



Rochester Hills

Minutes - Draft

Planning Commission

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Home Page:
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Chairperson Deborah Brnabic, Vice Chairperson Greg Hooper
Members: Gerard Dettloff, Nicholas O. Kaltsounis, Stephanie Morita,
David A. Reece, C. Neall Schroeder, Ryan Schultz, Emmet Yukon

Tuesday, December 20, 2016

7:00 PM

1000 Rochester Hills Drive

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Deborah Brnabic called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Auditorium.

ROLL CALL

Quorum present.

Also present: Ed Anzek, Director of Planning and Economic Dev.
Sara Roediger, Manager of Planning
Christine Wissbrun, Substitute Recording Secretary

Present 8 - Deborah Brnabic, Gerard Dettloff, Greg Hooper, Nicholas Kaltsounis, David Reece, C. Neall Schroeder, Ryan Schultz and Emmet Yukon

Excused 1 - Stephanie Morita

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2016-0439 September 27, 2016 Special Joint Work Session

Attachments: [Minutes PC-CC Joint 9-27-16.pdf](#)

A motion was made by Schroeder, seconded by Kaltsounis, that this matter be Approved as Presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 8 - Brnabic, Dettloff, Hooper, Kaltsounis, Reece, Schroeder, Schultz and Yukon

Excused 1 - Morita

2016-0540 October 18, 2016 Regular Meeting

Attachments: [Minutes PC 10-18-16.pdf](#)

A motion was made by Schultz, seconded by Kaltsounis, that this matter be Approved as Presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 8 - Brnabic, Dettloff, Hooper, Kaltsounis, Reece, Schroeder, Schultz and Yukon

Excused 1 - Morita

COMMUNICATIONS

A) Email from Reverend Diana Stover, dated 12/14/2016 re: Auburn Road Corridor - she said she was completely in support of the plans.

NEW BUSINESS

2016-0474 Public Hearing and request for Conditional Use Recommendation - City File No. 16-028 - 2941 Street Foods Troy, LLC, for the sale and service of alcoholic beverages for on site consumption, located at 87 W. Auburn Rd., at the southwest corner of Rochester and Auburn, zoned B-3 Shopping Center Business with an FB-2 Flex Business Overlay, part of Parcel No. 15-34-227-048, 2941 Street Foods Troy, LLC, Applicant

Attachments: [010917 Agenda Summary.pdf](#)
[Map aerial.pdf](#)
[Staff Report 122016.pdf](#)
[Letter Marcus 113016.pdf](#)
[Proposed Revised Flr Plan - 2.pdf](#)
[PC Draft Minutes 122016.pdf](#)
[PHN PC.pdf](#)
[Resolution \(Draft\).pdf](#)

(Reference: Staff Report prepared by Sara Roediger, dated December 16, 2016, Conditional Use Recommendation)

Present for the applicant were Nick Saad, Director of Operations and Mr. Doraid S. Markus, for 2941 Mediterranean Street Food, 363 Big Beaver Road, Suite 250, Troy, MI 48084.

Mr. Markus introduced himself as one of the principals for 2941 Mediterranean Street Food. He also introduced Nick Saad as well. He stated he had appeared before the Planning Commission when the plaza was in the development stages. He stated that they had opened a Mediterranean restaurant and that it is doing well. He continued that when the restaurant opened, they did have a liquor license but the plan was to sell beer and wine only. He further stated that in the future they may proceed to sell alcoholic beverages including liquor, mixers, cocktails and things of

that sort. He noted that they have a second location in Midtown Detroit which currently serves such beverages and seems to be a very good fit. He stated that they had written a letter, outlined the five (5) criteria for approval and requested Commission's approval. He described the restaurant as a great asset to the community and stated that the food is great.

Ms. Roediger stated that as the Commission is aware, the Council established last year that the sale and service of alcoholic beverages is a conditional use and is standard across all the zoning districts as accessory to a permitted use in a district. As a conditional use, this is a recommendation to City Council; however the applicant is a little unique in that this is not a development of a site. The site plan was already approved as part of having this conditional use and there are no proposed changes physically to the site. The site does not have any additional seating or anything of that nature as a result of the addition of the sale of alcoholic beverage. As such, staff has completed a review and recommends approval based on the review criteria for a conditional use.

Mr. Dettloff stated his understanding is that the restaurant had this liquor license prior to the start of the development, and he asked if the escrowed license was from an Oakland County business. He also asked if there were plans for outdoor seating. He commended them for the development being complete and filled.

Mr. Markus responded that Mr. Detloff was correct, and stated that they had no plans for outdoor seating at this time. He further explained that it is an evolving process, but that they have not finalized their prototypes as they are opening five (5) of these locations. He stated that if that should be an idea in the future, they would come to the Commission to discuss such plans.

Mr. Dettloff explained that the reason for his question was that he thought the City may have some set criteria for alcohol being served outside the restaurant building.

Mr. Anzek responded that typically alcohol consumption outside of a restaurant is required by the LCC to have a forty-two (42) inch high fence that surrounds it. The City's Building Department furthermore requires the facility to have a five (5) foot clearance passage on the sidewalk.

Mr. Hooper questioned whether the restaurant had the Class C license

but had not yet sold any alcoholic beverages to begin with, or just sold beer and wine.

Mr. Markus responded that they had been selling beer and wine.

Mr. Hooper stated that he had been to the restaurant and commented that the outdoor seating would become a challenge and that he was not sure how that would work.

Mr. Markus agreed and stated that there is no place to arrange outdoor seating unless an adjacent business might move in the future.

Mr. Hooper continued that if the location were similar to Firehouse Subs, outdoor seating might be possible. He concluded that he thought this would be a good addition to the site and had no objections.

Chairperson Brnabic stated that this item does require a public hearing and therefore opened the public hearing at 7:15 p.m. She stated that there were no comment cards or members of the public that wished to speak and closed the public hearing.

Motion by Hooper, seconded by Yukon, in the matter of City File No. 16-028 (2941 Street Foods Troy, LLC) the Planning Commission recommends to City Council Approval of the Conditional Use to allow alcoholic beverage consumption on site, based on documents dated received by the Planning Department on November 30, 2016, with the following findings.

Findings

- 1. The use will promote the intent and purpose of the Zoning Ordinance.*
- 2. The building has been designed and is proposed to be operated, maintained and managed so as to be compatible, harmonious and appropriate in appearance with the existing and planned character of the general vicinity, adjacent uses of land and the capacity of public services and facilities affected by the use.*
- 3. The proposal is having a positive impact on the community as a whole and the surrounding area by further offering jobs and another dining option.*
- 4. The proposed development is served adequately by essential public*

facilities and services, such as highways, streets, police and fire protection, water and sewer, drainage ways and refuse disposal.

5. The proposed development should not be detrimental, hazardous or disturbing to existing or future neighboring land uses, persons, property or the public welfare.

6. The proposal will not create additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services that will be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.

A motion was made by Hooper, seconded by Yukon, that this matter be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 8 - Brnabic, Dettloff, Hooper, Kaltsounis, Reece, Schroeder, Schultz and Yukon

Excused 1 - Morita

2016-0515 Public Hearing and request for Conditional Use Recommendation - City File No. 16-031 - Lifetime Fitness, for the sale and service of alcoholic beverages for on site consumption, located at 200 W. Avon, west of Rochester Rd., zoned I Industrial with an FB-2 Flex Business Overlay, Parcel No. 15-15-476-039, LTF (Lifetime Fitness) Club Operations Company, Inc., Applicant

Attachments: [010917 Agenda Summary.pdf](#)
[Map aerial.pdf](#)
[Staff Report 122016.pdf](#)
[Letter Luebke.pdf](#)
[Site Plans.pdf](#)
[PC Draft Minutes 122016.pdf](#)
[Public Hearing Notice - Plg Comm.pdf](#)
[Resolution \(Draft\).pdf](#)

(Reference: Staff Report prepared by Sara Roediger, dated December 16, 2016, Conditional Use Recommendation)

Present for the applicant were Mr. Joe Miller, General Manager, and Mr. Vince Orsini, Area Director, for the Lifetime Fitness Clubs in MI, 200 W. Avon Road, Rochester Hills, MI 48309.

Mr. Orsini introduced himself as the Area Director for the Lifetime Clubs in Michigan and introduced Joe Miller as the Senior General Manager of the Rochester Hills location. He stated that they were applicants for the conditional use approval to allow alcoholic beverage consumption of site at Lifetime Fitness in Rochester Hills.

Ms. Roediger stated that this is an existing business that is seeking to add the sale and service of alcoholic beverages and there are no exterior physical changes to the site. She stated that the staff has reviewed the plan and recommends approval as it meets all of the review criteria.

Chairperson Brnabic expressed her concern with alcohol consumption at Lifetime Fitness because people are using treadmills, weights and other exercise equipment. She stated that there is a day care facility on the premises and questioned the safety of the addition of alcohol to a facility such as Lifetime Fitness ('LT').

Mr. Orsini responded that as a company 'Lifetime Fitness' - the centers are more destination locations with the services that are offered. The goal is to have more of a social, country club type resort atmosphere. LT currently hosts several social and gathering events at its club, and this is the primary reason for the request. Alcohol consumption would be monitored through its Club Staff at Club Events and other Club activities.

Chairperson Brnabic reiterated her concerns, noting that the Planning Commission is being asked to approve a conditional use. She stated that the safety and appropriateness of alcohol consumption at a health club should be reviewed.

Mr. Orsini explained that LT, as a company, has over 120 clubs across the country; and have secured 30 alcohol consumption licenses across the United States and in Canada. He stated that LT does have operational procedures including a LT Safe Serve Certification that every employee is required to go through, in addition to the various state recommendations for any of its employees in the service of alcohol.

Mr. Yukon expressed his concerns about the service of alcohol at LT. He referenced Mr. Adam Luebke's (Corporate Counsel for LT) letter (attached). He inquired as to the following:

- What type of social events are held at the facility.
- How would the consumption be monitored at the facility where there are children.
- How would employees monitor those drinking.

Mr. Orsini responded that some of events would include an outdoor boot camp followed by a social event. The tennis house has tennis mixers/tournaments that primarily occur on Friday evenings and Saturdays.

Mr. Miller responded that the plan is to have three (3) designated, separate locations for alcohol beverage consumption. These designated areas are not open to the general traffic of Members. People that are not taking part in that social event would have difficulty accessing those areas. He continued that the child care center has a separate entrance and is actually on a separate side of the building from where the majority of the events take place.

Mr. Yukon asked if there were several designated locations in the facility.

Mr. Miller responded that there are multiple barriers between each section of the club. He noted that there is a process to enter the child care facility.

Mr. Yukon referenced Mr. Luebke's letter wherein Mr. Luebke stated that it is LT's desire to allow the consumption of alcohol on the entire premises, child care area notwithstanding, and asked for clarification of that statement.

Mr. Miller responded that the plans indicate the three (3) specific locations for the consumption of alcoholic beverages: the Cafe, the Bistro (which is enclosed like an outdoor restaurant), and the tennis house and lobby.

Mr. Yukon inquired as to the hours of service for the facility.

Mr. Orsini responded that there are no specific hours because LT is not currently serving alcoholic beverages.

Mr. Yukon questioned the hours of operation at LT's other locations currently serving alcoholic beverages, and questioned whether there have been any issues with the service of alcohol in those facilities.

Mr. Orsini stated that hours do vary dependent upon what areas of the country the clubs are located. He gave the example of LT's clubs in Las Vegas, NV, which would be open until midnight or in compliance with the local laws. He continued that typically the club areas of the service of alcoholic consumption shut down hours before the club closes. He stated that there have been no issues that he knows of.

Chairperson Brnabic stated that Mr. Orsini had mentioned three (3) specific areas within the facility for the service of alcoholic beverages and questioned whether alcoholic beverages could be carried throughout the entire facility.

Mr. Miller responded that they would not.

Mr. Dettloff commented that he had never heard of a health club that serves alcohol, and asked if this would be LT's first location in Michigan. He questioned whether the liquor license allows the service of alcohol for only special club events or if club members would be permitted to work out and then consume beer or wine afterward.

Mr. Orsini responded that this would be LT's first location in Michigan to serve alcohol. He responded that service would be at the Bistro, which is an outdoor restaurant and has certain hours of operation, at the tennis house available for mixer events and at the indoor cafe. There would be certain times of the day that the hours of operation and monitoring would be through the cafe staff and the manager on duty. The intent would be mainly for events; however alcoholic beverage service would be included as part of the Bistro (club's outdoor pool area) business.

Mr. Dettloff asked Mr. Anzek if the liquor license requirements that address outside service be applicable to this matter.

Mr. Anzek responded that they would unless the Bistro were to be enclosed by buildings or in some other way be impenetrable.

Mr. Hooper asked with regard to the outside seating, if LT would envision anybody going outside with alcoholic beverages.

Mr. Orsini responded that the sale and consumption areas would be contained.

Mr. Miller explained that during the hours of operation of LT's Bistro season, the dining area is fenced in.

Mr. Hooper questioned whether the fencing requirement was a condition of the local building ordinance or the liquor license.

Mr. Anzek responded that it would be a liquor license condition.

Mr. Hooper inquired whether the alcohol beverage consumption would be primarily for visitors or for patrons.

Mr. Miller and Mr. Orsini both responded that it would be for club members.

Mr. Hooper questioned how likely that members might not be working out at the club first but would be there for a social aspect.

Mr. Orsini responded that while that could happen, it is not LT's intent.

Mr. Hooper then inquired about the child care facility. He stated that 'No Alcohol' signage could be placed in and around the child care facility.

Mr. Miller responded that in the designated areas, the cafe is concealed from the child care center, and there is a threshold that would have to be crossed to enter the club. He noted that it could be incorporated into a part of the guidelines and restrictions at the club. He stated that each service area that would serve alcoholic beverages is enclosed.

Mr. Hooper asked whether signage would be in place.

Mr. Orsini and Mr. Miller both confirmed that it would.

Mr. Miller stated that there is current signage in place to prevent outside food and beverages (other than water) from entering the club.

Mr. Hooper commented that LT most likely would have three (3) separate serving locations within the club; and for special outside events, there would be a portable station that would move outside.

Mr. Miller and Mr. Orsini concurred.

Mr. Orsini stated that LT would try to keep alcohol contained to those designated areas.

Mr. Miller added that LT's intent is to designate the Bistro, the Cafe and the Tennis House/Lobby as the three (3) designated areas.

Mr. Kaltsounis commented that his concern had more to do with the site plan and parking issues. He commented that LT had come to the Planning Commission with a parking study which was approved. He expressed his concern that the conditional land use may be outside the realm of the original plan. He asked Mr. Anzek as to the requirement needed for an outdoor restaurant and/or seating.

Mr. Anzek responded that the requirement for a conditional use permit for outdoor dining was eliminated in 2009, and that it is permitted by right with the restaurant.

Mr. Kaltsounis expressed his concern that with the history of parking issues at LT, that the parking situation might worsen by the passage of this request.

Mr. Anzek recalled that during the approval process for LT, LT had provided evidence of adequate parking. After parking issues began, the City Administration permitted LT to alter lot spacing to allow more cars. He stated parking has become a self-policing matter; if people cannot find parking, it would negatively impact the club's membership. He cited the example of the parking issues during special events at the Village of Rochester Hills.

Mr. Kaltsounis stated that the approval of the addition of a liquor license in a facility that was originally not intended to have one would affect the facility site plan.

Mr. Orsini responded that LT is a member-based business and that he did not expect to see an increase in club attendance. He stated the request is to serve the current, existing members and not to attract additional membership

Mr. Kaltsounis expressed that club members can attend other LT facility locations. He suggested that this LT location is trying to find a way to keep members at its facility longer.

Mr. Miller responded that LT has strategically changed its membership and cost at its Rochester Hills location which seems to have alleviated the parking issues. He stated that during the facility's busy hours, parking is still available.

Mr. Kaltsounis commented that he has had an issue with parking whenever he visits the club, and he noted that he would like to see a new parking plan.

Mr. Schroeder questioned whether non-members could patronize the restaurants at LT.

Mr. Miller responded that diners would have to be members.

Mr. Dettloff questioned whether LT is a twenty-four (24) hour and seven (7) days a week facility.

Mr. Miller responded that it is.

Mr. Dettloff questioned whether Members would have access to alcohol 24/7 as

well. He asked if there are other health clubs in Michigan that have alcohol.

Mr. Orsini stated that while LT is open 24/7 for workouts, there are set hours of operation for the cafe, the bistro and the tennis house/lobby and alcohol would be restricted to those hours. He pointed out that Franklin Fitness and Racquet Club in Southfield as well as Deer Lake in Clarkston also have liquor licenses.

Mr. Schultz stated that he had no objection to the request.

Chairperson Brnabic opened the Public Hearing regarding the Approval of the Conditional Use at 7:40 p.m. Seeing no one come forward, she closed the Public Hearing.

MOTION by Schroeder, seconded by Dettloff, in the matter of City File No. 16-031 (Lifetime Fitness, for the sale and service of alcoholic beverages for on site consumption), the Planning Commission recommends to City Council Approval of the Conditional Use to allow alcoholic beverage consumption on site, based on documents dated received by the Planning Department on November 28, 2016, with the following six (6) findings.

Findings

1. The expanded use will promote the intent and purpose of the Zoning Ordinance.
2. The building has been designed and is operated, maintained and managed so as to be compatible, harmonious and appropriate in appearance with the existing and planned character of the general vicinity, adjacent uses of land and the capacity of public services and facilities affected by the use.
3. The proposal is having a positive impact on the community as a whole and the surrounding area by further offering jobs and health and social activities.
4. The proposed development is served adequately by essential public facilities and services, such as highways, streets, police and fire protection, water and sewer, drainage ways and refuse disposal.
5. The proposed development should not be detrimental, hazardous or disturbing to existing or future neighboring land uses, persons, property or the public welfare.
6. The proposal will not create additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services that will be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.

A motion was made by Schroeder, seconded by Dettloff, that this matter be recommended for Approval to the City Council Meeting. The motion failed by the following vote:

Aye 4 - Dettloff, Hooper, Schroeder, and Schultz

Nay 4 - Brnabic, Kaltsounis, Reece and Yukon

Mr. Anzek asked if there were any conditions that the Commissioners would recommend that might be acceptable.

After additional discussion by the Commissioners, it was determined that the addition of four (4) conditions could be considered for Approval.

MOTION *by Hooper, seconded by Yukon, in the matter of City File No. 16-031 (Lifetime Fitness, for the sale and service of alcoholic beverages for on site consumption), the Planning Commission recommends to City Council Approval of the Conditional Use to allow alcoholic beverage consumption on site, based on documents dated received by the Planning Department on November 28, 2016, with the following six (6) findings and four (4) conditions.*

Findings

- 1. The expanded use will promote the intent and purpose of the Zoning Ordinance.*
- 2. The building has been designed and is operated, maintained and managed so as to be compatible, harmonious and appropriate in appearance with the existing and planned character of the general vicinity, adjacent uses of land and the capacity of public services and facilities affected by the use.*
- 3. The proposal is having a positive impact on the community as a whole and the surrounding area by further offering jobs and health and social activities.*
- 4. The proposed development is served adequately by essential public facilities and services, such as highways, streets, police and fire protection, water and sewer, drainage ways and refuse disposal.*
- 5. The proposed development should not be detrimental, hazardous or disturbing to existing or future neighboring land uses, persons, property or the public welfare.*
- 6. The proposal will not create additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services that will be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.*

Conditions

- 1. Alcohol will not be served after 10:00 p.m.*
- 2. Alcohol services will be restricted to three (3) enclosed areas: the tennis viewing area, the outdoor bistro and indoor cafe.*
- 3. Prohibition of alcoholic beverages and appropriate placement of signage at the child care facility.*
- 4. Review by City code enforcement officers and/or Oakland County Sheriffs*

Office of offsite parking used by Lifetime Fitness patrons during scheduled events.

**A motion was made by Hooper, seconded by Yukon, that this matter be Approved.
The motion carried by the following vote:**

Aye 6 - Brnabic, Dettloff, Hooper, Schroeder, Schultz and Yukon

Nay 2 - Kaltsounis and Reece

Excused 1 - Morita

2016-0400 Request for Adoption and Recommendation of the Auburn Road Corridor Study

Attachments: [Draft PC Memo Anzek & Roediger 12-15-16.docx](#)
[AuburnRdCorridorPlan_JanuaryDraft.pdf](#)
[Edits from planning commission draft.pdf](#)
[OHM Cost Estimate.pdf](#)
[Public Comment Emails.pdf](#)

(Reference: Staff Report prepared by Sara Roediger, dated 12/15/2016, Draft Plan for Auburn Road Corridor)

Ms. Roediger stated that staff has been working with a steering committee, the consultant team and the general public over the past year to prepare a draft plan for the Auburn Road Corridor (ARC). She introduced Bradley Strader, AICP, PTP, Senior Associate and Caitlin Mallory-Marcon, Associate, MKSK, 687 W. Forest Avenue, Detroit, MI 48201 to present the power point for the draft plan.

Ms. Roediger recapped that public meetings were held, a survey was undertaken, and the steering committee developed made up of Planning Commissioners, City Council Members, business owners, residents and various other interested parties. She noted that a wish list was developed and a market study was undertaken to determine what the market could bear for the area.

She explained that Mr. Strader would go into depth in review of the market study and the culmination of the work that went into the draft Plan which is now available on the City's website and included on an Auburn Corridor Redevelopment Facebook page started by area residents. She added that 150 emails were sent to those who came to any of the public meetings or expressed interest with a direct link to the plan requesting comments and feedback. She noted that following the presentation this evening, should the Planning Commission feel comfortable with the plan, perhaps the members would entertain a motion to adopt and recommend for City Council's consideration and adoption of the Plan. She stated that Council will be making the policy and budgeting decisions that would bring the Plan to implementation.

Mr. Strader, stated that there have been previous plans done for Auburn Road for the Brooklands area; and the City revisited the previous plans with a goal of incorporating the best ideas they contained, and developed new ideas and goals with a focus on implementation. He noted that while the previous plans were well-designed, change has not happened for the area. He commented that in addition to the market study, meetings were held between the steering

committee and stakeholders, members of the public, and Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and City staff.

Plan Goals included strengthening the overall district as a unique destination with quality commercial development and neighborhood areas, calming traffic to make the area safer and improve the environment particularly for pedestrians, providing parking, defining a clear transition into the neighborhoods, reviewing opportunities for cooperation between the public and private sector, and finding opportunities for funding for changes to the road, the pedestrian areas, and buffering between the commercial development and the neighborhood.

He explained that a number of committee meetings were held, along with three public open houses, and door-to-door visits with businesses were undertaken between the City's Economic Development Staff. Howard Kohn, from the Chesapeake Group, a fourth team member, undertook the market study. In addition, telephone surveys and website information furthered the outreach to collect additional information. He stated that the plan is a balance between technical evaluation, past plans and input from the public, stakeholders, and the MDOT, who has jurisdiction over the road.

Ms. Molloy-Marcon highlighted public input, noting that three open houses were held at various stages throughout the project, with each open house highlighting different information. She stated that the open houses had great attendance, especially from Brooklands area residents; and mixed opinions were noted on certain aspects of the Plan. She commented that while the community is very supportive of doing something on Auburn Road, suggestions were offered to close off or cul-de-sac some of the residential streets, add a public plaza or incorporate additional parking. She noted that these suggestions were polarizing, with some individuals requesting streets be closed off and others not wanting them to be closed. She stated that almost everyone's opinion favored general pedestrian improvements, incorporating additional sidewalks ensuring that the sidewalk will be continuous on both the north and south sides of Auburn Road. Adding safe pedestrian crossings was stressed by the Principal at Reuther Middle School as well many parents of Reuther students. She mentioned that many people were interested in having more restaurants and more of an outdoor cafe environment along the street, and paving the alleys was also a very popular suggestion.

She noted that in addition to the public open houses, a survey was posted online and received a total of 158 responses. The survey included questions on the polarizing issues mentioned before, including whether it would be appropriate to suggest that additional parking be added that would encroach into the residential neighborhood by one or two lots in order to have a larger, more centralized parking facility for the entire district. She highlighted some of the responses, noting that 105 respondents stated that they think adding parking in a centralized parking district is an appropriate solution as long as its heavily buffered from the neighborhood, 24 responded that additional centralized parking was not needed, and 21 responded that while they thought it was a good idea, they wished it to be located elsewhere along the corridor.

She stated that a second polarizing question regarding the closure of some of

the streets to become cul-de-sacs and adding more public space or providing additional parking provided more split answers. She noted that 86 respondents felt it necessary to undertake street closures within the neighborhood, while 57 did not favor it. Thirteen respondents did not favor the streets that were suggested for being closed off and made suggestions for other streets to be closed. She pointed out that the overwhelming majority of the responses came from the Brooklands area residents themselves.

She explained that stakeholder interviews both in person and by telephone were also conducted during the market study performed by Howard Kohn. She commented that many respondents relayed the negative perception that the Brooklands area has overall. Most property owners contacted along the corridor were very open to redevelopment of their property and improvements to their businesses; and everyone seemed to be in support of the capital improvements being suggested along the roadway. The market study yielded that most patrons in the service area live nearby within the Brooklands area or in a neighboring community. The market study suggests that the general area could absorb an additional 45 to 64 housing units, 20,000 to 27,000 square feet of office and technology-driven space, and 41,000 square feet of retail goods and services.

She explained that while the study concentrated heavily on the Brooklands area, the manner in which the concepts could be applied along the various other nodes along the Auburn Road Corridor were also reviewed. She highlighted the intersection at Adams and Auburn Roads, showing that additional landscape or relocation of buildings closer to the road, management of traffic flow and access points could also improve traffic flow and buffer new developments from adjacent single family neighborhoods is important.

Mr. Strader commented that one of the suggested plan changes came out of the joint meeting between Council and the Planning Commission was to look at relocating entrances to be on the side of the buildings, with parking to the rear. Another item that came out of that joint meeting was to look at the intersection of John R and Auburn Road for incorporating mixed uses and consolidating some of the driveways in that area.

He noted that encouraging reinvestment by property owners to improve their buildings and facades caught the attention of both the residents and some of the property owners. During the steering committee meetings, it was discussed how might the City help provide some stimulus for change, how Oakland County might be able to provide some design services on facades, or how seed money might be available to help. He listed improvements such as changing the design of the building by incorporating a new facade, having the parking located on the side and/or at the rear, creating more pedestrian areas in the front, allowing more room for stormwater management and landscaping, cleaning up the signs, and revisiting zoning. He commented that the feeling is that more than a zoning change is needed to encourage reinvestment.

He explained that LSL Planning reviewed the area's zoning and while they had some recommendations for minor changes, the feeling is that generally the Ordinance crafted not that long ago has some really good elements. One

suggestion is to require more parking in the Brooklands area. While the City reduced the amount of parking required, because of the variety of uses in the Brooklands area, it is suggested that perhaps there is a need to increase the amount of parking required to avoid any parking pressure issues or result in people parking in the neighborhoods. Another suggestion was to perhaps allow more height, as the market study showed that there is some desire for mixed use or perhaps two or three story residential buildings. Another component suggested by a number of residents was to incorporate buffering to keep the noise and activity from the commercial area better separated from the neighborhoods. Dressing up the alleyways to make them more walkable and inviting to pedestrians or providing a wall, fence or landscape buffer would better separate the neighborhoods from parking and screen headlights.

He noted that alternative road designs were reviewed. He stated that traffic volumes are between 11,000 and 13,000 cars, approaching the capacity of a two-lane road and causing backups especially during the afternoon rush hour. Improvements at the Dequindre intersection would help; however, the volumes would be better served by a three-lane road. He noted that a three-lane road can handle 15,000 to 18,000 vehicles per day and removes turning vehicles from the traffic lanes. Parking alternatives included incorporating angle parking; however MDOT would not favor angle parking due to road speeds and volumes. A slip road was also suggested with parking removed from the travel lanes as an alternative. City engineers expressed concern that this alternative would add a significant amount of pavement in an area that already has stormwater issues. A favorite alternative of planners, traffic engineers, MDOT, and the public and stakeholders was the three-lane road, where the center turn lane could be a raised median or hardscape where it does not need to accommodate left turns. This would eliminate parking in the front of the buildings and allow for better-organized parking on the side and in the rear, accommodating both existing and future development. This alternative best met the goals of the study and also had the most enthusiastic response from the MDOT engineers because it improves safety. Speeds would slow somewhat with a typical speed in the area being 35 miles per hour instead of the current 40 to 45 miles per hour. MDOT suggested closing off some of the driveways and access points to improve the capacity of the road and reduce the crash potential. He noted that all of the City's plans for this area over the years had reviewed closures for safety reasons. He commented that the pros and cons to street closures have long been discussed. While it may improve safety by having fewer access points, it would create additional traffic on the streets that do remain open. He stated that residents expressed concern regarding school busses and snow plowing if streets are closed. Discussions on which streets should be closed reviewed whether adjacent alleys were public or private, or whether it would reduce parking pressure for the neighborhoods.

He commented that MDOT would also require a traffic study to show the impact on traffic operations of the shift of traffic to adjacent open roads. Considerations could be made to narrowing a street entrance or making it one-way to direct traffic flow. Objections raised included the possibility that cars would cut through businesses to avoid certain intersections. He reviewed what could be done in an area where the street was closed, showing additional parking or a plaza or public space. He mentioned incorporating a gateway or a more pronounced

crosswalk to welcome people to the area.

He noted that one of the items that came out of the joint meeting between City Council and the Planning Commission was the desire for a more detailed action plan, to help integrate the plan into the next Master Land Use Plan Update, which the City will begin in 2017. There was also some discussion that the portion of Auburn Road from Livernois to Dequindre might be turned back to the City at some point and how MDOT might be able to incorporate shared funding to rebuild the road. Concerns were expressed regarding stormwater and what MDOT's responsibility might be in correcting runoff problems. He noted that the height of the roadway causes runoff onto the adjacent properties and a solution is needed. Discussions are needed with Oakland County to see what they could offer in terms of helping with a façade program.

He explained that this is a concept plan, and that the next step would be a traffic operations study and detailed engineering work. The current engineering estimate is a little over \$3 million to rebuild the road and undertake the public improvements and right-of-way work, with approximately 10 percent for engineering design costs; and a funding source would need to be identified. He mentioned that there are transportation alternatives programs from MDOT and other available programs to help create a more pedestrian-friendly roadway. It is also hoped that there will be additional monies from the new administration that would be dedicated to infrastructure improvements. He stressed that the City should be aggressive in seeking internal and external funding options. He noted that there was discussion toward the formation of a more cohesive business association in the area, or perhaps a corridor improvement authority or business improvement district, to better work with the businesses to look toward shared parking. As City staff have offered that they have a good dialogue going with the business owners, they could serve as a resource to help assemble marketing and promotional materials for the area and change the attitude on how the Brooklands district is viewed.

He mentioned that the City owns a parcel at the west end of the area, and discussions at the first workshop centered around how the lot could be best used, whether it be for public space or parking. The parcel is not centrally located, and Mr. Kohn thought it might be a great site for redevelopment into a two- or three-story mixed use residential property. He commented that there are several options for that lot that could be considered as the plan moves forward.

Chairperson Brnabic called for any public comment:

Scott Campbell, 2793 Harrison Avenue, Rochester Hills, MI 48307 *Mr. Campbell stated that when he reviewed the draft plan that was emailed to him, he did not see any road closures. He expressed concern about the children walking to school safely because when Hamlin Road was closed, there was an increase in cut-through traffic through the subdivisions. He said that he was skeptical of internet polls because people could submit duplicate responses. He said that he did not support two- and three-story buildings due to an increase in noise and light. He expressed concern that additional restaurants with outdoor seating may add to the noise.*

Sam Loginack, 3231 Melvin Avenue, Rochester Hills, MI 48306 Mr. Loginack expressed his appreciation and support for the draft plan. He stated that pedestrian friendly communities experience spiritual, physical and community health. He said he would be in support of the closure of his street for the sake of safety.

Dwayne Zysek, A & S Unlimited Heating and Cooling, 1663 E. Auburn Road, Rochester Hills, MI 48307 Mr. Zysek stated that his business has been located on Auburn Road since 1990. He noted that pedestrian traffic along Auburn Road is dangerous and that cut-through traffic into the subdivisions is common during 6:00 p.m. traffic. He said he hoped that City Council would be in support of the plan.

Kathleen Campbell, 2793 Harrison Avenue, Rochester Hills, MI 48307 Mrs. Campbell stated that the Brooklands neighbors had created a Facebook page and that the main concern was road closures. She stated that there had been an increase in cut-through traffic with the closure of Eastern Street. She expressed her concern for the children walking to school with no sidewalks or streetlights. She said she was in support of closing Gerald Street to address cut-through traffic. She said that because the emailed plan had not listed street closures, residents had not attended the meeting.

Ms. Roediger stated that for clarification purposes, the draft plan has not changed and is the same plan that is posted on the Facebook page. She noted that the graphic shows potential locations for closures but that nothing has been changed.

Chairperson Brnabic added that it was possible there would be temporary closures as well.

Mr. Kaltsounis stated that he had attended some of open house meetings. He noted the residents' passion and support of improvement of the neighborhood. He stated that change begins with a plan, if there is no plan, no change will be implemented. He stated that the meetings have resulted in clear communication with residents. He stated that the draft plan is similar to a puzzle - with each component of the plan as recommendations shifted around until everything can come together as a complete plan for a successful design.

Mr. Anzek stated that the City has had concerns regarding the Auburn Road Corridor. He noted that everyone has worked to draft a fresh look and that the plan is a good guide for future decisions. He indicated that Councilperson Morita was not able to attend tonight's meeting but had requested him to express her views on the plan on her behalf. He stated that she is in support of the plan, but had requested one modification on page 35 - Business Improvement District (BID) vs. Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA). He stated she expressed her concerns with the City's difficulty implementing special assessment districts. He stated that she was in agreement with the plan, and mentioned while the BID is a possibility, her support is for a CIA using tax increment financing capture (TIF) to fund the plan.

He reported that MDOT would be working on right turn improvements at the east and west bound intersections sometime during 2017. He stated that once the plan is approved, it could be considered for inclusion under the City's Capital Improvement Program.

Ms. Roediger added that Paul Shumejko, City's Traffic Engineer has been working with Reuther Middle School to implement a safe routes to school program. In response to public concerns expressed regarding survey responses, she noted that the online survey had limitation designs of one response per IP address.

Mr. Schroeder had the following questions, regarding:

- Right-of-way acquisition required for setbacks*
- Maintenance of alleys - private vs. public*
- Alleys would have to be marked for access and identification purposes for the fire, police and emergency services and the City's Department of Public Services*
- Whether renovation could be undertaken of just the building facades to keep costs lower.*

He stated that detailed studies for both traffic and drainage would be primary for implementation of the plan.

Mr. Reece expressed skepticism about the parking design and stated that the increase in the number of larger vehicles could be problematic.

Mr. Strader responded that there are no right-of-way acquisition requirements for setbacks. He stated that alleys are privately owned and will remain privately owned unless the City determines a way beyond acquisition to make them public. He suggested that the alleys could be marked for rear service drives for the City street identification purposes. He explained that the feedback from the business owners revealed that storm water and building code requirements, paving of parking lots, permit fees, redesigned storm water were cost prohibitive but perhaps special waivers in this district might remove some of the barriers for redevelopment. He stated that the parking spaces could be adjusted to be wider and a buffer strip incorporated to allow for more room.

Mr. Hooper indicated his support of the plan and the implementation of the CIA with a TIF to move the plan forward.

MOTION by Kaltsounis, seconded by Hooper, the Rochester Hills Planning Commission finds the recommendations of the December 2016 draft Auburn Road Corridor Plan are consistent with the overall policies and goals of the City as outlined in the adopted Master Land Use Plan and therefore hereby adopts the Auburn Road Corridor Plan and recommends that the City Council do the same.

Approved

Aye 8 - Brnabic, Dettloff, Hooper, Kaltsounis, Reece, Schroeder, Schultz and Yukon

Excused 1 - Morita

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2016-0473 Request for Approval of the 2017 Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

Attachments: [Memo 2017 meeting schedule 12-16-16.pdf](#)

A motion was made by Kaltsounis, seconded by Yukon, that this matter be Approved as Amended, with July 18th being changed to July 25th. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 8 - Brnabic, Dettloff, Hooper, Kaltsounis, Reece, Schroeder, Schultz and Yukon

Excused 1 - Morita

NEXT MEETING DATE

Chairperson Brnabic reminded the Commissioners that the next Regular Meeting was scheduled for January 17, 2017.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business to come before the Commissioners, and upon motion by Mr. Kaltsounis, Chairperson Brnabic adjourned the Regular Meeting at 9:28 p.m.

Deborah Brnabic, Chairperson
Rochester Hills Planning Commission

Nicholas O. Kaltsounis, Secretary