could probably accommodate 150+ homes on the site. The value to Walled Lake Schools is not only the retail price of the land, but also the perpetual revenue of having those kids attending Walled Lake Schools.
- As Mr. McKeever mentioned, the Zoning Board of Appeals has asked the Planning Commission to look into some potential amendments to our sign regulations, in an effort to maybe curtail the number of petitions that come to the ZBA for sign exceptions. A couple of the big items are petitioners asking for additional wall signs, but also asking for ground signs that are too close to the road. That comes up often when you have an existing commercial property that has been around a long time, and Haggerty Road is a good example. Over the last decade, the road has been widened and has gotten a lot busier. For a business to put in a sign that complies with our current setback requirements for a ground sign, a lot of times that sign would land in the middle of their building or their parking lot.
- There is interest from at least one party in the DDA's Parcel C, which is the vacant property next to Walmart. This is something of a gateway piece into Commerce Township from West Bloomfield, and it's near the Five & Main development.
- You may see a conceptual plan for the Beaumont property at the next meeting.
- I talked to the prospective developer of Bay Pointe a couple weeks ago. He is still pursuing that development, even though it has been quiet recently. He will know more in 60 days.
- **NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE: MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2022**

L: ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Weber, supported by Rebeck, to adjourn the meeting at 9:32pm.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Chelsea Rebeck, Secretary