

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

Monday, November 14, 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  
Joe Loskill, Secretary  
Bill McKeever  
George Weber  
Sam Karim  
Brady Phillips

Also Present:

Dave Campbell, Township Planning Director  
Paula Lankford, Planner  
Larry Gray, Township Supervisor  
Mark Gall, Township Fire Marshal

**B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION** by Loskill, supported by Phillips, to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Agenda of November 14, 2022, as presented.

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION** by Winkler, supported by Loskill, to approve the Planning Commission Regular & Special Meeting Minutes of October 3, 2022, with the following addition: *Secretary* will be added following Joe Loskill's name on the roll calls.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**D. UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES**

George Weber – Township Board of Trustees

- We've had two Township Board meetings since the Planning Commission last met; the regularly scheduled meeting was on October 11<sup>th</sup>. I have several notes for the Commission.
- First, we approved the special assessment district roll for both Fire and Police, with Fire at 2.8 mills, and Police holding firm as the previous year at 2.622 mills.
- We introduced a new ordinance for sidewalks and recreational paths.
- We adopted the new sign ordinance, the revised language; however, I will say there was substantial discussion and I'm sure Dave probably had the assignment to revisit this. I think there will be more discussion at tomorrow's Board meeting. Of note or concern, from residents and some of the Trustees, was the First Amendment as it relates to signage on private property; meaning, should the Township be limiting all parcels the same way, of no more than 32 square feet of signage. Correct me if I'm wrong on any of this Dave, but specifically, there was discussion of Long Farm where you have somebody that has hundreds of yards of frontage and should they be limited to just 32 square feet. I don't think anybody had an answer but people were concerned on infringing, particularly during election time, on people's ability to not have 20 signs for different people in their yard.

Dave Campbell – I would agree. The conversation I heard with the Township Board, when this came in front of them and when they ultimately adopted it, most of the comments had to do with political signs, or what we call personal message signs in our zoning world. We don't necessarily care what the message is, but that generated most of the comments. If something does come back before you, I think a lot of the focus is going to be personal message signs on private property; how many, how big, the duration of them, if they are meant to be election-focused signs. And, to Mr. Weber's point, if you have 20 acres, are you entitled to more signage than if you live on a half-acre lot.

McKeever – What if your sign offends your neighbor?

Dave Campbell – That's a tough question sometimes, especially when you start getting into profanity. The First Amendment doesn't necessarily differentiate with profanity. The Supreme Court has heard some cases, and you get into some interesting arguments with that.

Weber –

- Additionally, the Township Board adopted a resolution opposing the Oakland County Public Transit Millage, which I think everybody saw passed by a fairly wide margin. It did not pass in Commerce Township. It was voted down, from what I was able to see, in most of the northern and western municipalities. Interestingly, it was passed in Novi and City of Novi Council was pretty much against it, but the voters approved it. So, we get the opportunity to pay another \$2.4 million in new taxes for Commerce residents that will provide limited value, if any at all.
- We had ongoing Township budget discussions. We're in the final throes of that, and I think that will be wrapped up by the December meeting.
- On October 25<sup>th</sup> we had a quarterly discussion, and this was a joint meeting between the DDA and the Township Board. Most of the discussion centered on Five & Main, a little bit on Lafontaine and some of the open parcels. It was a good opportunity for Township Board and the DDA to come together, share thoughts and be able to ask questions.

Bill McKeever – Zoning Board of Appeals

- We have not met since our last Planning Commission meeting.

Dave Campbell – There is a ZBA meeting this Thursday.

Brian Winkler – Downtown Development Authority

- We had a meeting on October 18<sup>th</sup>. Some of the highlights of that meeting are as follows.
- Bruce Aikens gave the DDA a brief summary on the status of the Five & Main project. He is getting closer to solidifying a partnership with a residential developer. He is requesting a 2-year extension on his option for the Phase II property, which is immediately north of the Phase I property, and the option was set to expire on October 31<sup>st</sup>. The DDA Board voted to extend the option until the next DDA Board meeting on November 15<sup>th</sup> to give the Board a chance to further review the request for a 2-year extension of the option.

- Larry Gray noted that the bids for the OCSO annex came in over budget and that the project will be re-bid early next year.
- Insite Commercial Report:
  - Parcel C, the northwest corner of Haggerty and Pontiac Trail; LAG continues to work on the PUD, whose public hearing in front of the Planning Commission has been delayed while LAG cleans up some items. The PC will review, on a preliminary basis, a revised site plan for this parcel as a part of our agenda for tonight.
  - Parcel L, directly east of the Township Hall, along Haggerty Road – Guidepost Montessori: Closing documents were signed after the DDA meeting on October 18<sup>th</sup>.
- The DDA selected Christopher Martella of Dawda Mann as the new DDA attorney. A Letter of Engagement was executed after the meeting.
- The proposed 2023 DDA Budget, which was revised to reflect the proceeds from the Sale of Property from Parcel C taking place in 2023 rather than 2022, was approved by the DDA Board.
- The DDA Public Relations Committee, Jose Mirkin, who does a great job, noted that the DIA Inside-Out program will again display artwork reproductions within Township facilities between May and October of 2023. In addition, the WLCSD will also conduct an Art Exhibition at the Library in May of 2023.

Jay James – Building Department

In Jay's absence, Dave Campbell provided the following:

- Jay included his standard report included in the agenda packet.
- An interesting one, the question we have been asked for many years now is, *When is somebody going to move into the old Hiller's at Union Lake and Commerce Road?* It looks like we may have an answer.
  - There is an entertainment group who wants to open a place called Urban Air. It's essentially an indoor amusement park with go-carts, a ninja course, swing ropes, ziplines, trampolines, etc., for young folks that will occupy that building.
  - We compelled both Urban Air and Kroger, who is their landlord, as a condition of occupancy, to put in sidewalks along their frontage of both Commerce Road and Union Lake Road. That might not happen until the spring, and Urban Air might be open by then, but it's one more gap in our sidewalk network that hopefully we can get filled in.
  - We told Kroger it was the least they could do for holding that building vacant for as long as they did.
  - I bring it up because I know Jay is working on the building permits for the interior buildout of that space. I know Fire Marshal, Mark Gall, is going to have to look at that as well with regard to fire safety.

## **E. PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

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

None.

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

## **F. TABLED ITEMS**

None.

## **G. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

## **H. SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS (2):**

None.

## **I. NEW BUSINESS (1):**

### **ITEM I1. PSP22-10 – COSTCO PARKING EXPANSION**

Larry Dziurdzik with The JNL Design Group representing Costco Wholesale is requesting site plan approval to expand the existing parking lot into a vacant outlot to the west at 600 Loop Road. Sidwell No.: 17-36-200-031

Dave Campbell gave a review. Larry Dziurdzik of JNL Design Group, representing Costco, is proposing to expand Costco's parking lot into the adjacent undeveloped outlot at 600 Loop Road. The expanded parking lot would include 55 new parking spaces with a significant landscape buffer around its perimeter. The proposed expansion requires site plan approval by the Planning Commission. Costco's future plans are to relocate and expand the gas station further east on their site in a location that is currently parking, so the proposed parking lot expansion is in anticipation of the reduction in parking for the future larger gas station. The new gas station will have wider bypass lanes between the pumps.

Dave addressed the overage in parking, the new light poles proposed to match the existing, which are taller than the ordinance currently permits, along with a condition to combine the tax parcels, and a revised landscaping plan to buffer the new parking lot. One of the delays with the new gas station is the time it takes to get the underground fuel tanks. Dave also discussed ways to mitigate concerns in an attempt to ensure that the gas station replacement actually occurs.

Larry Dziurdzik, Project Manager, JNL Design Group, 1955 Raymond Dr, Ste 119, Northbrook, IL, was present to address the request, and he delivered a presentation on the overhead.

Larry Dziurdzik – I know you have been here all afternoon. I have a short presentation to summarize what we are asking for. Dave did a great job and I don't want to repeat those comments. This parking lot is what Costco is considering Phase I of a multiphase master plan for the property. I think the last time I was before you, we thought that an expansion of the gas station was the most appropriate plan for the future. We listened to everybody, we went back to the drawing board, and we prepared what I think is a great fuel relocation plan for this property.

As I mentioned to Dave and Paula, we're doing something almost identical in Shelby Township. We are doubling the capacity. Before tonight's meeting, I was actually in line getting gas today. I timed it and it was almost 11 minutes, which is quite some time. I'm from the northern suburbs of Chicago. This fuel station here is probably one of the longest that I have seen. This is desperately needed for the property.

We're coming in today to get the site plan approved for the parking expansion, and we're looking at early next year to come in again before you with the fuel expansion site

plan application, which is a little more complicated because I believe that is a public hearing. Tonight is strictly just a site plan, but we can talk about the fuel expansion. As Dave mentioned, Costco is going to purchase this property, which is 1.27 acres. We are expected to close later this week. We've been working on the deal for a couple months. We are going to combine that with the existing parcel. My work with Costco, 90% of it, is similar projects like this. We are always looking for property and it's nice when the property is contiguous.

I think this is a pretty straightforward expansion. We're extending the drive aisles. It is a 55-car parked lot, with a couple cart corrals. Employees park in this corner of the parking lot right now. I verified with the warehouse manager; at any time, there's 120 to 150 employees in the building. That's quite a bit of parking and they take up this entire area. Our plan is to move them. It makes sense for now to move them to this area, and when the fuel station is built, we have this parking here. We have 55 here, and I think we have about 40 in this area, where the employees are going. That will open up this whole area for members, which makes sense.

Parking and members go hand in hand with Costco. Parking is such a big component of the business model, more so than any other retailer. The amount of parking we are asking for typically does exceed most municipal ordinances. All new warehouses we are working on have anywhere between 800-850 parking spaces for buildings slightly larger than this one, around 150,000 square feet. This is 132,000 square feet. With this parking expansion, I believe we are at 841.

I put together some facts. Costco has many employees who are data collectors, such as how many memberships are sold, per day, month and year, along with how many people actually go in through the front door. These graphs indicate that this particular store has seen an increase since the pandemic. It's interesting. Daily transactions are rising and sales are almost back to pre-pandemic levels for this store. This store opened in 2003, and there has been virtually no change to the store with the exception of some interior remodeling. Costco Operations have completed a building expansion study, a parking expansion and a gas expansion study. That's why I'm appearing before you tonight.

Larry Dziurdzik reviewed the graphs on the overhead showing the increase in Costco memberships, an increase in door counts, parking specs and statistics during peak periods. Slightly over 1,000 new members join per year.

Larry Dziurdzik – I don't think I will add anything to the site plan. I think it works quite well. We're respecting the setback along Loop Road of about 35'. We have interior parking islands and we do have some cart corrals which are very important. Today we have 787 parking spaces, with 16 handicap spaces. With this expansion of 55, we are at 841 total parking. That exceeds the maximum.

I'd like to talk about the future site plan for the fuel expansion. That will create a net loss of 17, so we will be down to 824 spaces. It's still right around the 800 mark that Costco is looking for. Costco is also looking at the expansion of the building to the south, and that would trigger a higher parking count for the property. That would be approximately a 20,500 square foot expansion, and that would be updates in optical, pharmacy and additional employee lockers.

Larry Dziurdzik reviewed additional details of the project on the overhead, including the addition of landscaping, irrigation, stormwater management, and the curb and gutter design. He then proceeded to discuss the fuel expansion plans, including the wider

bypass lanes and drive aisles, 16 pumps, 32 dispensers, adequate queueing, parking, and the landscaping buffer. The sequence of construction is to build a 55-car parking lot in 2023, then looking at the fuel station buildout, and decommissioning of the existing fuel station, in 2024. There is a supply shortage of underground fuel tanks; they are taking up to one year to get to the U.S. The final slide showed the potential Costco building expansion to the south.

Lastly, he assured the Planning Commissioners that Costco is moving ahead with the fuel expansion plans.

**Commission Comments:**

Karim – I have no questions.

Winkler – Regarding the height of the light poles. For the sake of consistency, the higher height is fine. I'm sure they're cutoff fixtures.

Chairperson Parel – That's an interesting point. That was my initial thought, but I have a concern that we are putting tall lampposts closer to M-5 and they would be very visible. I think what you're saying is that may be outweighed by the fact that using different types of lights or lamps in the parking lot could look odd. We don't necessarily want to see a mishmash of different lighting heights here.

Dave Campbell – I can understand that logic. Another thought too is for them to generate the same level of lighting with shorter fixtures, they would have to have more of the shorter fixtures. Is it better to have two taller fixtures, or more than two shorter fixtures.

Chairperson Parel – What is your opinion?

Dave Campbell – I can appreciate the logic of maintaining the height of the light poles that are already there. I think we have confirmed that those same light poles and same height are consistent across the entire Commerce Crossing development.

Weber – How tall are they?

Dave Campbell – 35 or 36'.

Larry Dziurdzik – They're slightly over 35' I believe.

Weber – What does the ordinance call for?

Dave Campbell – 25'.

Weber – 10', wow, that's a big difference.

Dave Campbell – The ordinance has a sliding scale based on how close you are to residential. This is not close to any residential, so the maximum of that sliding scale is 25'. It is within the Planning Commission's authority to deviate from that, if you so choose.

Chairperson Parel – Is there a way to direct the lights so that they're directed away from M-5?

Dave Campbell – We require that for all new lighting fixtures, that they be downward directed and shielded, which most LED fixtures of today are that by default anyway.

Larry Dziurdzik indicated the location of the light poles on the overhead.

McKeever – They would still adhere to our current photometric standards.

Dave Campbell – They do. The only deviation would be the height.

Chairperson Parel – My concern is the view.

McKeever – I don't have an issue with it. I think we're trying to reinvent the wheel.

Chairperson Parel – Brian, anything further?

Winkler – No.

Phillips – No comments.

Loskill – On the adjacent property for Bar Verona, what is the height of the fixtures on that property?

Dave Campbell – I'm trying to remember. We looked at the bigger shopping center, but I guess I did not confirm that they are the same as Bar Verona.

Loskill – Okay, I was just curious if they would be in line with the same fixtures and height.

Discussion continued regarding the parking lot light poles.

Loskill – My only other concern, in looking at your future expansion plans, I would ask you to take another look at your exiting. Out of that gas station, you have 8 lanes going down into 2 lanes. I think that is going to be a bit of a mess trying to get out, as you'll have people from the left trying to go right, and people from the right trying to go left. I like the way you have it now where it is open. I ask you to take a look at that when you come back before us with the site plan.

Larry Dziurdzik – Very good point. We do have several facilities north of Chicago that are set up like this, and they're actually working out okay. They do funnel.

Dave Campbell – With this setup, is the attendant being the referee to some degree, to ensure that people are leaving in an orderly manner?

Larry Dziurdzik – We like to have order. What I witnessed today was a little chaotic, but it worked. We have two setups, and we are leaning toward the new, funnel model for the exit. We will definitely take a look at it.

Chairperson Parel – You're looking for approval tonight?

Dave Campbell – They're seeking approval tonight of just the parking lot expansion.

Weber – Bill pulled up Google Earth and Bar Verona doesn't have any. Their lighting is just off the building.

McKeever – They have one in the north lot.

Weber – I like the landscaping plan. I don't have any questions. You said there is firm commitment to the fuel station, and I'd like to see that in writing. Have you sent Dave a letter saying, Costco is committed to the fuel station redesign?

Larry Dziurdzik – The emails I have received from Costco executives show that we are moving forward with the fuel relocation plan. I didn't put anything in writing to Dave, but I could.

Weber – Just something simple.

Dave Campbell – What we discussed too today was that when Costco goes to build the parking lot expansion, which I think you said is projected into late spring of 2023, one of the things they would have to do is hold a preconstruction meeting with the Township, which includes our engineers, utility companies, et cetera. That meeting is the last step before they get a green light to begin construction on any project. My thought was that if that is not likely to happen until mid to late-spring of 2023, if Costco wanted to commit that prior to that precon meeting, they would submit a site plan for Planning Commission consideration for this gas station, in my mind, that shows that they are committed to the gas station project. From a scheduling standpoint, if we sequence it right, it wouldn't hold them up.

Chairperson Parel – In that scenario, there is the possibility that they could have their parking lot, with more parking than they're allowed at this site, and something could happen that causes the expansion and the new gas station not to go through.

Dave Campbell – With the scenario I've laid out, it's not a guarantee that the gas station will get done. It is more of a commitment in the sense that they have gone to the point of actually developing a fully-developed site plan.

Larry Dziurdzik – Prior to construction permits being issued. If approved tonight, Costco accepts a contingent approval that we could not break ground on the parking lot until we appear before you with a full presentation for the fuel relocation.

Dave Campbell – I think what Mr. Parel is saying is that even if we did that, and you got a gas station site plan approval, that's not necessarily a guarantee that you're actually going to build it.

Chairperson Parel – I understand the intention and I trust you on that.

Larry Dziurdzik – We've been looking at the property for quite some time. The notes that I took from the last time we met, the existing fuel expansion isn't going to work. It really



needs to be demoed. It's an older model and there's a lot of gas traffic. We don't see that slowing down. We have talked about electric vehicles and the next decade. We are planning for the future. My office, along with Steve Cross, the authorized Costco Representative in the Midwest, we're all in agreement. In terms of a contingent approval tonight, we would be okay with that if that's what the Commission chooses to do.

Dave Campbell – I think it would be tough for them too, if they never built a gas station, for whatever reason, which I don't think is anyone's intent, and then for them to come back later and ask for the south side store expansion, but not having done the gas station...

Chairperson Parel – We understand that. I don't think tonight is the forum for that conversation.

Dave Campbell – I think there is a certain amount of good faith in Costco's intentions, but if we did wind up coming to a point where they're not doing what they said they were going to do as far as the gas station...

Chairperson Parel – At that point, the conversation might be, let us expand the building and then we'll do the gas station.

McKeever – I don't think it works that way.

Dave Campbell – I don't know that Costco has a motivation to do that.

McKeever – When the original developers came in for Bar Verona, did they have adequate parking?

Dave Campbell – It was Johnny Carino's at the time and that's an interesting question. They were short by 3 parking spaces.

McKeever – Was there a formal shared parking agreement between the restaurant...

Dave Campbell – The owner of this property had to grant an easement benefitting the owner of the restaurant, saying if and when they developed on this outlot, they would share 3 parking spaces with the restaurant. Fast forward 20 years, I don't think we've seen a parking shortage.

McKeever – I don't know that I could honestly sit here and say that there is an overabundance of parking at Costco. I wouldn't say there is a lot of unused parking there.

Dave Campbell – Our Zoning Ordinance says there is, but we have a Costco representative who does this for a living who says Costco needs more parking on this property. Because our Zoning Ordinance says they're exceeding the maximum, that's where it becomes the decision of this Planning Commission. When I was there today, that parking lot was pretty full on a Monday afternoon in November.

McKeever – I could point out Home Depot, or the former Kmart site, or any number of sites where the majority of parking spaces go unused, but I don't ever see that to be an issue in this Costco parking lot.

Chairperson Parel – I don't disagree. Dave, any other recourse we could have if they don't follow through with the gas station?

Dave Campbell – I mean short of having them put up some sort of a financial guarantee, which is an action I wouldn't want you to take tonight as I would want to discuss it with the Township Attorney first. You could not take action until we could discuss these scenarios.

Chairperson Parel – I don't think that's the answer. My opinion is that we're going to vote on it. I think we will probably take a leap of faith based upon the organization that we're dealing with.

Dave Campbell – Mr. Weber, you mentioned Costco putting something in writing. Does that help the conversation?

Weber – I think the email that Larry discussed would be fine for me.

Dave Campbell – Larry will generate a new email.

Larry Dziurdzik – Correct.

Weber – I have no further questions.

McKeever – I'm done.

Chairperson Parel – Dave, can you pull up the landscape plan?

The landscape plan was reviewed on the overhead. Dave Campbell showed the table indicating existing versus proposed landscaping. Discussion took place regarding sufficient buffering of the view from M-5, the types of plantings and the sizes of the trees and evergreen shrubs, possibly juniper. Larry Dziurdzik noted that a continuous hedge is planned along the curb, with a minimum of 36-42" in height. The Landscape Architect had commented that more specificity was needed as far as the species. McKeever had no issues. Weber requested that the plantings be a minimum of 4' tall (48" in height) at installation. Chairperson Parel agreed. The landscaping could be administratively approved. Larry Dziurdzik responded that Costco would accept these requirements.

Dave Campbell – If we are nearing the point where someone is inclined to make a motion, we provided recommended motion language within our review letter. The only thing that is not included in here is the condition that we discussed this evening that Costco must submit a site plan for the new gas station, prior to a preconstruction meeting being held for the parking lot expansion. Does that sound consistent with your understanding?

Larry Dziurdzik – That is correct, Dave, yes.

**MOTION** by Loskill, supported by Weber, to approve, **with conditions**, Item PSP22-10, Costco Parking Expansion, the request by Larry Dziurdzik with The JNL Design Group, representing Costco Wholesale, for site plan approval to expand the existing parking lot into a vacant outlot to the west at 600 Loop Road.

Sidwell No.: 17-36-200-031

Move to approve PSP22-10, a site plan for a 55-space expansion of the parking lot for the Costco Wholesale at 3000 Commerce Crossing Drive, upon the undeveloped outlot at 600 Loop Road.

**Site plan approval is based upon the following findings:**

1. The information presented demonstrates that the site plan meets the applicable standards and requirements of the Commerce Township Zoning Ordinance; and,
2. The number of spaces proposed, while in excess of the maximum permitted by Sec. 28.09.C of the Zoning Ordinance, is necessary to accommodate Costco's typical operation. Further, the overage in spaces is necessary in anticipation of a relocation and expansion of Costco's existing gas station, a project the Planning Commission recognizes is necessary to address the gas station's existing queues that sometimes spill into the adjacent public road; and,
3. The height of the two new exterior light fixtures would be in accordance with Article 31 of the Zoning Ordinance, and will match the existing poles.

**Site plan approval is conditional upon the following:**

1. The combination of the two parcels through Oakland County Equalization via the Commerce Township Planning Department; and,
2. Engineered construction plans to be reviewed and approved by the Township Engineer and Township Fire Marshal; and,
3. A revised landscape plan to be administratively reviewed and approved to address the review comments of the Township's landscape architect, noting that the evergreen shrubs shall be a minimum of 4-feet tall (48" in height) at the time of installation/planting; and,
4. Costco must submit Site Plan for the new gas station prior to a preconstruction meeting for the parking lot expansion.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**ITEM I2. PPU22-01 - LAFONTAINE AUTOMOTIVE GROUP (LAG) DEVELOPMENT – 2nd PRELIMINARY REVIEW**

LAG Development of Hartland MI is requesting a second Preliminary Review of a Planned Unit Development (PUD) for a new automotive dealership located on the northwest corner of Pontiac Trail and Haggerty Road, Unit 3 of the Commerce Towne Place. Sidwell No.: 17-24-401-056

Dave Campbell gave a review of the prospective change. The Commerce Township DDA has entered into a purchase agreement to sell Unit 3, aka Parcel C, to LAG, who intends to develop the property at the northwest corner of Haggerty and Pontiac Trail with a new car dealership. LAG originally intended to develop the site with two buildings, one housing the Hyundai dealership and the other the Genesis dealership. They have come to realize that once you account for the wetlands on Parcel C, it becomes a pretty tight fit to try to accommodate both dealerships on this property. Therefore, LAG is now exploring housing only the Genesis dealership on Unit 3, and re-purposing the former Dick Morris Chevrolet property, that they already own, for the Hyundai dealership. The other matter we have discussed with LAG, and they have discussed with Genesis, is the connection with the frontage road, along the front of Walmart and the

undeveloped property that is planned as the Five & Main development. LAG agrees that this is a necessary connection and the Township certainly wants it to be made; however, Genesis still needs to be convinced.

Because this project was in the process of being considered for a PUD, and because this is a significant change, the Planning Department wanted to get this before the Planning Commission and get feedback. Prospective layouts were sent over this afternoon, showing only the Genesis dealership on this corner.

Dave Campbell brought up the recent renderings on the overhead and stated that the Planning Commissioners had received hard copies of the same.

Elizabeth Marchese of Lafontaine Automotive Group was present to provide an update on the project.

Elizabeth Marchese – The only correction on here is that it does show a 2-lane service drive, and we would only be doing a 1-lane service drive. When we went through with our civil engineers and the architects, we're actually showing that the wetland encroachment is a good 15 feet in from the north property line shown in red. The usable space is actually more like this. We looked at that and placement of the two dealerships. Genesis requires its own entrance and exit. Genesis would prefer not to do the easement to Walmart. They want the corner exclusive to their customers only. It is a high-end brand.

We went round and round trying to figure out how we would fit two dealerships, with 243 parking spaces total. That's service vehicles, employee vehicles, customer parking and inventory. It's just not feasible, even if we used our parking space down at Dick Morris, or we used our extra parking lots in Walled Lake. So, we proposed to both Genesis and Hyundai to use this site as just the Genesis, because Genesis really liked it. It's the gateway to your community, it's a great thoroughfare for people to see this Genesis brand, which is still an up and coming high-end brand. We don't have a lot of dealerships in the State of Michigan; there's only two others. When we met with them, they liked this. They're amenable to the cross-access if it comes from Dave and the Township as a requirement. That's a compromise they're willing to accept.

Hyundai is accepting the Dick Morris site, and some modifications are necessary to the building to make it image compliant. Right now, we do have a new roof going on that building because it has deteriorated significantly. Those are the big plans. We had a meeting with the civil engineers of Genesis and Hyundai on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Leadership at LAG made the decision to move forward with trying to do just Genesis here, and use Dick Morris for Hyundai. It promotes ease of use for both customers and for the dealerships themselves.

Dave Campbell – When Elizabeth brought this to us, I said we have just enough time to throw this on the Planning Commission agenda to make you aware of it and see if there are any thoughts or comments. I think the intent is for them to come back with a revised PUD at the January meeting. We didn't want this to be a surprise.

**Commission Comments:**

Weber – Part of the issue you had with putting a Hyundai dealership at Dick Morris was your market area. Weren't you going to have to cut X-number of feet off the corner of the building?

Elizabeth Marchese – Correct. We did actually split that parcel, and Paula and Dave can attest. We can use the address where the building is as the actual address for the Hyundai dealership, and the back parcel would just be parking, which gives us our 9.2 miles to Feldman in New Hudson. The front parcel was already 9 miles from Glassman.

Dave Campbell – Does that mean you can't use the existing back parking lot at Dick Morris for Hyundai operations?

Elizabeth Marchese – We can. It won't have an address.

Weber – As long as the Hyundai market rep bought off on it, that's all you need, right?

Elizabeth Marchese – Correct. Dave Feldman has been aware of this parcel as a potential Hyundai dealership for almost a year now, and he has raised no red flags either.

Weber – Back up to Parcel C, and I will put my Township Board hat on; obviously, car dealerships aren't allowed. The design you brought to us was two boutique stores, not a lot of asphalt anywhere, and they didn't look like car dealerships. This doesn't do anything for me in terms of the layout, but if it looks like a car dealership, I think you're going to have a very hard time. I thought what you brought to us was fantastic because it didn't look like car dealerships. If it does, I think that will cause issues on both facilities. You need to come up with something that makes it not a lot of asphalt. The Dick Morris site has all that parking out front. We don't want them to look like car dealerships.

McKeever – It should be comparable to what we saw last time.

Elizabeth Marchese – At both sites, or Parcel C?

McKeever – When it was a combined site. We went back and forth and hashed out several comments, and I know George was diligent about what he didn't want to see. All of those elements need to be incorporated into your site, or your new design.

Elizabeth Marchese – The intent is still to do the forward facing building, with parking in the back.

Weber – We don't know what it's going to look like, but when you show this, it's all parking up front. I understand that this is just a Genesis rendering, but all that land to the north, we're assuming it's not going to be asphalt. That's what we're asking; not just that it be forward facing, but you do not have a lot of asphalt that is visible from Haggerty or from Pontiac Trail. Keeping in tune with the original renderings you showed us.

Elizabeth Marchese – Is there a preference as to where the building is located?

Weber – I think we're open to any great idea. You hid all the asphalt behind the other two buildings. We just don't want to see a sea of asphalt along those roads. On the Hyundai dealership, on the Dick Morris site, I think again, when it was a service facility, it was one thing and understanding it was used cars. Now if that's going to be a

new car facility, and if you're planning on parking lots of new vehicles for sale along Haggerty Road, I think you're going to get a little bit of pushback too. I would ask you to be creative in the same spirit of the renderings that you showed us the first time; forward facing, not a lot of asphalt visible, parking in the rear lot with no address.

Dave Campbell – Keep in mind though, the intent is to keep the existing building and repurpose it as a Hyundai dealership.

Elizabeth Marchese – They would still maintain some parking for customers in the front, and there may be one display pad.

Weber – Having a display pad ... again, if you're in the same spirit and the look and feel of the original renderings you showed us, I thought that was fine. A display pad is fine.

Elizabeth Marchese – I get it, and no gorillas.

McKeever – I'm in agreement with George, but also, for 20 years that service drive connection was always going to be there, and I wouldn't vote for anything that didn't include it. That is a busy intersection.

Weber – You said they acquiesced on that?

Elizabeth Marchese – Yes, they will, as long as we have a formal letter. We will get that from the Township stating that it is needed for access.

There were no comments from Loskill, Phillips, and Winkler.

Karim – I reserve comment until I see the design.

Chairperson Parel – Fair comment. I have no additional feedback but I'm excited for this to get off the ground.

Elizabeth Marchese – As are we.

Chairperson Parel – Is there anything else we can answer for you?

Elizabeth Marchese – No, you answered it, which is “no asphalt”.

Chairperson Parel – Dave, what's the next step?

Dave Campbell – If you look right here at the map, there is a sewer pump station that is intended to be abandoned as part of the sewer master plan for this whole area. At tomorrow night's Township Board meeting, the Township Engineer, Jason Mayer, is going to ask the Township Board to approve the budget for his office to design the sewer. That sewer connection will, one way or another, come across the LAG property to get to here, the dog ear of the Five & Main property, at which point, the Five & Main developer is obligated to take it across his development and ultimately get it to a manhole along Martin Parkway. Jason has told me that, while they have not designed this yet, what they think they will be able to do is a directional bore across here. It would

not be an open trench cut; it would be a directional bore. They won't know that for sure until they get the green light to design it.

McKeever – Don't they need access holes every so many feet?

Dave Campbell – They do, so they might be sticking out of the wetland to some degree. From a sequencing standpoint, the hope is that this is done before Lafontaine starts their site work, or shortly before. No one wants the Township sewer project to impede what LAG hopes to do on this property.

The Township Engineer will tell you that getting ductal iron pipe at this time is difficult. That is something that the Township will want to discuss with contractors who bid on this sewer project. We just heard it is also difficult to get underground storage tanks for a gas station.

From a procedural standpoint, we're doing a PUD on this property. Keep in mind that whatever LAG winds up doing on the Dick Morris property, that will probably be a site plan, and they're not necessarily going to be tied together. These are all good discussions about the expectations for each property, but from an approval standpoint, they will be on separate tracks to a large degree. One is a PUD and one is probably going to be a straight site plan. Keep that in mind.

A question to you, Elizabeth; are you going to be working on these at the same time?

Elizabeth Marchese – One starts first, and then we'll start on the other. Theoretically, they will both be under construction at the same time, but Genesis would start first.

Dave Campbell – When do you hope that construction would start?

Elizabeth Marchese – If we get the PUD agreement approval in January, the thought process is that we would be able to break ground in May on Genesis.

Dave Campbell – And Hyundai would be not too long after that.

Elizabeth Marchese – Correct.

Dave Campbell – And there's not a lot of groundbreaking on that one because you're using an existing improved site. So this was just discussion tonight. Again, I didn't want this to be a surprise when they formally submit for the January meeting.

Chairperson Parel – Hopefully we gave you what you needed.

Elizabeth Marchese – You did. I appreciate that.

Chairperson Parel – Thank you for coming out. We will see you soon.

### **ITEM 13. PLANNING COMMISSION BYLAWS**

Dave Campbell – The Bylaws had to be changed this year because of changes to the State's Open Meetings Act (OMA) as it pertains to remote meetings, which were due to the pandemic and social distancing requirements. The way the Township Attorney explained this to me, while it looks like there is a lot of red on this, what we're really doing is peeling back the changes that we had to make because of the OMA, and effectively saying, the Township will hold remote meetings due to active military service,

which is something State law says we have to do. Also, the Township will hold remote meetings as required by the OMA. So, instead of trying to change this with changes to the OMA, or chase the State law, we have a generic statement that says we will do remote meetings as required by the OMA.

Weber – For the Planning Commission’s feedback; when I was first appointed to the Planning Commission, soon after, I went to the one-day MTA Michigan Planning Seminar, which was invaluable to me in terms of giving me fundamentals of what a Planning Commission is, what we should and shouldn’t do, etc. Should that be part of the Bylaws as mandatory? Maybe folks are grandfathered in, but should that be a requirement? If you decide to be part of the Planning Commission, you have to go to some level of training to understand a Planning Commissioner’s responsibilities.

Dave Campbell – These are your Bylaws, so if that is the desire of the Planning Commission, that would be up to you. It makes sense to me. I might want an opportunity to work on what the language would actually say and where it would fit in. I would want the Township Attorney to check that language as well. There are different opportunities for training and education. MTA is a good one. Michigan Association of Planning does good training.

Weber – I went to whatever Paula said I had to go to, and I think it was the Michigan Association of Planners.

Dave Campbell – If that is the desire of the Planning Commission, then yes, we can insert that language. I just want to have a chance to figure out where that language belongs. Would it be something you do as a new member, or do you have to do it every 5 years?

Weber – I would look to you two for that. Initially, as a new member, understanding the fundamentals provided a good foundation for me coming in. It was eye-opening on things that you should not be asking. There were definite do’s and don’ts.

Dave Campbell – So, if the rest of the members are agreeable, maybe start with it’s something you do as a new appointee. If, after a year or two, we think it makes sense, maybe we revisit the idea of continuing education.

Weber – Every 5 years or 3 years, or some period of time, when there is enough change that happens that some kind of continuing education is probably warranted.

Dave Campbell – 5 years seems like a nice round number. You’re right. Think about how laws as far as marijuana have changed, or in terms of signage when the Supreme Court makes decisions that change the standards. There’s obviously value in continuing education. We can start with training new members.

Chairperson Parel – I’m for it.

Phillips – I would appreciate it.

Dave Campbell – Is Brady grandfathered?



Weber – No, not now, and Joe is questionable.

Paula Lankford – We can look into some education classes for Brady.

Weber – I think they do it quarterly at a community college.

Discussion of training options and programs continued. Dave and Paula discussed the timeline for reviewing revisions to the Bylaws with the Township Attorney. No action would be taken this evening. The revised Bylaws would be brought back in December for final approval by the Planning Commission.

#### **ITEM 14. ELECTION OF 2023 OFFICERS**

**MOTION** by Weber, supported by Phillips, to elect the 2023 Planning Commission officers as follows; Brian Parel as Chairperson, Brian Winkler as Vice Chairperson, and Joe Loskill as Secretary. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **ITEM 15. PLANNING COMMISSION 2023 MEETING SCHEDULE**

Dave Campbell – We did our best to stick to the first Monday of each month, but there are some holidays that conflict with that. January was moved to the 9<sup>th</sup>. I wanted to check with you regarding the April meeting. Monday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> is the Monday coming back from Spring Break for Walled Lake Schools. I thought that might be a week where folks are travelling. The other potential would be a week later on April 10<sup>th</sup>, but that is the Monday after Easter. I didn't know which made more sense, but we went with the first Monday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>. If there are any conflicts, now is the time to discuss it.

**MOTION** by Weber, seconded by Loskill, to recommend approval of the 2023 Planning Commission Meeting Schedule, as presented and with the April 3<sup>rd</sup> date as discussed. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **J: OTHER MATTERS TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION:**

Building Department Monthly Report

Dave Campbell – The report is in your packet, which Jay usually covers at the beginning of the meeting, but I gave him the night off.

#### **K: PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- **NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE: MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2022**

Dave Campbell – Looking ahead to the next meeting; one of the groups that was here for the Open House today was the prospective buyer of the Beaumont property, the big property at the northwest corner of Maple and M-5. Beaumont still owns it, but they would like to sell it to this potential developer. This potential developer has some concepts of what he wants to do on that property. That property is one of the 10 properties we are including as part of our Master Plan update. I don't know that the developer necessarily wants to wait for the Township to go through that entire process. I've explained to him that we hope this would be something of a collaborative process; as we are working on the Master Plan, and as he is working on his plans, that those visions dovetail into one another. He would like to bring his concepts to the Planning Commission at the December meeting for some initial comments.

Weber – He discussed with me the uses he was interested in developing on the property, some of which I told him he might encounter challenges getting approvals for.

Dave Campbell – I had a meeting with the developer and some of his colleagues a week or so ago, and we had a lot of those same discussions. One of their questions to us was, *What would the Township want to see there?* I said some of those questions might be answered as we go through the Master Plan process, but as I sit here right now, given the prominence of that property and its significance, I would want it to be some sort of a destination type use, whether that's for entertainment, recreation, athletics, or education as in some sort of a satellite campus, or for healthcare. What we don't want to see is just another typical corner in southeast Michigan. We want it to be something significant. I told him it should be something that gets him a blurb in Crain's Magazine. I hope they took that to heart to some degree, and I hope what we see in December is something in that realm. At the same time, what they're going to tell you is they have money on the line and they have to get something in the ground; this is what the market wants.

Weber discussed the zoning of that site and whether it should be changed, as part of the Master Plan process. He would like to take the time necessary to review this carefully. Dave noted that this developer constructed the development with the apartments at Four Corners in White Lake. Weber felt that development looked nice for that site, but it is not for M-5 and Maple Road. Dave added that the developer also has the Monkey Wrench Garage property under contract, and there have been discussions of a potential trailhead there.

Dave Campbell – The other property is one I have mentioned before, Sure Conveyors, who builds the conveyor systems for the egg industry. They want to build a new facility off Ladd Road, in the Harrison Industrial Acres. They said they want to get their site plan in front of the Planning Commission at the December meeting. We will also carry the Bylaws forward to the December agenda.

Chairperson Parel noted that the M-5 bridge looks fantastic, and discussion continued as Dave gave a positive update regarding the wave panels and lighting on the bridge.

**L: ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Loskill, supported by Phillips, to adjourn the meeting at 8:52pm.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

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Joe Loskill, Secretary