

To: Commerce Township Board of Trustees

From: Commerce Township Planning Department
David Campbell, AICP – Planning Director
Paula Lankford – Senior Planner

Date: August 14, 2024

RE: August 2024 Monthly Planning Department Report
(covering July 2, 2024 through August 13, 2024)



Development updates

- **Crumb Road west of Haggerty** - Schafer Development has been in discussions with the Planning Department on developing the vacant 5.3-acre parcel on the north side of Crumb Road just east of Meijer Drive with a for-sale two-story townhome development consisting of up to 38 two and three-bedroom units. The proposed units would be comparable to those Pulte is currently constructing within Towns of Merrill Park along Martin Road. The property is zoned B-3 (General Business) but is also in the Haggerty Road Corridor overlay, which allows attached residential as a special land use. Spencer Schafer presented two conceptual options to the Planning Commission at their August 12 meeting and received the PC's informal and non-binding comments. The PC was generally favorable to the concept, with much of the discussion focused on preserving existing vegetation and extending sidewalks along Crumb Road with the hope of someday having a non-motorized connection via Crumb to the Michigan Airline Trail.
- **8275 Cooley Lake Road** – Chris Sciacca of CCS Design is proposing to redevelop the site at 8275 Cooley Lake Road including an assemblage of five adjacent properties (six properties total). The existing building at 8275 Cooley Lake (formerly Chi-Town Union station, Perry Drugs, Food Town) would be renovated and utilized as CCS Design's offices and assembly area to relocate his business currently located in Wixom. Five of the six properties are zoned B-2 (Community Business) and the sixth is zoned R-1D (One Family Residential). Mr. Sciacca developed a concept plan showing two future buildings on the undeveloped land west of the existing building, and discussed that concept with the Planning Commission during their meeting on August 12. The Planning Commission was generally favorable toward the uses proposed within both the existing building and the future buildings, and looks forward to see new investment in a property that could certainly benefit from it, but wants to ensure that the site would be compatible with the surrounding residential homes in the Russell Beach subdivision.
- **SW corner of Pontiac Trail & Welch Road** – Bradley Thomasma with the ERT Group is proposing to redevelop the southwest corner of Pontiac Trail and Welch Road with a multi-tenant retail building with a potential for a drive-through tenant. A concept plan may be presented at the Planning Commission meeting on September 9 for their non-binding and informal comments.
- **Lafontaine Automotive Group (LAG Development)** – Lafontaine has two projects in process, as follows:

- **2199 Haggerty Road** – Lafontaine’s work on the former Dick Morris Chevrolet property is nearing completion, with a new building façade, new landscaping, sidewalks, lighting, paving, etc.
- **Hyundai-Genesis Dealerships** – LAG received their building permits, and held their pre-construction meeting on August 7, and will start their site work within the coming weeks for the two new dealership buildings on the northwest corner of Pontiac Trail and Haggerty. A portion of the wall between Walmart and LAG’s property was recently removed to extend the existing shared frontage road along the north side of Pontiac Trail to connect to LAG’s site.
- **Easterly Sleeth Rd gravel pits** - The two easterly undeveloped gravel pits located on the north side of Sleeth Road will be included in Oakland County’s tax foreclosure auction on August 16, 2024. The Planning Department is aware of several prospective development groups likely to bid on the two parcels, which are being auctioned in one bundle. Both properties are zoned R-1A (Large Lot One Family Residential), which hasn’t stopped inquiries to the Planning Department of whether they could be developed with commercial uses like self-storage or a gas station.
- **Chase Bank** – The development team for the approved Chase Bank at the northwest corner of Haggerty and Crumb (just south of the Meijer gas station) had their pre-construction meeting on August 7 and will be starting their site work within the coming weeks. Meanwhile Planning Director Dave Campbell’s bank keeps closing branches, and the ones they keep open are going cashless. Imagine telling your grandfather that someday a bank wouldn’t have cash.
- **Five & Main** – Site work has begun in earnest on the underground infrastructure, with the first residential buildings expected to be occupied by Summer 2025.

Zoning Map & Zoning Ordinance Amendments – Based on direction from the Township Board provide during a discussion at the July 23 quarterly meeting, the Planning Department, the Township Attorney, and representatives of existing alcohol retailers have been drafting an amendment to Sec. 26.316 of the Zoning Ordinance that would allow existing licenses to be consolidated, thereby expanding the license at one location so long as operations at another location nearby permanently cease.

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)

The ZBA’s regular meeting scheduled for July 25, 2024 included the following:

- Approval of a variance request for 2000 E. Oakley Park Road to construct a monument sign that will encroach 25 feet into the required front yard setback
- A discussion took place amongst the Board members on decision-making on the cases brought before the Board and how the criteria set forth in Article 41 are interpreted and implemented by the ZBA.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission’s regular meeting on August 12, 2024 included the following:

- The Planning Commission gave their informal and non-binding comments for a concept plan for the redevelopment of 8275 Cooley Lake Road (former Chi-Town Union Station)

an assemblage of six properties for alterations to the existing building for offices and assembly, with the possibility of constructing two additional buildings on the site in the future (as described above).

- The Planning Commission gave their informal and non-binding comments for a concept plan for a for-sale two-story townhome development on the vacant 5.3-acre parcel on the north side of Crumb Road just east of Meijer Drive (as described above).
- Planning Commission Chair Brian Parel boldly predicted Michigan State will not quit on their football season any earlier than their game on Sept. 28, and invited everyone to his tailgate party before the slobberknocker versus perennial powerhouse Prairie View A&M

The Planning Commission's regular meeting on September 9, 2024 may include the following:

- A concept plan for a new commercial development on the southwest corner of Pontiac Trail and Welch Road (described above)