

(REVIEW E-MAILED 04-21-18)
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Monday, April 16, 2018
2009 Township Drive
Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

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

ROLL CALL: Present:

Larry Haber, Chairperson
Russ Schinzing, Vice Chairperson
Brian Winkler, Secretary
Tom Jones
Bill McKeever
Brian Parel
George Weber

Also Present:

Dave Campbell, Township Planning Director
Jay James, Engineer/Building Inspector
Mark Stacey, DDA Director
Jason Mayer, Township Engineer, Giffels Webster

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Jones, supported by Parel, to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Agenda of April 16, 2018, as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Jones, supported by Schinzing, to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of March 5, 2018, with one correction; on Page 30, Jones, "My sister-in-law **was** in a very nice place ...".

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOTION by Schinzing, supported by Jones, to approve the Planning Commission Special Meeting Minutes of March 19, 2018, as presented.

Discussion –

Winkler – Larry, I wanted to mention, I believe you were present.

Haber – I couldn't be present. I was here in spirit, and on the internet.

Winkler – Okay, I didn't know if that was worth documenting or not.

Haber – We're going to try to change that by the way.

Winkler – The other thing I wanted to mention was about the March 5th minutes; 33 pages long. Deb did a great job!

Watson – Thank you.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

D. UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES

Bill McKeever – Zoning Board of Appeals

- We had one ZBA agenda item for a monument sign to encroach into the front yard setback.
- It was our first solar-powered illuminated sign apparently.

Jay James – I would say it was our first fully illuminated. Normally it's a spotlight that shines on it. This one is actually internally illuminated, with batteries in the stanchions and a large solar panel.

Haber – Where is this?

Jay James – It's on Welch Road, just south of Maple. The Welch Road Tech Center, across from the treatment plant.

George Weber – Township Board of Trustees

- At the Board meeting on April 10th, we did have a full agenda. I'll give you some highlights.
- Jason Pernick and Betsy Lafonde were reappointed to the Library Advisory Board.
- Linda Champagne was reappointed to the Parks & Recreation Committee.
- We had a detailed discussion with Bruce Aikens regarding his activity on Five & Main, specific to the PUD agreement. By the end of the evening, there was unanimous approval to move forward.
- We amended the ordinance eligibility standards on determining a hardship for taxation exemptions.
- We approved a water rate study.
- We had several discussions with the Fire Chief regarding moving forward with a new leasing strategy for equipment, as well as moving forward on a Safer Grant application with potential for additional firefighters.
- We approved the new eligibility criteria for any new firefighters that we may hire.
- We are moving forward with the non-motorized trail plan, incorporated into the Parks 5-Year Master Plan. That is specific to Five & Main as we want to make sure we have non-motorized trail ways appropriately incorporated into that plan.

Brian Winkler – Downtown Development Authority

- During the March DDA meeting, there were two highlights.
- The first was that the same presentation was delivered to the DDA that had been provided to the Planning Commission. Dave Campbell also described the traffic study and impacts the new development would have on Martin Parkway and the large roundabout.
- The second was an interesting revelation by David Scott, regarding Rails to Trails. As we all know, a donation was made to cover the engineering costs for improving the trails. David mentioned that the Trail Council is applying for a grant to cover costs of improvements, but the grant doesn't provide all funds necessary. Interestingly enough, another anonymous donor has stepped up to the plate to the tune of \$1.5 million to fund the shortfall.
- DDA Director, Mark Stacey, is present tonight. Mark, if you'd like to add anything, please do.

Director Stacey – I'd like to make you aware that the current issue of Crain's, on the front page, has a discussion of the Five & Main project. It's a great article. You can go on their website.

The Oakland Press will be running an article on it tomorrow. That is on their website tonight. It's also very positive.

We're getting significant exposure to the approval of the Five & Main PUD.

In addition, hopefully tomorrow, we will be signing closing forms for Gilden Woods, the daycare center which was approved by the Commission. That sale should be funded by the end of this week, and that will be moving forward very quickly.

Chairperson Haber – Is Bruce Aikens aware of the articles?

Director Stacey – Yes.

Chairperson Haber – A question about the trail. What's going to happen where it crosses at Haggerty Road?

Dave Campbell – There is design and engineering work being done by a group called Stantec, right Jason?

Jason Mayer – Yes.

Dave Campbell – It will include how the various crossings will be oriented, across Haggerty, across Welch, across Maple, and so forth. I don't know that we have those designed quite yet, but there will have to be a designated mid-block crossing at such high traffic areas.

Chairperson Haber – That trail is so heavily used.

Dave Campbell – It will be a great asset, both from a public health standpoint and economic development.

Jay James – Building Department

- Things are starting to pick up, considering the current weather conditions.
- We're getting tons of plans in, but it's still relatively slow.
- Soon it will be very busy.
- There's nothing major to update you on.

E. PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Chairperson Haber asked the members of the public for any discussion of matters not on the agenda. There were none.

Dave Campbell clarified that the Metro Environmental project is not a public hearing, and therefore, if anyone was present to comment on that item, this would be their opportunity to speak. There were no public comments.

F. TABLED ITEMS

None

G. OLD BUSINESS

None

Items H.1. and I.1. were proposed to be heard together and there were no objections from the Commissioners.

H. SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS:

ITEM H1: PSU18-002 – MICHIGAN SCHOOLS & GOVERNMENT CREDIT UNION – SPECIAL LAND USE – PUBLIC HEARING

Michigan Schools & Government Credit Union of Royal Oak MI is requesting a Special Land Use for a new credit union with a drive-through located on the north east corner of Pontiac Trail and Walnut Lake Road. Sidwell No.: 17-24-476-011

I. NEW BUSINESS

ITEM I.1. PSP18-0002 – MICHIGAN SCHOOLS & GOVERNMENT CREDIT UNION

Michael Blaneck, Stucky Vitale Architects representing Michigan Schools & Government Credit Union is requesting site plan approval for a new credit union located on the north east corner of Pontiac Trail and Walnut Lake Road. Sidwell No.: 17-24-476-011

Dave Campbell, Planning Director, gave a review of the location, the B-3 zoning, and the drive-through request, which is a Special Land Use. He discussed a future traffic light planned for Walnut Lake Road and noted that the petitioner has agreed to share in the cost of this signal at their proportionate share, which could be further discussed. He addressed parking, land banking, building materials, and the use of EIFS. Dave also reviewed the configuration of the building and drive-through in relation to the two road frontages, along with landscaping revisions, and minor comments from the engineer.

Michael Blaneck, Stucky Vitale Architects, 27172 Woodward Ave, Royal Oak, MI, was present along with Steve Brewer, Michigan Schools & Government Credit Union, 40400 Garfield Rd, Clinton Township, MI, to address the request.

Mr. Blaneck – I want to thank Dave for his presentation. We've had several conversations. We submitted in February. We appreciate the opportunity to be here tonight to present the project to you.

This is Michigan Schools & Government Credit Union (MSGCU). This will be their 15th branch. They have 4 other branches in Oakland County. This will be their farthest west. With the drive-through orientation, we tried to position it in a way that would encourage members to exit the site at Walnut Lake Road, knowing how busy Pontiac Trail is. We have worked with the orientation quite a bit to try to get an ideal location, and we're certainly open to rotating it a little more if that helps everyone to feel more comfortable about it. However, if we put the drive-through on the other side, now you would want to exit onto the main road, Pontiac Trail, and you wouldn't be able to make a left turn there.

The credit union has agreed to contribute to the cost of the signal, as the traffic study showed, and we can work out those details with the attorney.

The dumpster; we talked about sliding it up into this corner, next to the landscaping and snow removal areas. We just want to make it easy for the dump truck to get in and out of the lot.

We do have a loading zone which allows parking for members of the credit union who may have a commercial vehicle, school bus, et cetera.

We've already done an Environmental 1 and 2 on the site. The Environmental 1 showed potential issues, but the Environmental 2 showed that we were okay within the auto

parking area here. They were concerned that some of the values came in a little high, but they're under the state limit, so we're okay there.

We also did a geotechnical investigation report, and we found that this orientation is the best for the soil conditions on the site. As you move further south, there is a county drain here, and in the other direction, the soil is a lot softer with a lot less bearing capacity. Obviously, we're trying to keep the building in the best location for the site development. There's also a utility line that runs through the site. These lines will be moved. I emailed a photo to Mr. Campbell of the existing utility pole and lines.

Mr. Blanek continued to elaborate on the vision of the site, the location of the drive-through, the fact that the site has two frontages, and the attempts to minimize the impacts. He reviewed the architectural features, design elements, building materials, the connecting brick wall at the drive-through, the canopy, and presented photos of existing branches. He addressed the use of EIFS and presented a sample to the Commissioners. He assured them that this is a new, higher quality EIFS product. However, if the Commission preferred, they do have a cast stone alternative that they are certainly willing to use.

Mr. Blanek addressed rooftop screening and reviewed the glass, which is insulated, slightly tinted and anodized. He also discussed staffing, along with parking needs, which were based upon the MSGCU metrics for a new branch. He detailed the anticipated traffic for the drive-through, ATM and lobby, and added that the credit union also does auto loans and mortgages. They feel the branch will require 22 parking spaces.

Mr. Brewer – You may not have heard of MSGUCU. They're very popular on the east side, in Macomb County. We're a 60-plus year-old entity. We have grown tremendously over the last 15 years. We had probably around 350 million in assets 15 years ago, and now we're at .9 billion in assets.

97% of our members would recommend others to the credit union as a value proposition. We're big community partners. We offer scholarships for teachers, first responders and students. We'd like to have the same relationship with your community.

Chairperson Haber opened the public hearing.

Satish Tummala, 3200 Walnut Lake Road – I own the property across the street, to the south, the Motorwerks Building. I own the 2 acres of property, and then I also own the road as well, Walnut Lake Court, perpendicular to Walnut Lake Road, which ends with a cul-de-sac. I've been there 17 years. I've seen the traffic on Walnut Lake Road. What's going to happen to that in terms of the road? The road is in poor condition. In front of my building, there are so many potholes that you can't even drive through. You have to wait until the other car crosses then you go to the middle, over the yellow line. Now traffic will increase, which is great, but I just want to know what's going to mitigate that.

As for the traffic light, there have been dozens of accidents there, so I would make that a priority. One came to mind from 5 years ago where the car was burning to the ground. People ran into our building for our fire extinguishers.

Lastly, I stare at that vacant land more than anyone. I don't see how the view of the drive-through is a main architectural point. I would think the drive-through should be on the back of the building.

Chairperson Haber closed the public hearing as there were no additional questions or comments.

Commission Comments:

McKeever – Are there any concepts showing the allowable amount of parking, as well as the drive-through being located on the east side of the property?

Mr. BlaneK – We did not prepare a concept in that fashion.

McKeever – I have a really hard time-

Mr. BlaneK – We had more parking on the previous plan, but we cut it back.

McKeever – I don't even know that we have the ability to allow more than 120%.

Dave Campbell – It depends on how you want to interpret some language in the Zoning Ordinance. There's one section of the parking standards that says the Planning Commission may allow up to 120% of the required parking; but then there's also language that says the Planning Commission can otherwise deviate from the parking standards as they see fit based on information provided to them by the applicant. In that sense, you can and you have gone beyond 120%, but you've also gone less than the minimum required, based upon that language that gives you authority to deviate from the parking standards.

Typically, we're requiring people to put in less parking than the standards, because we recognize that our standards may require sites to be overparked. This is a little different from what we typically see, which is that they are asking for significantly more than what we require.

McKeever – I really do have issues with the drive-through being the prominent elevation. It's on two road frontages. I honestly wouldn't be comfortable with approving that location.

I agree with everything else brought up in the Planner's report. Normally, when we receive the building materials, you let us know if it's within the amount of each material; the approved percentages. I didn't see that in here.

Dave Campbell – Mr. BlaneK and I worked on that right up until the last hour, and I could have been more clear in my letter. They are within the percentages that are allowable. The one that Mr. BlaneK and I were looking at was the EIFS material on the elevations around the entrance. The maximum allowable per the Zoning Ordinance is 25%. Mr. BlaneK's calculation came in at 22%.

I'm fully aware of how this Planning Commission feels about EIFS/Dryvit materials, and I did want confirmation from him that it would not exceed 25%. Therefore, they are within the allowable percentages for building materials.

McKeever – As far as the width of the sidewalks, was that settled?

Mr. BlaneK – We are okay on that. We agreed and we're fine with the requirement.

McKeever – The 18' parking spaces and 4" curbs?

Mr. Blanek – Yes, whatever the ordinance requires, we will meet that.

McKeever – As far as the masonry brick wall at the drive-through, I know it's made out of brick, but to me it's a brick column.

Mr. Blanek – There's steel behind it, a steel background.

McKeever – It's still over an arch that is enclosing the ATM.

Mr. Blanek – Okay, an arch or a parapet element.

McKeever – But it doesn't screen.

Mr. Blanek – Right, we're not trying to screen all of the cars going through.

McKeever – We don't want to see the drive-through. I wouldn't vote in favor of this site plan, mainly because of the drive-through orientation.

One more question; they're only counting the stacking two deep, and spreading it out over the three drive-through lanes?

Dave Campbell – They're only showing two cars stacked. That was something that I suggested, that they only show stacking two deep. They were showing up to four deep, and I felt it looked cluttered and didn't help their cause.

Actually, they could fit at least a third car behind two of the lanes, and probably two cars behind the third lane.

McKeever – Does it count as stacking if those lanes are closed?

Dave Campbell – No, the assumption is that the stacking exists with the lanes being open.

McKeever – I'm done.

Weber – I agree with Bill, and I'll preface it a little as well. That intersection is going to be such an important, high-traffic intersection for the Five & Main development across the street, which is going to have very upscale design elements. It's going to be very important that all of the frontage along Pontiac Trail has a similar look. We want to bring that element to it. The drive-through element does not work for me in that location.

That's first and foremost.

Secondly, the overall aesthetics of the building look like a run of the mill credit union, not something that you're describing with the history and the relationships that you're having with the communities. I think this is our one chance to have something special there.

As for materials, I would be much more in favor of the cast stone element, versus EIFS. We can talk about that if you'd like, but something that is going to bring a higher end feel to that property and location.

I would also like to understand a little more about the burgundy striping. What is the rationale for that?

Mr. Blaneck – The striping is an element that we have on all the branches that we've done. This is the 7th or 8th version of this branch, so it's a prototypical branch that we have all over town. It's an accent color to give the branch its unique identity. There are all kinds of businesses that have branding elements or symbols. This is a subtle element, which is painted on so it can be changed easily. It's part of the corporate identity.

We are fine with the cast stone. We tried a few different ways to do it, and we're perfectly fine doing the monumental look. These are 24" tall stones; they're much bigger pieces for a monumental element.

Weber – A monumental element versus natural stone?

Mr. Blaneck – No, it's a cast stone, which is a manmade product.

Weber – Something more ...

Mr. Blaneck – More prominent, entrance type material. It's an architectural, cast stone, and we control the color so that we can blend it to match other branches, and to complement the brick.

Inside, there is a story and a half throughout, so it's a light-filled interior. I didn't have interior shots as unfortunately, our power was out today so I couldn't grab those. It's all stone with a lot of rich elements.

So, back to the drive-through. The more we rotate it, the more we push traffic. Part of it is just looking at how the traffic wants to pull out of this site. We could certainly rotate that more to the east, or counter-clockwise, and push the traffic.

Weber – Rotate it 180.

Mr. Blaneck – You want to flip it all the way over? But then when they come out of the drive-through, they're going to want to go straight to Pontiac Trail. We've done other branches similar to that.

Schinzing – Can you do a clockwise travel?

Mr. Blaneck – Well, the drive-through element is accessed from the driver's side.

Schinzing – Right, so switch everything so it's clockwise. There's other branches in the Township that are clockwise.

Mr. BlaneK – I could certainly test that as a possibility. I think we want to keep traffic going onto the side street, rather than going onto the major road. That will help the site work more efficiently and safely for anybody that comes into it.

We've got heavy landscaping and we're meeting all the requirements. We tried to minimize the effect as I know there was concern about the drive-through, and we're trying to balance that with elements of landscaping. We can certainly look at the possibilities, but I think everybody is in favor of safe ingress/egress.

Weber – I think there are alternatives.

Parel – I would echo a lot of the same comments. It'd be very difficult for me to approve this based on having the drive-through at such an important intersection. I think you should go back and look at the 180 as George described.

One compromise that I had taken into consideration was potentially instead of utilizing columns to block the drive-through, there could be some type of wall there. That is spur of the moment, but it might solve some issues.

I also had some smaller comments. The original dumpster location was very close to the entrance and highly visible. I'd like to see that moved, and obviously that's a much smaller issue than flipping the entire site.

I've seen similar use of EIFS. As Dave mentioned, I understand you're using a potentially better product that is less porous.

The Commissioners reviewed and discussed the EIFS sample provided by the applicant.

Parel – That's a better-looking product than I'm used to seeing. Dave, your report also noted having a documented need for the proposed use. There was a point made that there is currently a vacant bank with a drive-through that is 1.5 miles away.

Dave Campbell – Correct.

Parel – I don't know if that's something we really need to discuss.

Dave Campbell – I mentioned it in my letter. It is in the criteria for any Special Land Use, not just a drive-through, that a demonstrated need exists. Part of what they need to convince you of is that there is a need for a drive-through at this particular location, as opposed to another possibility, such as a vacant bank that already exists on Haggerty Road.

Chairperson Haber – How many credit unions are there in the Township now?

Discussions took place regarding existing credit unions within the Township, and the estimate was that three credit unions currently exist.

Parel – Dave, you had just mentioned it in the report and that we might want to discuss it, but I don't think it's a real issue.

How are you planning to screen the HVAC on the roof?

Mr. Blaneck – It's all Firestone, UNA-CLAD metal panels.

Parel – Okay. And lastly, I have no opposition to land banking of the parking spaces.

Mr. Blaneck – I did some research on that closed branch. It actually was a First Merit originally, and then Huntington bought First Merit. As part of the anti-trust, they had to close 170 branches. Huntington has a branch at 14 and Haggerty, and one in Union Lake. Obviously, they closed that branch, and I'm guessing it was because they had too many in the area, and not necessarily because it wasn't successful.

Weber – Just so I'm clear, the documented need is not a documented need for a credit union. It's a documented need for a drive-through in the credit union.

Dave Campbell – Correct, that there's a documented need for a drive-through use. In this instance, a drive-through use accessory to a credit union. And, other than in a downtown setting, I can't think of a bank that doesn't have a drive-through.

Winkler – The change of the EIFS to the stone goes a long way with me. I was a little concerned about the EIFS materials, but stone makes that issue go away. I'm in agreement with what's been mentioned about the orientation of the drive-through on the site. I would encourage the petitioner to look at that a little bit harder.

Jones – I'm in agreement with the other Commissioners. One issue is that, with regard to parking, I have to take into consideration what the business is. If they can legitimately say that there's as many as 10 staff members needing to be there for business purposes, I would tend to go along with giving them more spaces. He indicated 22. I don't have a problem with 22.

The architect pointed to the exit onto Walnut Lake Road and he indicated someone coming out and making a left turn. I thought that only a right-turn out of that would be permitted.

Chairperson Haber – That's on Pontiac Trail.

Jones – No, on Walnut. If you have right-in, right-out and left-out, my concern is the width of the exit.

Dave Campbell – Just to be clear, what we're proposing and what the traffic consultant suggested, is to add an outbound left-turn restriction at the Pontiac Trail driveway. There would be wayfinding signage, but also a porkchop median in the island to discourage outbound lefts at Pontiac Trail.

At the Walnut Lake driveway, the idea is that this would be a full movement driveway; right-in, right-out, left-in, left-out. Are you suggesting that there be two outbound lanes? So, there would be a dedicated right outbound and a dedicated left outbound?

Jones – Yes. We've run into this a number of times in the past years where we looked at 33' to accommodate those turns.

Dave Campbell – Okay. If it makes any difference, the traffic consultant did look at how the two driveways would operate, and found that even with one outbound lane, that drive would operate at a level service B, which we typically deem acceptable.

Schinzing – What percentage of the daily traffic goes through the drive-through.

Mr. Blaneck – On a monthly basis, it's 223 per day.

Chairperson Haber – That seems really high.

Mr. Blaneck – That's for a new branch. The analysis is over a period of one year, on one of the new branches that was opened recently. The best branch showed that their average ATM traffic is 8,037 monthly, or 260 per day.

Schinzing – I agree with some of the Commissioners regarding parking. I'm okay with the 22, but I also agree that the orientation of the building does not work for that location.

Chairperson Haber – Some of my points have been covered. One was the EIFS, so thank you for adjusting that.

I'm absolutely adamant about flipping the layout. I do not want to see the drive-through anywhere but on the back of the building.

I had some questions about the traffic flow. If you flip it and direct them around, those can be addressed.

The direction presents a problem with speaking to the teller; however, I just came back from Florida and there is a bank there, and a pharmacy there, that have only remote mounted drive-throughs. They're not attached to the building at all. They have a video screen. It worked out well for me. It may be something you want to think about as it would solve that problem.

We reviewed the dumpster.

Let's talk about brand recognition. I don't want to insult anyone here, but I've never heard of MSGCU. I've lived in this area all my life, not on the east side. So, brand recognition to me doesn't mean anything here because I don't know anybody in this area that's going to recognize your building. Having that red stripe there may be nice for you, but I don't think it's nice for this community. I would call your attention to the Tim Horton's on Haggerty Road. They had a similar situation as you, and we told them it would not work. We gave them suggestions for revisions and they put up a first-class building. They now use that as their standard building. We are Commerce Township and we expect a little better than some of the other communities.

We talked about the traffic light and you've agreed to participate. We certainly do appreciate that. We may need to look at the numbers on that at some point. I've heard an estimate of what it's going to cost.

There's too much parking. Land banking is my favorite thing. Go by Costco, Home Depot, Target, or any big box and there's a lot of unnecessary asphalt there. We don't need that.

Dave, as an aside, I have a note here for us to discuss EIFS percentages and to revisit the parking situation at the end of this meeting.

Dave Campbell – Okay.

Chairperson Haber – Land banking works out well for everyone. You don't have to do it right now, and if you do need it, it's there to use.

I mentioned that the aesthetics of the building don't do anything for me. The orientation should be flipped, and it should be made to look better. That would get us all onboard.

We touched upon the demonstrated need.

We usually see a whole materials board.

Mr. Blanek – I intended on bringing that, but unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate.

Chairperson Haber – If you do flip this building, I think it will address a lot of the problems, such as stacking, and also the sight of the drive-through. With the landscaping, you probably won't even see it. These are all things you can address, and there's answers to them.

We talked about the traffic concerns and a no left-turn onto Pontiac Trail.

I would recommend that we table this. There are too many changes here that have to be made.

Chairperson Haber also discussed banking inside the lobby, the drive-through, ATM usage and mobile deposits. He personally has not set foot inside of a bank in years and he feels that is where the future of banking is headed.

Dave Campbell – When they hopefully come back with revised plans, I have a list of 7 things the Planning Commission wants to see addressed; building orientation, the burgundy band, removal of any EIFS material, land banking of some parking, the dumpster location, 8' sidewalks, and the building aesthetics in general.

Chairperson Haber – Yes. The sidewalks are all around the building, along Pontiac Trail and Walnut?

Dave Campbell – Correct.

Jones – And the width of the driveway.

MOTION by Schinzing, supported by Jones, to **table** Item H1, PSU18-002, and Item I1, PSP18-0002.

AYES: Schinzing, Jones, Winkler, Haber, Parel, Weber, McKeever

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Chairperson Haber – Please come back soon.

ITEM 12: PSP18-0003 – METRO ENVIRONMENTAL

Oliver Hatcher Construction representing Metro Environmental is requesting site plan approval for an addition onto their existing building located at 1025 Metro Drive. Sidwell No.: 17-27-351-023

David Campbell, Planning Director, gave a review of the request to expand the building to more than double its size. This is a significant improvement to an existing, legal nonconforming site, and the goal is to achieve reasonable compliance with the current standards of the Zoning Ordinance. This should be in relative proportion to the scale of the improvement proposed.

He discussed the new paved, curbed parking lot, shifting the location for outdoor storage, reducing the size of the outdoor storage area and screening it. There are 16 parking spaces shown, and while they are aligned with the existing spaces on the north side of the site, based upon current parking setback standards, they would be too close to Metro Drive. The applicant has agreed to remove those 16 spaces to avoid having to request a setback variance from the ZBA. Clarification is needed regarding the 6 spaces that were previously land banked. They may want to pick up these 6 spaces in lieu of the other 16.

The applicant owns both properties, and a condition of any site plan approval would be to combine these two properties.

The smaller storage area has a full 8' privacy fence along the north side, and then a slatted chain link fence around the west and south sides.

They would also be removing the informal gravel drive and replacing it with a fully functional, paved, curbed new driveway on the south side of Metro Drive.

They are proposing a significant amount of new landscaping, both around the existing site, and around the proposed expansion area. The Township Landscape Architect had some suggestions for improvements, and those can be worked through within the realm of bringing the site into reasonable compliance.

The existing building is fluted block with corrugated metal paneling above it, and those materials would be carried into the proposed building expansion. This site is within the industrial district, which does not have strict standards for building materials, as in the office and business districts. It is not unreasonable to continue with the existing materials.

Mr. Evangelista, the project manager, stated that exterior lighting would be limited to wall packs along the side of the building. These will be fully cutoff with light being directed downward. However, Mr. Evangelista also thought that his client may want to have some security lighting in the storage yard; motion activated security lighting. This is something that is allowed, however it would have to meet the same design requirements; downward directed and fully shielded so that it's only shining down on the area that's meant to be illuminated.

Ron Evangelista, Oliver/Hatcher Construction, 27333 Meadow Brook, Novi, MI, was present along with Greg Bono, PEA Engineering, 2430 Rochester Ct, Ste 100, Troy, MI.

Mr. Evangelista – Mr. Campbell did an excellent job of describing everything we're proposing. I think there's only one other point that I'm not sure he identified. We will be connecting to the public water and sewer.

Dave Campbell – The existing septic field is right where the building addition is proposed, correct?

Mr. Evangelista – The septic field is in the front yard. There's an existing well on the site. It will be disconnected from the building, but it will be used for a process, for filling trucks.

Dave Campbell – So, while it's not a zoning issue, any time we can get a connection to municipal water and sewer, that's another aspect of bringing a site into compliance with our standards of today.

Commission Comments:

McKeever – I'm in agreement with everything Dave pointed out in his review. I did have one question regarding the vinyl screening material in the chain link fence. Is that an acceptable material?

Dave Campbell – The Zoning Ordinance requires that a storage yard in the industrial district be screened. It doesn't specify what type of screening material that is. If it's adjacent to residential, then it has to be a block masonry wall. We ran into that with Northstar Pools a couple years ago. They wanted outdoor storage and they happened to be adjacent to Scotland Yard, so they were told they had to put in an 8' masonry wall. This site is not adjacent to residential, so if you as a Planning Commission deem it to be appropriate, then they'll use the slatted, chain link fence.

McKeever – I thought we had basically outlawed that type of fence with our last revision.

Chairperson Haber – That's what I thought too.

Dave Campbell – It's not allowed in our TLM district, where we also allow limited outdoor storage, but in the industrial district, I'm not aware of any such prohibition on it. The other site I can think of where we did allow it was C.A. Hull, off Goldie Drive. They had a similar situation with a nonconforming site with outdoor storage. We were trying to get them into reasonable compliance. They proposed a combination of a block wall on one half, and then a slatted, chain link fence on the other side. You felt that was appropriate on that site.

This is open to discussion between you and the applicant. Given that it's a nonconforming site, we're trying to get it up to reasonable compliance.

Chairperson Haber – We find that those slats tend to blow out, so half of them are missing.

Weber – I'm fine with it as submitted.

Parel – My main concern would be the visibility from Ladd Road. That fence would be visible from Ladd Road on one side, correct?

Dave Campbell - Mr. Evangelista, did we talk about what the material would be on this portion of the fence, where it does face out to Ladd?

Mr. Evangelista – That would be the cedar fence, and it would all be screened. It's a privacy fence.

Dave Campbell reviewed the fencing around the site on the overhead.

Dave Campbell – I want to be clear on this too. The privacy fence would cover that phase, along the side facing toward Metro, and then it would transition to the slatted chain link along this length and across here?

Mr. Evangelista – That's correct.

Parel – Okay, it's helpful to get more clarification. I still think it's a good call to look for another potential material.

The other comment I had was in regard to parking. I think I see where you're going with it. It looks like the requirement was a total of 52, and you're proposing 37. I think the thought is that, the amount of increased business isn't necessarily going to lead to a need for additional parking.

Mr. Evangelista – Correct. Metro Environmental has more employees in the office, and in the warehouse area. We've provided adequate parking for visitors. Mr. Campbell indicated 6 spaces on the west side. We would include those in the project and they would be paved spaces. The 16 spaces on the north will be removed.

Dave Campbell – Correct me if I'm wrong, Mr. Evangelista, but in speaking with your client, it was determined that the additional parking they're proposing meets the needs of the client. The deficiency would just be relative to our Zoning Ordinance, and not necessarily to their needs.

Mr. Evangelista – That is correct.

Winkler – I'm okay with what the petitioner is proposing. I have a feeling that the parking as proposed by the petitioner is probably adequate. I think they're showing improvements in reasonable proportion to what they're trying to accomplish.

Dave Campbell – Another thought was that the purpose of the building is that they could have their business vehicles parked inside. Therefore, you could make a reasonable argument that some of the parking is actually inside of the building addition.

Mr. Evangelista – That is correct.

Jones – I have no comments. I agree with Brian.

Schinzing – Just for my understanding, could you explain the shortfalls in the landscaping that Giffels Webster noted?

Dave Campbell – The letter was included in your packet, dated March 30th. I look at these five bullet points and I don't see anything that we can't address administratively.

Jason Mayer – I talked to Mark and what he said was that they have all their required plantings, they're just not in the right spots. It's really just a matter of shuffling around what they have.

Chairperson Haber – That can be done administratively.

Dave Campbell – They're not short 50 trees. They just could be put in better locations, which is something we can work out.

Schinzing – In our recommended motion language, we don't require the municipal hookup. Can we, or should we?

Dave Campbell – I don't think it's unreasonable to include it as a condition of approval. Again, given what we're all striving to do, which is to bring the site into reasonable compliance. Jay, if this were a new site on otherwise vacant land, given this proximity to the existing water and sewer, we would require them to hook up, correct?

Jay James – We would require them to hook up to sanitary sewer, but not necessarily water.

Schinzing – You're already offering it, correct?

Mr. Evangelista – Yes.

Schinzing – I'd just like to make sure it's part of the proposal.

Dave Campbell – If it does make any difference, my understanding is that they do want to keep their well for irrigation purposes, and for filling the trucks.

Chairperson Haber inquired about the main entrance into the building, which was to the northwest corner. He also discussed handicap parking spaces. The petitioner reviewed these areas on the overhead for the Commissioners.

MOTION by Weber, supported by Schinzing, that the Planning Commission **approves, with conditions**, Item PSP18-0003, Metro Environmental, the request by Oliver Hatcher Construction, representing Metro Environmental, for site plan approval for an addition onto their existing building located at 1025 Metro Drive.

Sidwell No.: 17-27-351-023

Move to approve PSP18-0003, a site plan for Metro Environmental at 1025 Metro Drive, based on a finding that the proposed building addition and parking lot comply with the applicable standards of the Commerce Township Zoning Ordinance, that 31 parking spaces (with the option of 6 additional deferred spaces) is acceptable, and further that the plan brings the entire site into reasonable compliance with the current standards of

the Zoning Ordinance in proportion to the scale of the addition the applicant proposes.

Site plan approval is conditional upon the following:

1. Approval of construction plans by the Township Engineer, Township Building Official, and Township Fire Marshal;
2. Combination of the two parcels (-022 and -023) through Oakland County Equalization;
3. Administrative review and approval of a revised landscape plan and exterior lighting plan if security lighting is proposed;
4. Applicant agrees that connections will be made to municipal water and sanitary sewer.

AYES: Weber, Schinzing, McKeever, Parel, Haber, Winkler, Jones

ABSENT: None

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

J: OTHER MATTERS TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION:

Chairperson Haber – If there is a brief agenda at an upcoming meeting, I'd like to discuss the EIFS materials and review parking again.

Dave Campbell – Do you want preliminary discussion, or do you want me to do homework on how other communities look at parking standards?

Chairperson Haber – I'd like to look at the parking standards if you can get them so we have something to talk about. It would be a very preliminary discussion no matter what.

Dave Campbell – Any standards in particular?

Chairperson Haber – I don't think we will see big boxes anymore. I think they're gone. I just don't want to see a lot of wasted parking space.

Dave Campbell – Then you mentioned building materials as well. The one in particular that jumps out is the 25% allowance for EIFS/Dryvit in the B-3 zoning district. We have other districts where we limit that to 10%. Based upon the number of nodding heads I'm seeing, we may want to back off of that 25%.

Schinzing – At the RCOC meeting, can you bring up the condition of Walnut Lake Road? That road is a disaster, and it's going to be a main road to get to Five & Main.

Dave Campbell – Yes. Aldi was required to extend their left turn lane, so you can see where they put in new pavement. You can see on the aerial how bad the existing pavement is. When the Five & Main development comes in, this center left turn lane will likely be a continuous center left turn lane all the way across. As part of that work, hopefully it will be a reconstructed road. That's speculation on my part, but yes, that will be part of our broader conversation with the RCOC, to ask about the deteriorating section of Walnut Lake Road.

Chairperson Haber – I'd like to be involved in that RCOC meeting.

Dave Campbell – Okay.

Weber – One question. Dave, you had mentioned that Gilden Woods has come back. Did they come back yet with a new stone façade?

Dave Campbell – Not yet. They worked with Jason Mayer's office as far as getting engineering approval. I think they wanted to clear that hurdle.

They're well aware. I've had conversations with their architect about the stone. They said they're looking at a few different options and they'll get back to us.

I think their next big step is closing with the DDA to take ownership of the property.

Weber – Got it. When I heard engineering, I thought it was architecture too.

K: PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- **NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE: MAY 7, 2018 @ 7PM**
- As Mr. Weber mentioned, the Township Board took a significant step on a project that you have seen, the Five & Main project. They did grant approval of the PUD.
- Aikens goal was to have this approval before the May ICSC in Las Vegas. Aikens will return to the Planning Commission with a fully developed site plan.
- We are working toward getting an audience with the RCOC, with the help of our County Commissioner.
- There were two significant recommendations in the traffic impact study.
- One was to improve the capacity of the roundabout by adding an additional northbound lane. The second was, as discussed tonight, the traffic signal at Walnut Lake and Pontiac Trail.

Schinzing – At the Board, was the residential conversation fine, or were there mixed feelings on that?

Dave Campbell – I got the impression that there were two or three members of our Township Board who needed some convincing on the residential component. The argument I made, from a Planning standpoint, was that you're creating the closest thing we will ever achieve to a "downtown", and what makes a true downtown great is that people actually live there, in addition to shopping, dining, entertainment, et cetera. When people live there, it becomes their neighborhood and they take ownership of it, and it becomes a real community.

Members of the Board suggested that we already have that residential component, given the apartments that are under construction on the west side of Martin Parkway, and the Pulte and Hunter Pasteur neighborhoods to the north. But, ultimately it was a unanimous vote to approve the PUD. If there were concerns about the residential, they weren't significant enough to vote against it.

- At the May Planning Commission meeting, I hope that the credit union will turn their work around and get back in front of you.
- We will also have a public hearing in May for Wilson's Marine. They've occupied another building on Haggerty Road, further north, near Goldie Drive. They are doing outdoor boat storage, outdoor sales and displays, none of which had approval from the Planning Commission. They're on a deadline with Mr. James

to get the necessary approvals, or remove those materials. They've submitted for Special Land Use for the outdoor storage, and for the vehicle repair use.

Schinzing – So they're asking for forgiveness instead of permission.

Dave Campbell – I will not disagree with how you've phrased that.

Jones – Are we asking for any conditions of improvement along with that?

Dave Campbell – They submitted recently. I have not had a chance to do any kind of review on what they're proposing. The outdoor storage component in the TLM zoning district requires screening, and TLM is held to a higher standard for screening. I will review their project and see what is proposed. That will be the main focus of your conversation with them, is how are they going to screen the materials they want to keep outside, including boats, sections of dock and other materials related to their business.

L: ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Schinzing, supported by Parel, to adjourn the meeting at 8:38pm.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Brian Winkler, Secretary