



# Rochester Hills

## Minutes - Draft

### Planning Commission

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Home Page:  
[www.rochesterhills.org](http://www.rochesterhills.org)

*Chairperson Deborah Brnabic, Vice Chairperson Greg Hooper*  
*Members: Ed Anzek, Gerard Dettloff, Nicholas O. Kaltsounis,*  
*Stephanie Morita, David A. Reece, C. Neall Schroeder, Ryan Schultz*

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Tuesday, January 15, 2019

7:00 PM

1000 Rochester Hills Drive

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## CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Deborah Brnabic called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the Auditorium.

## ROLL CALL

**Present** 9 - Ed Anzek, Deborah Brnabic, Gerard Dettloff, Greg Hooper, Nicholas Kaltsounis, Stephanie Morita, David Reece, C. Neall Schroeder and Ryan Schultz

Quorum present.

Also present: Sara Roediger, Director of Planning and Economic Dev.  
Kristen Kapelanski, Manager of Planning  
Maureen Gentry, Recording Secretary

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2019-0003](#) December 18, 2018 Regular Meeting

A motion was made by Hooper, seconded by Reece, that this matter be Approved as Presented . The motion PASSED by an unanimous vote.

## COMMUNICATIONS

A) Planning & Zoning News dated December 2018

## DISCUSSION

[2018-0584](#) Rochester Hills Research Park - City File No. 18-021 - a proposed office/research and warehouse/production Planned Unit Development campus addition to the EEI Global site on 25 acres located at 1400 S. Livernois, on the west side of Livernois, south of Avon, zoned REC-W Regional Employment Center - Workplace, Parcel No. 15-21-276-013, Designhaus Architecture, Applicant

*Present for the applicant were Peter Stuhldreier, Designhaus Architecture, 301 Walnut Blvd., Rochester, MI 48307 and Derek Gentile, 1400 S. Livernois, Rochester Hills, MI 48307, owner.*

*Ms. Kapelanski advised that the applicants were proposing an office campus addition to their existing development. The site was in the REC-W Regional Employment Center - Workplace district, which allowed the proposed use. They were planning to add three additional buildings, along with an access road, walkways and landscaping. Although plans had been submitted and gone through one review, they were looking for feedback from the Commission.*

*Mr. Stuhldreier related that the parcel had undulating topography. He and Mr. Gentile had talked about the site, and they both thought there was an opportunity to transform a site plan across it. He looked at the road connections, road improvements and safety features. There would be connections to the Trail, and it would be a great R&D hub with a very central location with great access. He showed an aerial view of what they thought geometrically and physically would fit the lines and the flow of the site and would balance with the parking tabulation. He noted that the building currently had 150 employees, and there were 450 parking spaces. They would be increasing that to 680 and doubling the square-footage of the buildings in a balance between high bay space and office space in an effort to attract higher tech, research, automation, prototyping, etc., types of businesses into the area. They discussed getting a connection from Horizon Ct. to the campus road to improve the flow of emergency vehicles and to do something to alleviate different traffic patterns. They currently had a boulevard entrance at a traffic light at the north end of the site which would go to the south and attach to Rochester Industrial Dr. He felt that would be a great public benefit. The site would be interlaced with walkways, pedestrian pauses, boulevarded streets, a food truck court for employees and connections to the Trail. They thought that the proposal was an overall positive thing, and they believed that they could reach the requirements of a PUD and come to a balance of square-footage and uses and parking.*

*Mr. Gentile stated that a high priority was to add some site amenities for their employees. Being next to the Clinton River Trail was a real benefit to the employees. They currently did not have an easy way to access it from their employee entrances, so they wanted to build a nice, landscaped walkway to get there. Mr. Stuhldreier came up with the concept of a food truck area and a courtyard that would access the Trail. They felt that could enhance community activities taking place on the*

*Trail. They were routinely asked to use the parking lot for fundraising events such as runs or walks. He wanted the development to look really nice - more of a campus feel like a university - with a high-end research and development center. He had a creative agency, and as a marketing firm they had a lot of customers who came to the site on a routine basis. He had been asked multiple times by some of his suppliers if there might be an opportunity to be a part of their campus. They had customers in the advanced manufacturing area inquire about an opportunity to use some of their space. He stated that there was no shortage of demand; it was just how they should build it so it fit their purposes and worked for the overall look and feel of the space. They were very excited about it.*

*Mr. Kaltsounis mentioned that the Commissioners typically asked if applicants had talked to their neighbors, and he asked if they had talked to any of the households across Livernois. Mr. Gentile said that they had not. Mr. Kaltsounis thought that the project was nice. He frequently passed by the property and admired the trucks, and he saw that the parking lot was still there. Mr. Gentile said that the storage parking would probably go away, because they would need it for regular parking. He had several other facilities that handled that type of activity. Mr. Kaltsounis said that his only concern was that the project needed a little more color. There were some blue accents on the building, but he wondered if they could add a little more color off of Livernois. He gave the example of the JENOPTIK building. There was glass and color, and it was set apart.*

*Mr. Gentile explained that they did not spend a tremendous amount of time on the aesthetics. They had been focused more on the logistics - the roads, the sidewalks and the green space - but he felt that it was a good point. He reiterated that he had a whole creative team which could go to town.*

*Mr. Stuhlreyer added that they took more of a look at the scale and scope. They thought that the individual buildings would probably be built to suit or be pad lots based upon the parameters of the PUD. If there was a major user, it would probably come in with its own architecture, although buildings would have to go through site plan approval based on the PUD. Mr. Kaltsounis remarked that the Commission had fun with the outside of buildings, and he knew that Mr. Gentile's company sold flair. Some of the new modern buildings were setting examples, and he thought that the subject location would be a good place to do that, and that was his challenge to the applicants. Mr. Stuhlreyer agreed that there was an opportunity for all four of the new buildings to be jewels.*

*Ms. Morita pointed out the trucks on the north end, and she asked if they would no longer be there. Mr. Gentile said that was correct. Ms. Morita asked if there would be a building right next to the Trail. Mr. Stuhlreyer said that none of the relief they would be seeking would be related to setbacks. Ms. Morita asked if the area was low and wet, and Mr. Stuhlreyer confirmed that it was a non-regulated wet spot. They had done a tremendous amount of engineering already. Ms. Morita stated that she really loved the idea of their company reinvesting in the City, and she thanked Mr. Gentile. She said that she would also like to see some color and flair and some individuality with the buildings. Her only hesitation was the proximity of the building to the Trail and making sure that whatever went there matched the natural environment. She had ridden the Trail enough to know that there were nice parts with buildings that fit in and areas next to some unsightly industrial buildings. She felt that the project could provide a great opportunity for a company willing to take a chance on that space, recognizing that they had this great green space right behind them. She concluded that if it was done well, it would fit in well.*

*Mr. Schroeder thought that it would be beneficial if every building had a different color at the entrance so that when someone arrived, they could just look for the red or the blue building. He added that it was a very nice proposal.*

*Mr. Dettloff agreed that it was a great concept. He echoed Ms. Morita's sentiment about investing back into the City. He asked if they could speculate on the number of potential new jobs. Mr. Gentile believed that it would be 450-500.*

*Mr. Anzek commented that they had done a nice job, and he felt that it would be a good use of the land. He asked if Mr. Gentile would hold design rights over the other buildings, indicating that someone else's showcase might not be so attractive to others. He knew that it would be a reflection of Mr. Gentile's business. Mr. Gentile said that his father held a firm fist, and being a creative agency, they would pay close attention to that. They were outdoorsman, and they liked the green space. Having an aesthetically pleasing building would fit in with that. He did not want to have a cinder block wall facing the Trail; it would be something tasteful. Mr. Anzek asked Mr. Gentile if he planned to own or lease or both. Mr. Gentile said that he was in discussions with his development partners. It would be a condominium development, so there would be some restrictions to be followed. If someone wanted to put in a headquarters*

*and wanted to have a hand in customizing the building, they wanted to offer that flexibility. However, they wanted to maintain standards on the look and feel and make sure it was aesthetically consistent with the rest of the campus. Mr. Anzek asked if there would be any interior restaurants. Mr. Gentile said that it was a little early to guess, and it would depend on the user. Mr. Anzek noted the topography east of Horizon Ct., where it dead ended, which he said would be a significant elevation change. He had looked at it, and never thought he could take a car down it. It was pretty steep, so he wondered if they would cut and fill. He pointed out that at the access point coming from the lower left corner, there was a gravel lane. It had an access to the parking lot where the big trucks were parked and was seldom used. He recalled that there was an easement granting Mr. Gentile access rights. It had been difficult for the Fire Dept., because station one required a lot of security. They did not want vehicles driving behind or too close to the fire station if possible. He felt that it would be an interesting opportunity to look into, to see if they could gain a third access off of Rochester Industrial to the Horizon loop road. It would be a great way for people to get to Hamlin. He suggested that perhaps Ms. Roediger could arrange a meeting with the Fire Dept. to talk about it. He pointed out that Horizon Ct. was used for visitor parking for the fire station, and they would have to find out if the fire station would need additional visitor parking.*

*Ms. Roediger responded that they had met with the Fire Dept. to talk about those exact issues. The Fire Dept. recognized that they had always used Horizon Ct. differently than how it was intended, which was as a public right-of-way. They were looking at alternatives for how they should park vehicles and have access. She felt that connecting Rochester Industrial, Horizon Ct. and EEI Global to the light at Drexelgate would be a win for the access in the area. She added that the Fire Dept. was willing to work with them. Mr. Anzek said that when 500 jobs were being added, the current employees might use it as an alternative to Hamlin also. If they were backing up at the southern roadway at rush hour, and there was an emergency, there would be a road wide enough for the fire trucks to get out and pass the people who were stacked. He thought that overall, it was a great use of a great piece of land. He knew from past experience that both JENOPTIK and KOSTAL had cited proximity to the Trail as something for their employees, and it was one of their site selection reasons. He thought that it would be a good selling point for the building in the back.*

*Mr. Hooper asked what kind of relief they were looking at with a PUD rather than developing it under REC-W,. Mr. Stuhldreier said that one*

*thing would be the connection to Horizon, which was an off-property asset. The second was parking, because they would be about 150 short of the requirements.*

*Ms. Kapelanski had not thought they were looking at a PUD. They could go that route, but REC-W envisioned an office campus and would allow that use. Mr. Stuhlreyer said that one of their bigger concerns with phasing was that if they looked at it as a true site plan, they did not have interest in full commitment for the exact architecture of the building layouts. The companies would want particulars. They might need a height of 24 or 30 feet. Instead of having to come back with an amended site plan, he thought that having a PUD with some parameters would allow the subsequent site plans to come in cleaner. Ms. Kapelanski noted that for the first review, they were just asking for parking modifications and some parking setback modifications. She suggested that they might want to think about developing under REC-W. Mr. Hooper said that a lot would depend on the engineering and storm sewer, which would be underground because of the impervious surfaces they would be creating. Mr. Stuhlreyer said that their calculations showed about 50-50. Detention would be underneath the large parking lot on the west, and there would be four or five basins in the green spaces. Mr. Hooper supported the concept, and he wished the applicants good luck.*

*Chairperson Brnabic stated that she also supported the concept. She asked the applicants if they had any further questions for the Planning Commission. Mr. Gentile said that he did not. Mr. Stuhlreyer said that they had been interested in getting some initial feedback, and they would go back to the drawing board. Mr. Gentile said that his biggest concern would have been if someone had a major issue they had not thought about. He gave Mr. Stuhlreyer a lot of credit. They spent a lot of time going through the process, and they kicked the tires about the requirements. He felt that they had addressed important things like green space, access and aesthetics. They met with staff and the Mayor and got some feedback, which helped. He announced that they were ready to move forward.*

*Mr. Reece said that Mr. Stuhlreyer was spot on about how they should look at the project. If they looked at it holistically as a site plan under development over a period of time, they would not have an elevation for every building to approve under one site plan. They had to consider that, because it would be an important part of how they proceeded. He did not think it would be realistic to box in the owner and the architect and insist that every building be designed. It would evolve over time, whether it was*

12 months or 18 months, and they had to keep an open mind. It would be a work in progress in terms of the buildings. If they could hammer out the parking, because 150 short was a lot, that would be important. He stated that it was a great concept, and he had all the confidence that Mr. Stuhldreier would respect the comments about the Trail and the neighbors across the street. They might want to look at doing a traffic study. He knew that it got backed up at Drexelgate during rush hour. He felt that it was a phenomenal use of the property, and that it could be a real jewel in the City.

Chairperson Brnabic congratulated the applicants and said that the Commissioners looked forward to them moving forward and turning the concept into a site plan.

Mr. Anzek asked about the lone parcel in the southwest portion that was not shown on the plan and if they had considered trying to purchase it to tie in with the development. Otherwise, he considered that it would be an orphan with no access. Mr. Gentile said that General Development bought that ten acres. When they first started talking, his initial thought was to acquire that land, but General Development got it. He did not see anything holding them back from doing what they wanted, and his assumption was that when the project was approved, that General Development would want to get on board. Mr. Stuhldreier had included a parking lot that would be accessible for their buildings. Mr. Anzek pointed out that they would have to go over a wetland. Years ago when someone was looking at it, they could not get a one-lane road across the wetland. He said that it would be great for them to be a part of the development instead of trying to wedge in at some future point. Mr. Stuhldreier said that originally, they showed a building six in the location, but the deal did not work, but they did have a doorway into their property.

**Discussed**

**2019-0009**

A proposed integrated, for-sale residential community consisting of single-family homes, duplexes and small four-plex condominium buildings or small cottages on two parcels totaling approximately 8.8 acres on the east side of Livernois, between Auburn and South Boulevard, zoned R-4 One Family Residential, Three Oaks Communities, Applicant

*(Reference: Plans and elevations had been placed on file and by reference became part of the record thereof.)*

*Present for the applicant was Bruce Michael, a Principal with Three Oaks Development, P.O. Box 8307, Ann Arbor, MI 48107.*

*Mr. Michael began with a story about another development and how they would like to apply it in Rochester Hills. He stated that their mission was to build inclusive neighborhoods for the general public that promoted greater independence and choice for homebuyers and their families with developmental disabilities (for example, autism, where someone could not function independently in society). About three years ago, they were approached by a group of parents who had adult children with developmental disabilities. They asked for help with an alternative for their children besides putting them in a group home or living with them for the rest of their lives. After some research, he found that there was no one doing what they were doing. There was very little for sale activity for this type of development. They looked at tax credits and other governmental assistance, and determined that they did not want to get involved with that. Private financing would allow them to move more quickly. Each individual had specific abilities, and they modified the housing to meet a particular need. He noted that their first project, which was under construction, was in Saline. They tried to create an integrated environment where disabled adults were not in a disabled "ghetto" and isolated, but were with normal folks so they could have more of an opportunity to be independent. They used a mix of single-family homes, duplexes and four-plexes for the disabled.*

*Mr. Michael continued that at the ground breaking of their development in Saline, National Public Radio came and then aired a story nationwide. They found that no one had done the same thing in the country. The cottages that would serve the disabled public would be sold to the individuals or sold to a trust, and would provide a completely different alternative to a group home concept. As they started the process, one of their big concerns was how the general public would accept it. They questioned whether people would want to buy and live next to disabled people, but they were amazed to sell out almost when they started. They had a waiting list for Saline, and parents usually ended up buying a house in the same development to be near their children. It satisfied issues parents had with regard to their children, including being taken care of when they died. They started getting calls from around the country asking them to come and build, because no one else was doing it. They started with four families that wanted to be in Rochester Hills which had grown to 16.*

*Mr. Michael showed slides of the homes and floor plans. Every house would have a front porch. It would be a walkable community. They found that there was a need for ranches and a first floor master, story-and-a-half*

homes that were affordable. Their product line was 1,300 to 2,000 s.f. for the single-family homes. In Saline, about 40% of the housing was occupied by either an IDD person or someone related to one. Prices would start a little under \$300k for single-family, and the condos or cottages would range from \$100-180k for the IDD folks. He noted that they had gotten approval for another development in Westland. Sometimes, they did not know exactly what they needed to build for their customers. They had developed a variety of products in different sizes and prices, which could be customized. They used flex lot sizes.

Mr. Michael related that they just attended an open house where they were introduced to 140 families who had interest in obtaining this type of housing. He noted that they had one parcel under contract and one for which they were ready to sign the purchase agreement on Livernois, between Auburn and South Boulevard. They would connect to a dead end in the development to the northeast (Pine Woods) and out to Livernois. They determined where the regulated wetlands were on the property. He said that he was present to get any input the Commission might have. There was about 8.5 acres, and he showed a sketch for 17-20 single-family lots; 16 duplex units and 16 units of IDD housing. They would cross the wetland in what he thought was the least painful place - over the road. He asked if there were questions.

Ms. Kapelanski advised that the parcels were zoned R-4, so the project would have to be a PUD given the mix and uniqueness of uses. As mentioned, the internal road would connect to the Pine Woods site condos, which were currently under development.

Chairperson Brnabic said that Mr. Michael talked about the development in Saline, and he mentioned that the general public embraced the concept, and that there was a demand from people who were not disabled to live within the community. He presented that 35% would be single-family homes and 65% would be a mix of homes, and that there was a waiting list. She asked if there was a waiting list in the other community for the 22 single-family homes. Mr. Michael said that the development was completely sold out. Some people dropped out, and it was immediately filled with someone else. If they had more land in Saline, they would be developing it.

Mr. Kaltsounis noted that Ms. Kapelanski had mentioned the word unique. He agreed that it was definitely a unique concept. Mr. Michael had talked about having a trust in place if parents passed away and what would happen to people. Mr. Michael explained that the disabled

*individual would be the owner or there would be a trust created for them as the owner. The parents did not have it in their names, because they would lose eligibility for Medicaid coverage. During the process, he met with State and County agencies that administered Medicare and Medicaid and made sure they were compliant. They formed separate condominium associations for the IDD homeowners as opposed to the general public homeowners. That set of parents would end up being on the first, which had a lot of issues the general public did not. The family had to hire a care giving agency, such as Catholic Social Services. Medicaid coverage would not be provided for more than four people in a building, so that was why they were four-plexes at the most.*

*Mr. Kaltsounis said that a caregiver's office was shown for other sites, but he did not see that with the proposed plan. Mr. Michael said that if there was a four-plex, a caregiver would have a station in the common space. In one instance, a gentleman was so disabled that he had a caregiver in his space as well. There were no exterior entrances other than through the common space. Mr. Kaltsounis wondered if there would be some gray areas. Mr. Michael explained that the units would be designed specifically for different individuals. Some wanted two-bedroom units, some wanted an attached garage. The idea was to provide what an individual needed and what they could afford. A lot of the parents were paying for a second home. Mr. Kaltsounis groaned at all the siding, but he realized it was for a different purpose.*

*Mr. Michael explained that a caregiver did not live in the homes generally, although some people wanted a second bedroom for someone who did. They had been asked to provide a product that allowed for a higher functioning person. They were the micro homes that were starting to become popular. Eight of those units could occupy the same space as two of the four-plexes. The caregiver office would be provided within the eight units, and the area would be fenced. Mr. Kaltsounis asked if the concept could be applied to the elderly as well. Mr. Michael agreed that it could, and they had been asked about providing for disabled veterans, too. He advised that they were integrating technology into the houses to help with security. They were introduced to the Center for Independent Futures out of Illinois. There were two moms who had IDD kids that aged out of the school system. They began to develop concepts for educating people in how to deal with the issues. There was an array of regulations and funding sources that were hard to understand or find.*

*Mr. Kaltsounis reiterated that it was definitely unique. He thought that it was exciting, because there were needs out there, and it was fitting a*

*need. He noted that there would be challenges; the applicant had a certain plan for the development, and flexibility was needed. He recommended trying to preserve as many of the trees as they could to keep the beauty. He indicated that it would be a shame to just clear cut the site. Mr. Michael said that they had met with Ms. Roediger and Ms. Kapelanski a couple of times, and they discussed some specific things they could do to try to minimize the loss of trees along the southern edge. He understood that Engineering allowed more flexibility in storm water drainage. It would be their intention to take water from the southern edge, where there were neighbors, and preserve the trees and allow the drainage to go to the storm drainage in the street rather than through the rear yard drains. Mr. Kaltsounis said that there were many developments in the City that were tree-lined that looked amazing. He thought that they could bring something new to the City, and it would be another way to showcase the trees as well as the development. He said that he looked forward to what they brought back.*

*Mr. Schultz knew that the Commission, along with City Council was always tasked with trying to figure out how to incorporate alternative, affordable or other types of housing into the community, but he thought that they looked at it too narrowly sometimes. The proposal was something that had never come up on his radar, but after hearing the presentation, he was thrilled that something like that could come to the community. He felt that it could really be a hub for great things, and he thanked Mr. Michael for opening his eyes. He looked forward to helping him navigate the process.*

*Mr. Reece agreed that it was a very good presentation. He noted that he was the Chairman of the Board of the Macomb/Oakland Regional Center (MORC). MORC was the largest non-profit organization in the State. It primarily dealt with developmentally-abled people and people who had great needs. It provided the resources and avenues for individuals who needed home and respite care. He remarked that the Commissioners, a month ago, almost dislocated their shoulders patting themselves on the back on how great it would be to have affordable housing that was needed. He heard horror stories of when MORC was first formed, when the executive director believed strongly in shutting down the mental institutions across the country and opening group homes. The group homes were firebombed, picketed and garbage was thrown at people. He knew that everyone had a family member or knew of someone who had a need such as they were discussing. They had evolved greatly as humans to accept people, like everyone else who might be slightly different, into the communities. He felt that the development would be a*

*quiet, well-maintained community, and it would not lower property values. The people struggled on a daily basis on how to take care of their children or parents. He had a niece with Down's syndrome who was 23 years old and would soon age out. His sister-in-law struggled with what she would do with her daughter when she was gone. He maintained that a community like that would be a jewel within Rochester Hills. He agreed that there would be some challenges to work through. There were still regulations they would have to work hard to meet. They had to be respectful of the neighbors, because they also had a stake in the community. Once they knew the people who moved in, they would welcome them with open arms and find that they were a tremendous asset to the neighborhood and community. There would be some hills to climb, but he did not think it would be insurmountable if they had an open mind and really believed what their Master Plan consultants had told them.*

*Mr. Anzek thanked Mr. Reece for his perception, which he felt was critical to the project to embrace. The need was something he never thought about. He had not thought about what developmentally disabled adults did when they did not have parents. He felt that it was incumbent upon the Commissioners to help Mr. Michael's project become a reality. He clarified that the caregiver would not be on duty 24/7 but be a shift worker. He noted that the internal street would connect to Pine Woods to the east, a project that had been in development through about ten extensions. He asked if the street would be private or public. He thought that having a public street would be a big benefit to both developments, and it would give the Pine Woods' people better access. He suggested talking with the developer, Mr. Randazzo, about defraying some of the cost to make the street public. He thought that there was a great need for the development, and that it was needed in several locations throughout the City. He did not think such a development would ever have hundreds of units, and they were probably learning that the proposed size was right. He wished Mr. Michael good luck.*

*Mr. Michael said that they would be happy to make the street public. He thought that standards for both private and public were fairly identical. He commented that all three owners of Three Oaks had family members or had a relationship with someone who had such issues. For instance, his wife was the guardian for two adult siblings, one of which had been developmentally disabled and passed, and the other who had schizophrenia and was bi-polar and could not hold a job. It was their mission to do the developments, because the need was huge. They were getting calls from places like Philadelphia and Seattle from people wanting to partner with them. He stated that the proposal was probably*

*sold before it started. The integration was the most important thing, as well as getting people better able to function in society by being around others. Mr. Anzek noted that the City was making a significant investment in Innovation Hills, a new park which had a section designed to support autistic and other children with physical limitations. He wondered why they would not continue that effort.*

*Mr. Dettloff gave Mr. Michael kudos for an amazing concept. He asked why communities would not be lined up around the block for something similar. He asked where in Saline their other development was, noting that he would be in the Ann Arbor area in the near future. Mr. Michael gave the address. Mr. Dettloff asked if it was under construction or if people lived there currently. Mr. Michael said that the first people would move in next month. Mr. Dettloff asked if Ann Arbor had reached out to him. Mr. Michael said that it was families who contacted his group. People had to be willing to be organizers. He built the housing, but the people had to navigate a whole process of setting up treatment plans, hiring the caregivers and other things. They were going to create a Three Oaks community to educate people. They ran into the Centers for Independent Futures who had already done it, so they connected with them. They kept getting introduced to groups of families who wanted to help. He had been asked to do a development in St. Clair, but it was a little too far out in the country. It was close to New Baltimore and Chesterfield, so they were looking at a parcel there. There was a group of people in Ann Arbor, but they had to still find property. Mr. Dettloff thanked Mr. Michael for thinking of Rochester Hills. He said that innovation was the City's theme, and he reiterated that it was an amazing concept, and he looked forward to seeing more.*

*Ms. Morita asked if the residents moved in and there was a caregiver in some of the units during the day and sometimes overnight, which Mr. Michael confirmed. Ms. Morita asked if the residents paid the caregiver directly. Mr. Michael said that a homeowner's association just for the IDD units, separate from the general public who bought into the community, would hire the caregivers. It was their choice, although they could be introduced by Three Oaks. They worked with MORC and other agencies, but they were not in the caregiving business. Ms. Morita asked staff if the project would fall under the group home exception to home occupations for commercial use of a residential building. Ms. Kapelanski agreed, and said that it would be done as a PUD, but the Zoning Ordinance allowed group homes in single-family residential districts.*

*Ms. Morita suggested that Mr. Michael needed to think about the fact that*

*Rochester Hills was not a member of the Smart bus system. There were OPC busses that picked people up if given three days' notice, but they would only take people to Rochester, Rochester Hills or Oakland Township locations. If someone had a job in Troy, they would not go there. He would want the residents to know that if they needed bussing. She said that she liked the idea of the small spaces and the mixed uses and being able to keep families together, and she thanked him for bringing it forward.*

*Chairman Brnabic believed that on an individual basis there were some smaller Smart busses that traveled the community and picked up residents privately. She was not sure what was involved, but she had seen them. Ms. Morita said that she had seen them come into the community, but she stated that Rochester Hills was not part of the Smart system. The City allocated its Smart dollars to the OPC, and the OPC was contracted to provide bus service for residents with developmental disabilities or physical disabilities if under age 50. She saw a North Oakland residential commuter coming up Crooks, but there were no bus stops.*

*Mr. Michael said that part of the plans for individuals looked into those things and found alternatives. They found that with 12-16 units that it allowed a caregiver enough critical mass to make things work. It was hard for them to be scattered and do a house here and there. They got Samaritus to come to Washtenaw County, because they had a concentration of eight units there. He thanked Ms. Morita for the bus information. They wanted the widest range of options for their people. Ms. Morita also suggested looking into Dutton Farm. She sat on the Mayor's advisory council for Diversity and Inclusion, and the person who ran the farm was very big on hiring people from the disabled population, and it would be a great resource.*

*Chairperson Brnabic stated that she also supported the concept. She thought that it provided a great opportunity to support a need and demand for IDD individuals and their families. She asked Mr. Michael the projected timeframe for the project. Mr. Michael said that first they would call on the surrounding neighbors to have a private participation meeting. He noted that Ann Arbor required it, and they felt that it was a good technique to have real conversations about possible issues without cameras inhibiting things. That would be their next step. They had already flagged the wetlands, and they would hire an engineer and surveyor and come back with a submission. He hoped that they would have a submission in to the City in March or April. Chairperson Brnabic*

*asked how long it took to put a community of such caliber and size together. Mr. Michael advised that they started in Saline three years ago, and they would move the last person in in August of 2019. That included the entitlement process approval.*

*Mr. Schroeder stated that it was great and thrilling to him. He personally faced the situation, and there had been no solution or place to go. His daughter worked in the psych unit of a hospital, and people had nowhere to go for help. They could be helped temporarily, but there was no place for them to go. It affected everyone. He said that he hoped it really caught on, because it was really needed. Mr. Michael said that they could not find anyone in the country that was doing the same thing - no one had embraced the ownership concept. Their objective was to keep things affordable enough so they could reach as many people as they could. They had even been approached by a large institutional group home owner who wanted to buy in and operate as a group home. They wanted to make sure they were a long-term institutional, high quality outfit not in it for the buck but for the care. They were trying to figure out how to do it as many different ways as they could to provide as many options as possible. It was a middle market option, and people who were lower middle class probably could not afford it. Most of the middle class people they had encountered could, and someone could get in for under \$500k for both homes. They were doing some things other builders might or might not do. Everyone would get a front porch made out of trex so they would be more airy feeling. They used all Koehler plumbing products. They were trying to provide a high quality house that was affordable. He agreed that the only options were group homes. He noted that his brother-in-law had been in nine group homes in three years. Some were of bad quality. Someone could not be kicked out of his own real estate, which was important. Mr. Reece added that there was the pride of ownership that would come with it.*

*Mr. Schultz asked Mr. Michael if he had found any lending institutions that had stepped up and wanted to loan for that type of project. He was asking more specifically about lending to the end user. He imagined that certain institutions would not be too friendly. Mr. Michael agreed that there was a struggle, because everyone wanted to sell loans on the secondary market. The secondary market would not buy a loan done through a trust for someone who did not have the economic means to repay the loan without some assistance. Mr. Schultz asked if he had success with credit unions. Mr. Michael said that some of the banks were looking at warehouse loans for his project. Some of the families could just write a check, but it was all over the board. They wanted to try to figure*

*out a way to get the secondary market to open the door to a lot of mortgage money. They were working on that. They had talked to MISHDA about their first time homebuyer program, and it had its own set of hoops to jump through. If they could get that figured out, they would be able to get people in the lower middle class. They were trying to make connections with employers that would employ developmentally disabled people. Kroger was a great example, and they employed his brother-in-law on occasion. They were still learning on a daily basis.*

*Chairperson Brnabic believed that Meijer also had such an employment program. She thought it was awesome, and that what Mr. Michael was doing was such a genuine effort to provide high quality and affordability. He had her every respect, and she looked forward to the development being part of the community.*

**Discussed**

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

*Ms. Morita commented that the Commissioners were supposed to have a much longer meeting, but Legacy was pulled. She showed a picture of her house, which was next to the Legacy project. She met with the developer at her home earlier in the day and she had her neighbors look at the plans. She wanted to offer the Commissioners a chance to visit the site from her kitchen, which she said was the best way to see it. She asked Ms. Roediger to provide her with a set of the large plans when they were resubmitted, and she suggested that the Commissioners could look at the plans and look at the property and figure out what the applicants were doing and why. It would give a much better sense of what the project was about. Since it was almost February, and the site was fenced because they were still cleaning the contamination, she maintained that the best view would be from her kitchen, and she told them to feel free to call her.*

*Mr. Reece asked if Mr. Staran could give the Commissioners some guidelines for the meeting so they knew what they could and could not attempt to discuss, since there was a Consent Judgment.*

*Ms. Roediger noted that there was a neighborhood meeting with the residents the previous week that did not go too smoothly. As a result, there had been a number of discussions and modifications to the plan. They thought that proceeding as originally scheduled would not have been to anyone's advantage. Staff met with their team earlier in the day,*

*and she felt that there had been a lot of progress. A lot of the outstanding questions were related to the environmental cleanup, which was associated with a Brownfield Plan and the Consent Judgment. That was not necessarily under the site plan review. The details of the cleanup were reviewed as part of those documents, and they wanted to make sure all of those items were ironed out before going before the Planning Commission. When the meeting did take place, Mr. Staran, Mr. Wackerman from ASTI, the City's environmental consultants and Mr. Paul Davis, the City Engineer would be in attendance. The applicant's intent was to be ready for the February meeting.*

*Mr. Kaltsounis thought that the original developer of the property was just going to throw mats down and build. Ms. Roediger said that it was a completely different Consent Judgment. The first one was for office and retail uses. Per the new Consent, the main part of the site was cleaned to "No Further Action" standards, which was like clean ground appropriate for residential use. There was still a portion to the east that would not be cleaned to that standard. It would be encapsulated for green, open space. The cleanup was about \$14 million, where it would have been about \$4 million for office and retail.*

*Ms. Morita said that she also had the Brownfield Plan and other base documents. She had institutional history from being on Council when the Consent was amended. She said that it was a fluid situation. If any of the Commissioners had questions and could not reach Ms. Roediger, Ms. Morita told them to please feel free to reach out to her.*

*Mr. Schroeder asked if the DEQ made a final determination about the encapsulated portion to see if it was acceptable. Ms. Roediger noted that the State did some cleanup many years ago, but they never finished. Mr. Schroeder asked if the other area was an actual landfill. Ms. Roediger stated that it was, and the applicants were working with the State, and they were almost done.*

*Ms. Roediger talked a little about what would be discussed at the joint meeting on Jan. 29. Staff had been working with Council on the format. It would be held in the back of the auditorium, and they would discuss the Master Plan, Auburn Rd., the Zoning Ordinance, short term rentals and the Woodlands Ordinance.*

## **NEXT MEETING DATE**

Ms. Roediger reminded the Commissioners that the next meeting was the joint meeting scheduled for January 29, 2019.

## ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business to come before the Planning Commission and upon motion by Mr. Kaltsounis, seconded by Mr. Reece, Chairperson Brnabic adjourned the Regular Meeting at 8:49 p.m.

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Deborah Brnabic, Chairperson  
Rochester Hills Planning Commission

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Nicholas O. Kaltsounis, Secretary