

**To:** Commerce Township Board of Trustees

**From:** Commerce Township Planning Department  
David Campbell, AICP – Planning Director

**Date:** October 3, 2018

**RE:** October 2018 Monthly Planning Department Report  
(covering September 5 through October 3, 2018)



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### Development Proposals

- **Resort Lifestyle Communities** – The Planning Commission held a public hearing as part of their regular meeting on Sept. 17 for a 130-unit senior independent living facility on an undeveloped 17.5-acre parcel along the west side of Haggerty Road between Maple and Crumb. The property is zoned B-3, but is also within the Haggerty Road Corridor (HRC) overlay. The HRC overlay allows multi-family residential as a special land use so long as it is developed consistent with the HRC overlay’s higher development standards. The PC approved both the special land use and the site plan for RLC, conditional on some revisions that will be reviewed administratively, including upgrades to the building materials.
- **SE corner of Glengary & Wixom (tentatively “Oak Hills”)** – The approx. 35-acre undeveloped property at the southeast corner of Glengary and Wixom Roads was approved for 78 new single family homes (“Commerce Point”) in 2006. That project was a victim of the Recession and never commenced. Pulte Homes has applied to develop the site as a Planned Unit Development (PUD) with 91 single-family homes that would be smaller and narrower than what is allowed under the property’s current R-1B zoning. During the Preliminary Review with the Planning Commission held during the PC’s Sept. 17 meeting, the PC expressed concern that the project had too high of a density with too small lots (&7,200 square feet). Pulte’s belief is that offering smaller lots clustered together allows them to preserve more of the existing natural features on the property, provide more open space, and provide more public amenities (sidewalks / pathways) through that open space. Based on the PC’s comments, Pulte is going to re-evaluate their proposal.
- **Five & Main mixed-use PUD** – The Planning Department and the DDA are working with Bruce Aikens on a process for amending the Five & Main PUD Development Agreement and Development Plan to add a 4-story hotel to Phase 1 of the project in an area where the approved Development Plan showed a drive-through restaurant and general retail space. The hotel would be sited atop the approximate footprint of the recently-demolished former Township Library. This change would require a new review & recommendation by the Planning Commission, and approval by the Township Board. Mr. Aikens believes the hotel could be constructed and occupied well ahead of the opening of the rest of Five & Main (targeted for Fall 2021), so the Township will have to be sure

the hotel is developed in such a way that it can stand on its own (access, parking, utilities, etc.)

- **Commerce Village Veterinary Hospital** – Dr. Andrea Putt appeared before the Planning Commission on Oct. 1 for a public hearing on her petition to conditionally rezone the property at 613 W. Commerce Road. Dr. Putt’s veterinary practice is nextdoor at 605 W. Commerce, and she hopes to use the structure at 613 for animal rehabilitation services. Since 613 W. Commerce is zoned R-1D (single-family residential), Dr. Putt is proposing to conditionally rezone the property to B-1 (Local Business), with one of the key conditions being that the property can only be used for medical and/or general office, and not for most of the other commercial uses allowed in B-1. After holding the public hearing, the Planning Commission forwarded Dr. Putt’s conditional rezoning petition to the Township Board with a recommendation of approval. The conditional rezoning will likely be on the Board’s Nov. 13 agenda.

### **Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)**

- **Regular meeting on September 27, 2018** – At their regular meeting on Sept. 27, the ZBA took the following action:
  - Approved a ground sign in front of the new Allergy & Asthma medical office along the east side of Union Lake Road. The proposed sign needed a sign exception because its location is less than 75 feet from the centerline of the road right-of-way
  - Approved an addition to an existing nonconforming garage on Alsup. The existing garage is nonconforming because it is an accessory structure on a property without a principal structure (the house is on separate property on the opposite side of the street).
  - Denied an 8-foot privacy fence between two homes on Appalachi that needed a total of seven variances relative to its height, its non-ornamental nature in the roadside and lakeside front yards, its setback (or lack thereof) from the road, and its setback (or lack thereof) from the edge of North Commerce Lake.

### **Planning Commission**

- **September 17, 2018** – The Planning Commission typically meets on the first Monday of the month, but the September meeting was scheduled for 9/17 to avoid a conflict with Labor Day on 9/3 and Rosh Hashanah on 9/10. The following items were on the PC’s 9/17 agenda:
  - A public hearing for Resort Lifestyle Communities (described above)
  - A Preliminary Review for Pulte’s PUD at Glengary and Wixom (described above)
  - A conceptual review of a new building at the west end of Boulder Court (west side of Martin Road between Oakley Park and Richardson)
  - A conceptual review of a proposed conditional rezoning of 613 W. Commerce Road (described above)
- **Oct. 1, 2018** – The following items were on the PC’s 10/1 agenda:
  - A public hearing for the conditional rezoning of 613 W. Commerce Road (described above)

- A conceptual review for a new commercial / office building on 2 vacant acres at the northwest corner of Martin Road and Boulder Court, where the anchor user would be an Aqua Tots Swim School. The Planning Commission was generally favorable toward the proposed use and the conceptual layout.
- A use determination for a new drive-through car proposed on a vacant lot along the west side of Haggerty Road between Pontiac Trail and Oakley Park. The property is within the Haggerty Road Corridor overlay district, where accessory drive-through's (drive-through for a restaurant, bank, pharmacy, etc.) are permitted as a special land use. With a drive-through car wash, it could be argued that the drive through is not accessory to any principal use, but in fact is the principal use. The Planning Commission felt that a drive-through car wash is a use that would be allowable as a special land use in the HRC overlay, but that it would be difficult for the developer to satisfy the requirement for a special land use to show a "documented need" for the use. The PC felt there is already a sufficient number of car washes within that area, and therefore doubts they could find there to be a documented need for another drive-through car wash.

**M-5 non-motorized bridge update** – The bridge contractor received approval from the MDOT for closure of M-5 between Maple and Pontiac Trail on Saturday 10/6 through Sunday 10/7 to remove the fascia jacks off the face of the bridge span over M-5. While they received approval for the full weekend, MDOT expects the closure will only be for a few hours on Saturday morning, and only for one direction of traffic at a time. However, during the writing of this paragraph of this report, MDOT called to say the posts for the permanent fencing over the bridge's main span that were being installed today (10/3) were painted a noticeably wrong shade of white. Therefore, the fence may not be completed by the weekend, and the fascia jacks (which include the temporary fence) can't be removed until the permanent fence is installed. As of the writing of this report, it is unknown how long re-painting the fence posts will delay the project. The posts may have to be shipped back to the shop where they were custom fabricated.

MDOT has informed Commerce Township that the contractor is seeking payment of additional costs that were not included in their accepted bid for the project, specifically the steel fence posts for the fence over the main span (the same fence posts that were painted the wrong shade of white), and the painting of the exposed electrical conduit for the bridge's lighting system. The bid specs prepared by MDOT called for standard aluminum fence posts, despite the fact that the aesthetic enhancement package created by the Township's architect (and included in MDOT's final plans) specifically called for steel fence posts. MDOT, the Township, and the contractor will continue our discussions of which party should be responsible for added costs.