

MINUTES of a Special Rochester Hills City Council and Planning Commission Joint Work Session held at 1700 W. Hamlin Road, Rochester Hills, Michigan, on Wednesday, October 22, 2003 at 7:30 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Dalton called the Special Rochester Hills City Council and Planning Commission Joint Work Session to order at 7:35 p.m. Michigan Time.

2. ROLL CALL

City Council

Present: President John Dalton; Members Jim Duistermars, Lois Golden, Melinda Hill

Absent: Member Bryan Barnett, Barbara Holder, Gerald Robbins

Planning Commission

Present: Vice Chairperson James Rosen; Members William Boswell, Deborah Brnabic, Greg Hooper, Audrey Ruggiero

Absent: Chairperson Eric Kaiser; Members Barbara Holder, Nicholas Kaltsounis, Kristen Myers

QUORUM PRESENT

Others Present: Pat Somerville, Mayor
Jane Leslie, Deputy Clerk
Ed Anzek, Director of Planning/Development
Scott Cope, Director of Building Department/Ordinance Enforcement
Paul Davis, City Engineer/DPS
John Hines, Deputy Building Director
Deborah Millhouse, Deputy Director of Planning/Development
Bob Spaman, Director of Finance
Dick Young, Supervisor of Inspection Services

President Dalton stated that Council Members Barnett and Holder provided previous notice they would be absent and asked to be excused.

Vice Chairperson Rosen stated that Planning Commission Chairperson Kaiser had intended to attend the meeting.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Hill described a pamphlet she distributed to her fellow Council Members called “A Civic Gift” published by the Michigan Land Use Institute that focuses on “Historic Preservation, Community Reinvestment and Smart Growth in Michigan.”

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Lee Zendel, 1575 Dutton Road, refuted comments made by an unnamed Council candidate who stated that more Sheriff’s Department deputies are not needed because the City’s crime rate is down since last year. Mr. Zendel stressed that deputies do not respond only to criminal incidences, but are also responsible for non-criminal occurrences such as traffic accidents.

5. ADMINISTRATION

5a. Tienken Road Improvements

5a.i Traffic Improvements at Tienken and Rochester Road

Mr. Ed Anzek, Director of Planning/Development, explained that, in conjunction with City Engineer Paul Davis, Traffic Consultant Steve Dearing of Orchard, Hiltz McCliment, Inc., and Tetra Tech MPS, an infrastructure and resource management firm, plans have been devised to demonstrate that improvements to the intersection of Rochester Road and Tienken Road in conjunction with the proposed Papa Joe’s and Holiday Village development, will minimize, alleviate or improve the traffic situation there. He then introduced **Mr. John Gaber**, attorney for the Holiday Village development proposed for the southeast corner of the intersection.

Mr. John Gaber of Williams, Williams, Ruby & Plunkett, 380 North Old Woodward Avenue, Birmingham, described the traffic presentation tonight as the “maximum proposal we can offer to improve congestion at Tienken and Rochester.” He requested feedback from Council following the evening’s presentation to facilitate forward momentum on the project. He explained that, ideally, they would like final approval by January 2004, thus enabling the developer to complete road construction during the lower traffic congestion summer months when school is not in session.

Mr. Michael Labadie, Traffic Engineer from Tetra Tech MPS, 26600 Telegraph Road, Southfield, presented three (3) alternative scenarios for intersection configurations that would facilitate traffic flow. He began his presentation with a projected simulation of the current intersection, noting that, in his opinion, “the volumes forecast that are shown as new traffic is over-estimated,” thus making it a very conservative forecasting of traffic. The simulation was for peak hour traffic movement times between 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., stressing that that is the time during which the amount of cars is greatest. He also noted that their study did not analyze the complete traffic network, but rather, only this specific intersection.

He then displayed the three (3) proposed scenarios for development at the intersection.

Scenario 1 proposed to:

- Extend westbound left turn lane on Tienken Road at Rochester Road.
- Construct an eastbound shared through/right turn lane on Tienken Road across Holiday Village's frontage.
- Create a westbound shared through/right turn lane on Tienken Road at Rochester Road.
- Create a northbound exclusive right turn lane on Rochester Road at Tienken Road.
- Extend existing eastbound right turn lane at Tienken Road at Rochester Road and restripe as a shared through/right turn lane.

Mr. Labadie noted that this proposed scenario was not an improvement over the current situation.

Scenario 2 proposed to:

- Extend westbound left turn lane on Tienken Road at Rochester Road.
- Construct an eastbound shared through/right turn lane on Tienken Road across Holiday Village's frontage.
- Create a westbound shared through/right turn lane on Tienken Road at Rochester Road.
- Create a northbound exclusive right turn lane on Rochester Road at Tienken Road.
- Extend existing eastbound right turn lane at Tienken Road at Rochester Road and restripe as a shared through/right turn lane.
- Convert the second eastbound through lane on Tienken Road at Rochester Road to a shared through/left turn lane.

Scenario 3 proposed to:

- Extend westbound left turn lane on Tienken Road at Rochester Road.
- Construct an eastbound shared through/right turn lane on Tienken Road across Holiday Village's frontage.
- Create a westbound shared through/right turn lane on Tienken Road at Rochester Road.
- Create a northbound exclusive right turn lane on Rochester Road at Tienken Road.
- Extend existing eastbound right turn lane at Tienken Road at Rochester Road and restripe as a shared through/right turn lane.
- Construct second eastbound left turn lane on Tienken Road at Rochester Road.

Mr. Labadie noted this scenario results in a “very significant improvement in stop delays, taking into account future traffic growth and additional traffic from the two (2) developments.”

City Council Members and Planning Commission Members raised questions and concerns regarding:

- Stop delays and how they were determined.
- Safety issues regarding the various driveways.
- The need for a traffic signal at the Papa Joe's site.
- Safety concerns with regards to patrons attempting left turns.
- The need for boulevards and “Michigan” left turnarounds.
- Dual left-turn lanes at the intersection.

- Improvements to Tienken Road on the east side of Rochester Road need to be similar to the west side.

Mr. Labadie explained:

- The stop delay for the final scenario is 57.8 seconds: some vehicles will not stop at the intersection, while other vehicles may stop for as long as 120 seconds. The stop delay is an average of all vehicles.
- The roads operate as a network and any bottlenecks in the network will influence the flow throughout the system; the study focused in on this particular intersection.
- The situation does not warrant a traffic signal also noting that the driveways “operate in a balanced way.” If a driveway were removed from the plan, “it gets out of balance and won’t operate as well.”
- The plan is not a “panacea” but does address many of the issues: reduction in stop delay, ability of drivers to exit side streets, etc.
- Stressed that the developers are giving the City the right of ways.
- Current funding does not allow for more complex or extensive enhancements to the intersection.

President Dalton noted that this is “not the fix, it is the improvement.” He suggested that this is a short-term solution allowing the City time to examine the situation further and, in the event of future development, negotiate for the remaining rights-of-way.

(Recess 9:26 p.m. – 9:40 p.m.)

ii. Bridge and Intersection Improvements at Tienken & Kings Cove (Members received a copy of a City Council Work Session Agenda Summary Sheet dated October 14, 2003 from Paul Davis, City Engineer)

iii. Tri-Party Funds

iv. Thoroughfare Master Plan

Mr. Davis presented an overview of the intersection of Tienken Road and Kings Cove:

- Council has shown reluctance to increase beyond three (3) lanes of traffic, however, even a four (4) lane road would be highly congested.
- The current traffic congestion at the intersection warrants a rating of E, with a rating of D being the minimum acceptable rating.
- Future projections (year 2015) call for the rating to remain E approaching F.
- City does not have the funds for a “massive corridor improvement.”

- Oakland County Road Commission concurs that a five (5) lane road is needed at this intersection.
- Traffic has and will continue to increase rapidly, thus warranting an update to the Master Thoroughfare Plan.
- Any improvements will be expensive and there is no Federal funding available to assist in offsetting the cost to the City.
- The balance in the Tri-Party Fund is not adequate for the current improvement plan.
- It is estimated that accidents on Adams Road and Tienken Road will increase significantly if improvements are not made.

Ms. Hill expressed her concern that the plan for this intersection changed drastically from what was originally presented and she fears it is not what the community wants.

Ms. Golden stated that the Master Thoroughfare Plan was “obsolete instantly.” She stressed that the Council has “to look at reality and look at what the professional says.”

Mr. Duistermars acknowledged that the plan is obsolete and that the process to make the appropriate changes must be accelerated.

Mr. Rosen stated that “the easiest thing is to do little damage with three lanes” noting that the City can get by with three (3) lanes and minimal expense. He questioned, in the case of five (5) lanes, whether the City is going forward with projects without getting the appropriate community input. He expressed concern that the City is trying to move forward with new plans when previous plans have never been completed.

Ms. Hill concurred with Mr. Rosen, and stressed the need to weigh the impact a five (5) lane road through the City’s historic district would have on the community. She called for community input.

Mr. Davis stressed that his recommendation as City Engineer is to alleviate the congestion while planning for future growth. He noted that traffic problems resulting from the actions of surrounding communities are the problems of Rochester Hills and must be addressed by the City.

Mr. Duistermars suggested that the Master Plan be updated every five (5) years and that, due to the time-consuming nature of the current review process, the City does a disservice to residents by being “reactionary to all these things we don’t anticipate.”

Mr. Dalton agreed, “it’s obvious our thoroughfare plan isn’t any good.” He agreed with Ms. Hill that Council needs to be made aware of these situations in a timelier manner. He felt he learned a great deal from this discussion.

Mr. Rosen acknowledged that “while it might be the [Master Thoroughfare] Plan is obsolete and not meaningful,” while also stressing that “it’s the only one we have.” He supported updating the plan as soon as possible and stressed the need for a consultant to examine the City as a whole, whereas it is “misleading to look at a chunk.”

There being no further business to discuss before the Planning Commission, Vice Chairperson Rosen adjourned the Planning Commission portion of the meeting at 10:33 p.m.

(Recess 10:33 p.m. – 10:40 p.m.)

b. Update on City Hall Renovations (A0162) and Oakland County Sheriff Substation

Mr. Scott Cope, Director of Building/Ordinance Enforcement, introduced **Mr. Dick Young** Supervisor of Inspection Services, to update Council regarding the progress of the City Hall renovations as well as **Mr. John Hines**, Deputy Building Director, to update Council regarding the progress of the new Oakland County Sheriff Substation.

Mr. Young noted the following:

- City Hall project is approximately \$500,000 under budget.
- Second floor drywall, ceiling, lighting and carpeting is installed at the north end of project.
- First floor drywall has been installed.
- First floor ceiling grid, paint and light fixtures will begin the week of October 27th.
- Proposed completion date is first or second week of December.
- Tentative furniture set-up and move scheduled for October 27 through December 8, 2003.
- Council chambers will be ready for occupancy on December 17th.
- There will be no interruption of service to residents.
- There is a proposed Open House for some time in January 2004.

Mr. Hines, offering photographs and a floor plan, noted the following:

- Oakland County Sheriff Substation overhead mechanical and electrical in progress.
- Interior masonry and metal stud walls underway.
- Framing for hard ceilings in progress.
- Substation site grading 85% complete.
- Substation curbs and walks 90% complete.
- Court site grading 75% complete.
- Court site curbs and walks 40% complete.
- Overhead doors, skylight are complete.
- Curtain wall to enclose building 90% complete.
- Substation casework delivered, installation to proceed following ceiling grid.
- Overall project is approximately 66% complete based on construction costs.

President Dalton praised all involved for bringing these projects in under budget, noting it demonstrated “significant good planning.”

c. City Survey Results (Members received a copy of a City Council Work Session Agenda Summary Sheet dated October 22, 2003 from Susan Galeczka, City Council Liaison)