

To: Commerce Township Board of Trustees

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

Date: January 8, 2025

RE: January 2025 Monthly Planning Department Report
(covering December 4, 2024 through January 7, 2025)



Development updates

- **Midtown on Haggerty (Kroger w/ fuel center)** – Schafer Development continues their efforts to amend the approved planned unit development (PUD) for Midtown on Haggerty, effectively replacing the 187 apartments approved on the westerly two-thirds of the site with a 100,000 sq ft Kroger with fuel center. The existing Kroger (formerly Hillers) at the northwest corner of 14 Mile and Haggerty would be repurposed. The amendment to Midtown on Haggerty’s PUD required a public hearing at the Planning Commission’s meeting on January 6, 2025, consistent with the procedures of Article 38 of the Zoning Ordinance. Much of the discussion amongst the PC and the development team was the recognizable public benefits to be included with the PUD, given the deviations being sought by the developer relative to the property’s underlying B-2 zoning. Deviations include a Kroger fuel center which is typically only permitted as a special land use in B-3, and the multiple drive-through’s within Midtown which would otherwise require special land use approval in B-2. The discussion of public benefit had a particular focus on:
 - Sidewalk/pathway extensions & connections along and between Haggerty Road, 14 Mile Road, and M-5
 - A commitment by Kroger to not appeal the newly-assessed value of their store, so long as that assessment is based on sound analysis
 - A commitment by Kroger to backfill the vacated store (former Hiller’s) with a quality user, avoiding a repeat of the former Hiller’s at Union Lake and Commerce Roads that was allowed by Kroger to remain vacant for over a decade
 - A high-quality Kroger store including quality design & exterior materialsThe Planning Commission opened and closed the public hearing (all while Planning Commissioner Brady Phillips continually popped his Jahmyr Gibbs jersey that he still had on from the night before), but did not take any formal action on the project in order for the Schafer Development team to revise their submittal after hearing input from the Planning Commission. The expectation is for the amendment to the Midtown on Haggerty PUD to be included on the upcoming Planning Commission meeting on February 3.
- **Townes at 42 North (Meijer outlot next to Goodwill)** – If the above holds true, Spencer Schafer of Schafer Development could be pulling double duty at the Planning Commission meeting on February 3. His team has formally submitted a request for site plan and special land use approval to develop a for-sale two-story townhome product consisting of 39 two and three-bedroom units on a 5-acre outlot of Meijer on the north side of Crumb Road just

east of Meijer Drive. The proposed units, to be known as 42 North, would be comparable to those Pulte is currently constructing within Townes of Merrill Park along Martin Road. The subject site is zoned B-3 (General Business) but is also in the Haggerty Road Corridor (HRC) overlay, which allows attached residential as a special land use. Spencer Schafer presented the concept 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 of attached for-sale townhomes, 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 along Crumb from Haggerty to the Michigan Airline Trail east of M-5. This proposal is being reviewed by the Planning Department staff as well as other outside consultants including the Township's traffic Engineer who is preparing a traffic study that would determine the traffic volumes to be generated, and compare them to the volumes that could plausibly be generated by the other uses permitted by right on a 5-acre parcel zoned B-3 (retail, restaurant, hotel, etc..) all in effort to target a public hearing for the Planning Commission meeting on February 3, 2025.

- **10765 Bogie Lake Road** – Jim Maher has assembled at least seven properties on the south side of Bogie Lake Road, just west of the Bogie-Cooley-Oxbow Lake roundabouts, including the property housing the long-vacant West Winds nursing home. The assemblage is unique in that it is bookended by WL Northern High School to the west and south, and the West Lake assisted living facility to the east, and includes properties zoned R-1A (Large Lot Single Family Residential) as well as R-2 (Attached Residential). Mr. Maher and his engineering consultant have held multiple meetings with the Planning Department and other Township representatives, the most recent being on January 7, to discuss options for a residential development on the assembled properties. Mr. Maher's latest concept is for a development of single-family homes on 50-foot wide lots, clustered in an effort to preserve shared greenspace. Based on feedback received, Mr. Maher and his team might present their concept to the Planning Commission at an upcoming meeting for further input.
- **Reserve at Crystal Lake Phase 2** – The developers of The Reserve at Crystal Lake (Andy Milia, Gary Jonna, and friends) intend to begin work on Phase 2 of their approved project, which would extend/loop the underground utilities and road (Crystal Lake Drive) around the north side of Crystal Lake. A preconstruction meeting has been scheduled for January 16 in order to begin construction on Phase 2.

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)

The ZBA's next regular meeting is scheduled for January 23, 2025. The deadline has passed with no applications submitted, however, the meeting will be held to take care of annual "housekeeping" items such as the 2025 election of the ZBA officers and the annual review & approval of the ZBA's Bylaws. Given it's a housekeeping meeting, the ZBA Chair has opted to hold the meeting at 5:30pm. It remains to be seen whether Trustee Sovel will be in a position to brag to his fellow ZBA members that his beloved Pistons have a winning record in January for seemingly the first time since the George W. Bush Administration.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission's regular meeting scheduled for January 6, 2025 included the following:

- A public hearing for the Midtown on Haggerty amended PUD located at 155 Haggerty Road (as described above) was held, but no formal action was taken to allow the development team to revise/refine their submittal with the intent of returning to the Planning Commission on February 3.

The Planning Commission's regular meeting scheduled for February 3, 2025 could potentially include the following:

- DIY sundae bar
- A revised PUD amendment for the Midtown on Haggerty development located at 155 Haggerty Road (as described above)
- A public hearing for the Townes at 42 North site plan & special land use located north off of Crumb Road, east of Meijer Drive (as described above)