



# Rochester Hills

## Minutes

### Planning Commission

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Rochester Hills, MI  
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Home Page:  
[www.rochesterhills.org](http://www.rochesterhills.org)

*Chairperson William Boswell, Vice Chairperson Deborah Brnabic*  
*Members: Gerard Dettloff, Dale Hetrick, Greg Hooper, Nicholas O. Kaltsounis,*  
*David A. Reece, C. Neall Schroeder, Emmet Yukon*

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Tuesday, April 30, 2013

7:00 PM

1000 Rochester Hills Drive

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#### CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson William Boswell called the Special Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Auditorium.

#### ROLL CALL

**Present** 7 - William Boswell, Deborah Brnabic, Gerard Dettloff, Greg Hooper, Nicholas Kaltsounis, David Reece and C. Neall Schroeder

**Absent** 2 - Dale Hetrick and Emmet Yukon

Quorum Present

Also present: Ed Anzek, Director of Planning and Economic Development  
James Breuckman, Manager of Planning  
Maureen Gentry, Recording Secretary

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2013-0170 April 16, 2013 Regular Meeting

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

**Aye** 7 - Boswell, Brnabic, Dettloff, Hooper, Kaltsounis, Reece and Schroeder

**Absent** 2 - Hetrick and Yukon

#### COMMUNICATIONS

- A) *Letter from Charlotte Burckhardt, dated April 23, 2013 re: Oakland Township Rezoning*
- B) *Planning & Zoning News dated March 2013*

## NEW BUSINESS

**2013-0145** Public Hearing and Request for Recommendation of a Conditional Land Use - City File No. 13-002 - to construct a drive-thru facility at a proposed ATM for Fifth Third Bank at the Rochester Hills Plaza on Walton Blvd., west of Livernois, zoned B-3, Shopping Center Business, Parcel No. 15-09-476-033, Gerald G. Weber, Applicant

*(Reference: Staff Report prepared by James Breuckman, dated April 25, 2013 and Site Plans had been placed on file and by reference became part of the record thereof.)*

*Present for the applicant was Gerald G. Weber, Weber Architecture, 13711 Madison Ave., Lakewood, Ohio, 44107.*

*Mr. Weber introduced himself as the architect on the project representing Fifth Third Bank. He summarized that the banking industry was changing with the roll-out of internet and smartphone banking, so they were starting to see less of a need for an actual walk-in bank. Fifth Third had a bank in Rochester, and there was another one nine miles to the west, and they wanted to put a free-standing ATM in the middle. It would dispense money, take deposits and transfer money. He claimed that it was the next best thing to talking to a teller, but there was still an opportunity to use a nearby branch. Mr. Weber advised that the proposed site was at the Rochester Hills Plaza on Walton Blvd. He pointed out the area the ATM would go, and said they would take out about eight parking spaces. The parking required for the center was 236 spaces, and there were 424 spaces, so they were well within the code. They liked to have an ATM away from the main traffic at the buildings, and it would be in an area where traffic was not interfering with cross traffic on site. He showed the side of the ATM that would face the street with signage on the canopy and the minor signage on the ATM, and asked if there were any questions or comments.*

*Chairperson Boswell asked Mr. Breuckman if he had anything to add. Mr. Breuckman stated that the project was compliant with the Ordinance requirements for parking, canopy structure and setbacks. It was considered an accessory structure to the principal shopping center, so the setback requirements applicable to a building were not applicable to the ATM. He noted that a Conditional Land Use was a discretionary decision by City Council after the Planning Commission's recommendation.*

*Chairperson Boswell asked Mr. Weber if they put ATMs in various places*

around the country. Mr. Weber said that was correct. Chairperson Boswell observed that the rendering in the packet showed one person using the ATM and one person stacked behind, waiting to use it. He asked how often there was stacking behind. Mr. Weber responded that the typical busy time for an ATM was between 5-6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and there might be two cars waiting. It was very rare to have several people waiting. Chairperson Boswell said that he understood it might be rare, but when he looked at the rendering, the car of the person next in line was sticking out into the drive aisle. He could envision someone driving a little carelessly and running into that car. If there was a second car behind the one waiting, it might totally block someone who was parked. He asked if that happened very often or if it was not something that should concern him.

Mr. Weber stated that it did not happen very often. He said that one of the reasons they put the ATM as far away from the building as possible was because those spaces were the last to get taken. Also, usually employers asked their employees to park in that area, so they would not be coming in and out. They looked at it from the standpoint that there were always cars pulling in and out, and people needed to be diligent. He maintained that it would be no different than the conditions that were there currently.

Mr. Kaltsounis stated for the record that he banked at Fifth Third Bank, but he thought it was the same thing as eating at a Taco Bell. He continued that he was not aware of too many similar situations (with ATMs) in the City. There was a Comerica ATM at the building his family had owned on Auburn and Crooks, but it was right up against the building. He likened the proposed ATM to a neighbor's trailer that someone did not want to see right up against the lot line. He had a problem with the location. He did not have a problem with the ATM; he just wished they had done a better job of negotiating the location. He noted that in Kentucky where he traveled for work, there was an ATM in a parking lot of a restaurant. It was not up against the road - it was a couple of rows in, and although it was there, it did not appear to be there. He reiterated that he would really rather not see the ATM right against the road.

Mr. Weber mentioned that they had just received approval for an ATM in Troy at the Oakland Plaza (14 Mile and John R), and it was almost identical to the proposed. Mr. Kaltsounis said that personally, he would be happier if it were moved on the other side of the adjacent aisle.

Mr. Reece said that he was not as concerned about the location, but he was concerned about site circulation, as he frequented the center quite a

*bit. He referred to the main entrance off of Walton to the east of the proposed ATM, and said that on a Saturday or Sunday, there was a lot of east/west cross traffic on the main drive. If people wanted to access the ATM and they came in from Walton, they would have to make a turn somewhere to orientate themselves to enter the ATM. It could potentially cause a lot of congestion when it was busy, and the center was currently about only about three quarters full. He noted the sign at the center which was also adjacent to the proposed location for the ATM. He felt that could cause issues as far as people pulling out and traffic coming in and people trying to make a left-hand turn onto the drive aisle. He suggested that the ATM could be moved to the west a little further. He asked what would happen with the ATM if Fifth Third was bought out by another bank, and who would take it down. He stated that he would not want to see it just sitting there.*

*Mr. Weber said that it was in the lease that if the ATM was no longer used, Fifth Third would be responsible for returning the area to its original condition.*

*Mr. Schroeder stated that he was also concerned about the stacking. He recalled that when Whole Foods was in the center, the center was very congested everywhere, and the parking areas were full. He agreed that there would be congestion at the intersection, and he felt that there should be more stacking - at least for two or three cars. He also did not think it would be a good idea to have a car sticking out into the north-south parking lane.*

*Chairperson Boswell said that he realized Mr. Weber was not a banker, but there had been articles in the paper and on television about the new, smarter ATMs where someone could actually deal with a teller. If Fifth Third started to use one of the more modern ATMs where people did various types of banking, he definitely thought that they would need more stacking. Mr. Weber agreed that Chairperson Boswell was probably right. Mr. Weber had not personally heard about a remote teller in an ATM, but he believed that it could happen someday.*

*Mr. Dettloff asked how long the land lease was. Mr. Weber believed that it was for five years with an option for another five. Mr. Dettloff indicated that there was a considerable amount of vacancy in the center now, but he hoped that would be changing with the market. He thought that the stacking issue was certainly worth some consideration. Mr. Weber said that he would talk to his client about adding stacking, as the Bank had agreed to it before. They would have to go back to the landlord to get it*

*approved, and that would be the only issue that would prohibit it. Mr. Dettloff asked if stand-alone ATMs were becoming a trend, as opposed to banks. Mr. Weber said that was what he had been hearing from the Bank. They were working on being able to use a phone I.D. instead of an ATM card, similar to a boarding pass.*

*Mr. Kaltsounis referred to the ATM at his building on Auburn and said that on a payday Friday, there could easily be four people waiting to use it. He suggested that Mr. Weber might even have to consider a stop sign. People would have to go around the entire parking lot to get to the ATM, and he was not sure they could stop people from making a u-turn.*

*Mr. Weber was not sure, but they had discussed that once a customer knew where to go, the problem tended to go away. He would use Rochdale rather than fight traffic by Walton. He mentioned that in Troy, the Bank ended up putting in room for four cars - one at the ATM and three for waiting.*

*Ms. Brnabic agreed with the other Commissioners that there was a need for more stacking. She asked if the reasoning behind bringing the ATM was the distance between branches, and the fact that it would be a convenience for customers. Mr. Weber agreed. Ms. Brnabic said that in considering the future changes in banking, she could see where there would be a need for more stacking. With a full service bank, there could be two ATMs with two and three cars at each one, so it would stand to reason that there could be several cars no matter what day of the week, although she realized that it might be worse on a late Friday.*

*Mr. Anzek said that hearing the Commissioners' comments about stacking and conflicts, he suggested that if the ATM were shifted slightly to the west, people could go north through the one-way aisle and loop around and enter into the stack. They could take up a few more spaces and get a couple more cars in line. Ms. Brnabic thought that people would figure out that it would be easier to turn down Rochdale and use that entrance to the center.*

*Chairperson Boswell asked if there were any comments regarding Mr. Anzek's suggestion. Mr. Schroeder and Mr. Reece spoke up and agreed it could be a good idea.*

*Chairperson Boswell opened the Public Hearing at 7:28 p.m. Seeing no one come forward, he closed the Public Hearing. He asked if there was a motion for the Conditional Land Use.*

*Mr. Hooper thought that they might need to add a condition about revising the Site Plan to reflect the verbal description of asking for additional stacking. Chairperson Boswell understood what Mr. Hooper was saying. The motion read that the CLU was based on plans dated received on April 25, 2013; however, the applicant would be modifying the plans. They could add that the Recommendation was subject to the revisions made by the Planning Commission on April 30, 2013. Mr. Reece presumed that it would have to be subject to the landlord's approval as well. Mr. Breuckman advised that the matter would not go to City Council without revised Site Plans, so he suggested changing the wording in the motion. Chairperson Boswell determined that they would take out the date of the plans received.*

***MOTION*** by Schroeder, seconded by Brnabic, in the matter of City File No. 13-002 (Fifth Third Bank ATM at Rochester Hills Plaza) the Planning Commission **Recommends** to City Council **Approval** of the **Conditional Land Use** with the following seven (7) findings.

*Findings*

- 1. The proposed structure and landscaping meet or exceed the standards of the Zoning Ordinance.*
- 2. The new structure will promote the intent and purpose of the Zoning Ordinance.*
- 3. The proposed structure has been designed and is proposed to be constructed, operated, maintained, and managed so as to be compatible, harmonious, and appropriate in appearance with the existing and planned character of the the general vicinity, adjacent uses of land, the natural environment, and the capacity of public services and facilities affected by the land use.*
- 4. The proposal should have a positive impact on the community as a whole and the surrounding area by expanding the options for banking services.*
- 5. The proposed ATM should generate no net impact on public facilities and services, such as highways, streets, police and fire protection, drainage ways, and refuse disposal.*
- 6. The proposed development should not be detrimental, hazardous, or*

*disturbing to existing or future neighboring land uses, persons, property, or the public welfare.*

7. *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 Brnabic, that this matter be Recommended for Approval to the City Council Regular Meeting,. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye** 6 - Boswell, Brnabic, Dettloff, Hooper, Reece and Schroeder

**Nay** 1 - Kaltsounis

**Absent** 2 - Hetrick and Yukon

**2013-0174** Request for Site Plan Approval - City File No. 13-002 - Fifth Third Bank ATM, a proposed stand alone ATM at the Rochester Hills Plaza, located on Walton Blvd., west of Livernois, zoned B-3, Shopping Center Business, Parcel No. 15-09-476-033, Gerald G. Weber, Applicant.

*Mr. Kaltsounis said that he prefaced his previous vote not on the fact that he did not want an ATM, but rather that he did not want it so close to the road. He recommended that they have four spaces, including three for stacking. Ms. Brnabic asked if the Planning Commission needed to re-review the plans before it went to Council. Mr. Dettloff thought they could add a condition including that Staff would have final approval. Mr. Reece pointed out the location he felt the ATM should be moved, which was agreeable to everyone.*

**MOTION** *by Schroeder, seconded by Dettloff, in the matter of 13-002 (Fifth Third Bank ATM at Rochester Hills Plaza), the Planning Commission **Approves the Site Plan**, based on plans dated received by the Planning Department on April 25, 2013, with the following four (4) findings and subject to the following four (4) conditions.*

**Findings**

1. *The site plan and supporting documents demonstrate that all applicable requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, as well as other City ordinances, standards, and requirements, can be met subject to the conditions noted below.*
2. *Circulation and off-street parking areas have been designed to avoid common traffic problems and promote safety.*

3. *The proposed improvements should have a satisfactory and harmonious relationship with the development on-site as well as existing development in the adjacent vicinity.*
4. *The proposed development will not have an unreasonably detrimental or injurious effect upon the natural characteristics and features of the site or those of the surrounding area.*

Conditions

1. *City Council approval of the Conditional Land Use.*
2. *Provide a landscape bond for proposed landscaping in an amount to be determined by Planning Staff.*
3. *Add "Not to be used as Construction Drawings" to all sheets, prior to Final Approval by Staff.*
4. *Move the ATM to the west and add 3 stacking spaces, subject to staff review and approval for traffic flow on site.*

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

**Aye** 6 - Boswell, Brnabic, Dettloff, Hooper, Reece and Schroeder

**Nay** 1 - Kaltsounis

**Absent** 2 - Hetrick and Yukon

**2012-0142**

Public Hearing and request for Approval of Master Land Use Plan Amendments including adoption by reference of the Rochester Road Access Management and the M-59 Corridor Plans; a statement addressing the Complete Streets Policy; a statement regarding the Tree Conservation Ordinance and designation of two parcels on Old Orion Court from One-Family Residential to Business/Flex 1 on the Future Land Use Map.

*(Reference: Memo prepared by James Breuckman, dated April 25, 2013 and amendments and MLUP map had been placed on file and by reference became part of the record thereof.)*

*Mr. Breuckman advised that the matter was sent out to appropriate agencies for comment, and he received no comments. When City Council approved the distribution of the amendments for comment, it asserted the right to also adopt the amendments. If the Planning Commission passed the motion, it would then be sent to Council. He summarized the amendments including the plans to be adopted by*



reference. He noted that the Future Land Use Map was amended for a couple of parcels on Old Orion Court, adding the Flex Business overlay.

Mr. Kaltsounis thanked Mr. Breuckman for his work, and said that he did a very good job.

Chairperson Boswell opened the Public Hearing at 8:45 p.m. Seeing no one come forward, he closed the Public Hearing.

**Motion** by Schroeder, seconded by Kaltsounis, the Rochester Hills Planning Commission hereby **approves** the 2013 updates to the Master Land Use Plan.

The Planning Commission determines that:

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of the Michigan Public Acts of 2008, as amended, requires the Planning Commission to make and adopt a basic plan or parts of a plan corresponding with major geographic sections or divisions of the city as a guide for the physical development of the municipality and to review and, as necessary, update said plan every 5 years; and

**WHEREAS**, the City's Master Land Use Plan was duly adopted by the Planning Commission on February 6, 2007, and the Planning Commission reviewed the Master Land Use Plan during 2012 to identify necessary amendments and adjustments; and

**WHEREAS**, Notices of Intent to prepare an update to the Master Land Use Plan were sent to adjacent municipalities, school districts, Oakland County, and other governmental agencies within Rochester Hills, consistent with the provisions of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of the Michigan Public Acts of 2008, as amended; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission has made a careful and comprehensive study of present conditions and the future needs of the City and have met consistently to research and prepare a draft of the updated Master Land Use Plan; and,

**WHEREAS**, the proposed updated Master Land Use Plan includes text, maps, detailed land use and development policies, existing and future land use, demographics, natural features inventory, economic analysis and implementation proposals; and

**WHEREAS**, notices and agendas were duly published of public hearings

*and meetings on elements of the Master Land Use Plan Update, and further discussion and opportunity to be heard was had on August 7, 2012, September 18, 2012, October 23, 2012, November 12, 2012, and April 30, 2013 ; and*

**WHEREAS**, *the Planning Commission held a public hearing in accordance with the procedures of PA 33 of 2008, as amended, on April 30, 2013 at the Municipal Offices of the City of Rochester Hills at 1000 Rochester Hills Drive, Oakland County, Michigan, and said plan was on display before the public hearing in accordance with PA 33 of 2008, as amended.*

**RESOLVED**, *that the Planning Commission of the City of Rochester Hills on this April 30, 2013 hereby adopts the Master Land Use Plan Update for the City of Rochester Hills; and*

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, *that the Plan in its final form be adopted, attested to and transmitted to the Mayor, City Council and City Clerk of Rochester Hills, the Oakland County Register of Deeds and the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.*

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

**Aye** 7 - Boswell, Brnabic, Dettloff, Hooper, Kaltsounis, Reece and Schroeder

**Absent** 2 - Hetrick and Yukon

## DISCUSSION

**2013-0171** City Walk Mixed-Use Concept - City File No. 98-047.2 - discuss proposed use for a proposed building at the City Walk Planned Unit Development at the southeast corner of Rochester Rd. and Tienken, zoned Flexible Business, FB-2, with a PUD Overlay.

*(Reference: Memo prepared by James Breuckman, dated April 25, 2013 and concept plan had been placed on file and by reference became part of the record thereof.)*

*Present for the applicant were Paul and Francis Aragona, Aragona Properties, 37020 Garfield, Suite T-1, Clinton Township, MI 48036.*

*Mr. Breuckman advised that the applicants had approached Staff with an idea for an approved retail footprint at City Walk to do a true mixed-use building. They were proposing residential over retail. Staff thought it was intriguing and brought it to the Planning Commission for a discussion to get input. He asked Mr. Aragona to talk more about the proposal.*

*Mr. Paul Aragona stated that the original vision for City Walk included about 100,000 s.f., and it was built out except for the subject pad. The pad was originally 40,000 s.f. of the 100,000 s.f. of retail that was planned. A Sherwin Williams building at 4,000 s.f. went into the 40,000 s.f. building, leaving 36,000 s.f. of possible retail. He stated that they had created a walkable development. There were many services on the site that residents could enjoy, and traffic continued to grow at the intersection and to the north. He maintained that in the immediate area, however, there was a lack of rooftops into the intersection. Everything was held back several hundred feet in each direction, which kept population out of the center. He stated that it was unfortunate, because there were a lot of places that could be walked to and a lot of services - a pharmacy, bank, child care and restaurants, for example. They could add more retail, although it was not the strongest market. Their center was a community center, not a retail environment. It was community-based and served the needs of the radius around it. They thought that by adding a mixed-use component, they could get more residents who could directly enjoy the multitude of services, not only at their development, but at the intersection. There were churches, playgrounds and the trail, all within a couple of minutes. They wished to explore the possibility of putting in a mixed-use apartment/retail building. There would be about 66 units. They intended to have the majority of the first floor as parking for the units above. There would be controlled entrances, and the parking could be accessed by an elevator. They thought it was very important to have at least one parking space per unit.*

*Mr. Aragona noted that the building configuration would be similar to one they were developing in Royal Oak on Main St. He showed the elevation for the building, which also had about 5,000 s.f. of retail. The coloring would be similar to what was already at City Walk. He said that he would be happy to answer any questions.*

*Mr. Reece thought he should recuse himself from the discussion from the standpoint that his company was involved with the original development of City Walk, and this would be a project his company would potentially be interested in looking at in the future.*

*Chairperson Boswell said that it was a discussion item, and that Mr. Reece had a perspective that a lot of the other Commissioners did not. Mr. Dettloff said that he had no problem with Mr. Reece participating. Mr. Hooper agreed that he had no problem. Mr. Kaltsounis agreed it was only a discussion item, and Chairperson Boswell said that if the Site Plan*

*came back before them, they would review it at that point, but he did not see a reason why Mr. Reece needed to be recused.*

*Mr. Breuckman clarified that the proposed building would be four stories. He had asked the applicants to add a cross section to interface with the single-family behind the building. It could be a concern, and they wanted to get a handle on how the relationship worked.*

*Mr. Hooper welcomed Mr. Aragona. He asked if there were any limitations regarding height in the current PUD, noting that 50 feet was being proposed. Mr. Breuckman did not believe there was a height limitation. It was handled on the Site Plans and elevations, so the PUD referred to the Site Plan, and the Site Plan established the building heights. Mr. Aragona added that the Site Plans had to meet the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Hooper asked if the Ordinance allowed three stories. The proposed building would have a flat roof, but Mr. Hooper was not sure if 50-feet would comply with three stories.*

*Mr. Hooper recalled that two similar projects had come before them - Lorna Stone at South Boulevard and Adams and City Place on the east side of Rochester Rd. They were both approved but never built. Both developers ended up saying there was no market for residential over retail. He asked what had changed.*

*Mr. Aragona said that things had changed quite a bit. The luster for housing had fallen off, and it did not have the appeal it did in the past. Apartments were enjoying the highest occupancies they had ever seen, and rents were increasing fairly dramatically. The biggest change was in demographics. There was a small percentage of a large group of people in Rochester Hills that were not being served. They were looking for more of an urban environment, a higher-end apartment, and a walkable development, and Rochester Hills lacked in those kind of products. Developers had been working on greenfields with suburban zoning regulations and things got built low rise and in large groups. He stated that there was a need for a Class A type unit. It appealed to a small percentage, but the area had 80,000 residents in that primary marketplace.*

*Mr. Hooper asked if the apartments were projected to be all rentals. Mr. Aragona agreed, but he did not think it precluded condo-ing them later and selling the units. The apartments would have a condo feel and would be more deluxe. They would fit the economic demographic of a couple-mile radius. Mr. Hooper asked the price point. Mr. Aragona said*

*it would be \$1,600-2,300.00 per month. They would appeal to a small group, but it was one that was not being served.*

*Mr. Hooper said that the plans submitted showed a fairly boxy building, but the one in Royal Oak showed more detail, with balconies and accents. He asked if they submitted a building for approval if it would have a lot of detail. Mr. Aragon said they would have balconies, and they would fit the character of City Walk. They would use the same type of materials, including stone, steel and metals.*

*Mr. Kaltsounis asked how long it had been since Mr. Aragona had been in front of the Planning Commission. Mr. Aragona thought it was about five years. Chairperson Boswell commented that the intersection worked very well. Mr. Kaltsounis realized they would not get a stilt structure, but he stated that the type of building submitted would be important, and he said that it would be interesting to see what they proposed. He thought they would have to consider rentals versus condos in the future, and it would have to be spelled out in the PUD. He did not know what the rules were. Mr. Aragona advised that some of the buildings had been sold off - Walgreen's and Sherwin Williams, although he still maintained the common areas.*

*Mr. Kaltsounis remembered some years ago that Farmer Jack was an option for City Walk. Mr. Aragon corrected that they never had grocery proposed. Mr. Kaltsounis said that they had to determine whether they wanted a big box or apartments. As Mr. Hooper had mentioned, there had been several proposals that never came to fruition, but Mr. Kaltsounis stated that the dynamics were very different today. He would not mind seeing apartments in that area. He concluded that apartments did not bother him, and he would be interested to see what happened.*

*Mr. Aragona claimed that traffic would be cut down. It would be 66 units versus 44,000 s.f. of retail. The population would be far less than with all retail. He noted that the building was their big box, and in today's market, it was one of their most difficult depths (100 feet deep) to work with. They would be committed to larger format tenants that did not want to pay much, and the stores did not look so good after a while. Mr. Kaltsounis said that the City was running out of space, and they had to think of options to bring people into the City while keeping it green, and the proposal would be a potential option. Mr. Aragona related that 66% of new retail developments today were in mixed-use or had a mixed-use component. People wanted to live close to the services that retail provided and be closer to amenity-rich areas.*

*Mr. Dettloff thought that Mr. Aragona had done a great job filling in the center. He agreed that the big box was a thing of the past, and that it was a real concern in the market. He thought the time was right for a development like the proposed. He commented that Mr. Aragona was coming in at a perfect time, and Mr. Dettloff agreed it would fill a void. With the medical schools coming in, he thought the apartments would catch a lot of that attention. He clarified that the building Mr. Aragona had in Royal Oak was for apartments, not condos. Mr. Aragona said that apartments for them were the most stable investment in real estate over time. Mr. Dettloff observed that a project like the apartments would generate activity at the sites across the street, and he was excited to see it evolve.*

*Ms. Brnabic asked Mr. Aragona if there were any vacancies currently in City Walk. Mr. Aragona said there were just a couple, but that most of it was rented. Ms. Brnabic noted that Walgreen's was the original anchor, and Mr. Aragona agreed that it was. Ms. Brnabic mentioned that he sold Walgreen's. Mr. Aragona said there was a land lease, but they later decided to sell the land lease portion. Ms. Brnabic asked Mr. Aragona if he thought that one parking space per unit would be adequate. Mr. Aragona explained that there was additional parking around the perimeter of the site. Ms. Brnabic brought up that Mr. Aragona said there was a small, select group that wanted an urban feel, and she asked for a little more input about that group. Mr. Aragona said that in the neighborhood that existed currently, there were a fair number of early nesters, and a lot of singles and professional people that had delayed getting married, which was probably the biggest group. They would not get empty nesters usually. They would be working professionals for the most part who worked within a couple of miles. Ms. Brnabic asked if there would definitely be a demand for that type of unit, considering the high price range. Mr. Aragona believed it was an underserved market.*

*Mr. Reece said that based on the elevations, he liked the excitement it would generate. He would be concerned about a couple of things. At that price point, he asked Mr. Aragona if he saw that people might want certain amenities like a pool or workout facility within. Mr. Aragona said that the area would provide the amenities. People would have a gym membership, etc., and look outside of the building for services. He said that a pool was not typical for a mid-rise building, and he did not believe people would expect one.*

*Mr. Reece thought the project was akin to the development in downtown*

*Rochester Rd. on the east side. There was a three-story building with retail on the ground floor with apartments or condos on the upper floors. There were balconies that faced Rochester Rd. Mr. Aragona said that those had about a dozen units, and they were renting for the same money. Mr. Reece said that if he was a young professional living in the area but did not want to locate downtown, Mr. Aragona's units would be the type he would be looking for. Mr. Reece agreed that the market had changed, and they were seeing significant improvements in the residential market. He thought that there was a strong demand for the units based on the way the economy was coming back. There was opportunity for it to generate some further interest across the street, and he thought that would be great, because he indicated that it needed some life blood.*

*Mr. Schroeder said the Commissioners would appreciate it if Mr. Aragona considered looking into a LEED or green building. It would be nice if it had a green roof that residents could utilize. He asked why there was a gap between the Sherwin Williams and Mr. Aragona's building.*

*Mr. Aragona said that it was for a back alley access for what could be an additional 5,000 s.f. building, similar to the Sherwin Williams. He noted that there was interest from food uses.*

*Chairperson Boswell thanked Mr. Aragona and said he could see that there was enthusiasm for the project, and they planned to see him soon. He asked if any of the Commissioners were against 50 feet for the height. Mr. Hooper said they would have to see how it came out. His concern was that the requirement was three stories for that zoning, although three stories could be close to 50 feet. Mr. Breuckman advised that the base height was 30 feet. Mr. Hooper said that with the pitch of the roof, it could be higher. He did not want to run into a buzz saw later on. Mr. Aragona said that they would explore with Staff what the most efficient way to do it would be. They had not really looked at that side of it much - that is, the PUD and the current zoning. Mr. Reece felt that it would be a function of the elevations and what they did with the design work. It could make it appear less overpowering from the street level. Mr. Breuckman noted that the homes to the east did have deep rear yards, which acted as natural buffering. There were a lot of trees, and some landscaping was planted along that property line to supplement. Mr. Aragona agreed that they added a continuous line of evergreens. Mr. Hooper said that it would come down to the renderings and what the actual view looked like.*

*Mr. Schroeder suggested that Mr. Aragona might want to contact the*

*residents before it became a surprise at a public meeting. Mr. Hooper agreed it would be a smart idea to talk with the people on Courtland. They could explain the concept and remind people that there were 50-foot tall trees there. Mr. Aragona agreed, and said they could also point out the alternative, which would be commercial. Mr. Hooper thought people could not ask for better neighbors as far as it being quiet.*

**2013-0172**

Small Area Planning - Ed Anzek and James Breuckman, Planning and Economic Development

*(Reference: Memo prepared by James Breuckman, dated April 25, 2013 and article from the Washington Post dated April 22, 2013 had been placed on file and by reference became part of the record thereof).*

*Mr. Anzek and Mr. Breuckman presented the next item. Mr. Anzek stated that he and Mr. Breuckman had been talking with the Aragonas for four to six months on different things they could do. Staff determined that they probably were at a point in the City's progression that they had to begin to think differently about redevelopment. They had heard about the changing market and dynamics. Mr. Aragona's situation was not new. Staff had been approached by the owners of Hampton Village about reinventing and moving the commercial buildings around and adding residential. It might also happen at the Bordine's site. Allowing residential above retail and other things without changing the identity of the community was something he felt that they needed to have a frank and candid discussion about. He stated that Rochester Hills was a great community, and it was the best one he and his wife had lived in. Staff did not want to change much of it, but they were seeing changes in the marketplace. They read about award-winning projects in other communities that were attracting people. One of the biggest questions was how they would keep attracting people to Rochester Hills. It was largely a community of big lots and single-family development. The schools would continue to attract people, but they had concerns that it was not enough. He felt that they could incorporate some new things into redevelopment. They needed to do some things a little beyond the norm, and he stated that it all started with small area planning. There were some small areas that Staff had identified that did not function that well. They wanted to develop concepts to incentivize those areas to get financial commitments. They would have to do some creative things, not just traditional development patterns. He and Mr. Breuckman wanted to have a discussion about some of the issues they were looking at and to introduce what could be considered radical change. He did not think it was radical, but it was different. As with the discussion about Mr.*



*Aragona's proposal, it was the type of thing they were talking about - bringing buildings forward, doing mixed-use and creating more intensity. A year ago, Mr. Breuckman did the Value Per Acre Analysis to see where there was value in developments, and that was clearly in intensifying sites and reducing some of the parking. He stressed that parking was not critical to making a site work and having a lot of it could become a deterrent. He pointed out the large, vast acres of asphalt in some of the centers. He said that he would love to see them get filled up with viable, productive uses. That would take a change in the thinking process. He asked the Commissioners to put on their thinking caps and start looking seriously at the future to see what they could do to incentivize the type of development and redevelopment that they wanted. Staff wanted to know what the Commissioners would like to see and what they felt would work, and he and Mr. Breuckman would figure out how to get there. They had been looking at how big some of the shopping centers were and how more compacted and better they could be.*

*Mr. Breuckman recalled that they had talked about small area planning about eight months ago. They looked at the Tienken area. The more they looked at it, the more they wondered how they could do something different besides the business as usual pattern. They kept running into their own (the City's) walls, and it was a big challenge with the small area plans, because it would take a re-thinking of how the City operated. That was why they needed to have a frank discussion and determine if they were going to continue down the same road. It would require them to take the lead to make things happen. When they thought about small area plans, they had to think about walkability and that pattern of development. There was a market demand for it. He thought that Mr. Aragona raised some good points. Mr. Breuckman pointed out a book he had read about a year ago, and it was the genius of Amazon.com. With housing in the past, two or three products served 20% of the market, and that was what everyone built and sold. Amazon aggregated a lot of little sellers to sell products and put it in one place. A store did not have to carry a vast array of products. They had to reach the 1% of the market. Mr. Aragona needed to find 66 people out of 90,000 who were interested in his product. It was not something that could be built en masse. To reach that portion of the market, which was definitely underserved, they would have to think about doing things in a different way. They could not think of big increments of demand, where someone came in and took on a lot of debt and built all the infrastructure alone and had to sell massive quantities of product. The City had to break things down into smaller increments. That required leadership with infrastructure and storm water management and roads. Home ownership was at an 18 year low, and renting was at an 18*

year high. It was not a matter of people having to rent. The vehicle miles traveled per capita was in decline. There were bumps and dips during recessions, but vehicle miles traveled per capita had started to decline before the last recession, and it continued to go down. People were choosing different ways to live. He mentioned a planning conference he attended and showed a graph from there which showed three s-shaped figures representing innovation, growth and decline cycles. Successful organizations knew when to jump from the market cycle they were on to the next one. He stated that it was the genius of Apple. They made the Mac and then jumped to the I-book and then they developed the I-pad, knowing full well that it would completely cannibalize the Mac laptop sales. They jumped and got out in front of the tablet craze. Microsoft, on the other hand, did not see the internet coming and did not jump from the innovation cycle and had been playing catch up ever since because they declined. It was interesting to him because when things were going great, that was when people had to start thinking about doing something new to get ahead of the market. That was what the small area plans were. It meant that they needed to start pushing and agitating to do things in a little bit different way. They could not accomplish the small area plans in the box that was out there currently. Staff wanted to find out if the Commissioners were interested in taking that leadership role or if they should continue with where they were at. That would be fine; the City was doing well, and they had all the pieces in place if someone wanted to do something. Mr. Anzek was right when he said that if they chose to do it, it would be for a targeted area. Mr. Breuckman showed two small areas in the City and put on an overlay of downtown Rochester to show the scale and that it would fit. It represented three blocks of downtown Rochester. They could fit all of downtown Rochester where Winchester Mall was. They could take Old Towne and put all of downtown Rochester in the middle with blocks to spare on either side. He noted that the Village of Rochester Hills was so successful because it conformed with all of the rules of walkability. Downtown Rochester and the Village of Rochester Hills were about the same size. His point was that there would not be a transformative change for the entire community. Small area planning would entail picking a couple of places and focusing on them and taking more of an activist role to try to foster change. Mr. Breuckman concluded that they were looking for guidance from the Commissioners about how to move forward with small area planning.

Mr. Anzek stressed that the thoughts were not to change the standard, traditional neighborhoods, but it was to try to introduce something unique that would attract that 1%. To attract that person who might dwell in an apartment building until they were ready to buy a home in Rochester

*Hills. It would be introducing some additional choices above and beyond what the City currently had. Mr. Breuckman reminded that the City was built out; they needed to build in and build up. Marshalling and focusing their resources was the only way to go if they were going to do it. It would take agitation. Staff would have to go to all the City departments and look at all the codes and ways of doing things. He reiterated that it would not be easy, and they needed to know that the Commission "had their backs" before they started.*

*Chairperson Boswell mentioned that people had come before the Commission with plans that were similar to Mr. Aragona's. Mr. Aragona happened to be falling into things at the right time. Chairperson Boswell asked if Staff was seeing people come in with new trends that the Commissioners did not know about yet.*

*Mr. Breuckman said that the plans they got in the past were for the old big deck model. It was someone who wanted to build a lot of a type of product. Great downtowns let many different niches co-exist close to each other. One person could build a small increment of something and as it was aggregated, it added up to something much greater than the whole. If someone wanted to come in and build one 18-unit residential building that was around the corner from something else, the City was not really set up to do that. The people that came to the City assembled areas that were close to the size of the entire downtown Rochester and put one type of product on it. They paid for all of the infrastructure costs. That was why those projects got put on the shelf when the economy got bad - they were based entirely on debt. If they were going to make the small areas work, the City would have to take some role. It might be facilitating the storm water infrastructure and the roads, so that individual people could buy a small area of land, and come in and put up a small building on their own. It would be a lot of small bets rather than one really big redevelopment project. It would be like the old model of doing development, where things were built incrementally, and if it were going to work, that was how it had to work, rather than one person doing it all. The Village of Rochester Hills was a place where it was done by one person and done well, but it was still kind of a sanitized mall. He said that it was very nice, but kind of Disney.*

*Mr. Kaltsounis said he was trying to consider what incentivize would mean. He wondered how they would pick the right place. He used the example of downtown Auburn Hills. As long as he had been on the Commission, they have had two or three Master Plans that included what they thought a downtown area should look like. He did not think it had been touched in 8-10 years plus. Until a developer came forward to do*

*something, nothing would happen. He noted the two office buildings on South Boulevard by the hospital. The City made an investment by putting in infrastructure because they knew something would get built. He did not know if they picked small areas if that would happen. In the meantime, they had selected areas in the Master Plan, although larger areas, for mixed-use development. They took the uncomfortable move back then for mixed-use developments. He thought that Mr. Aragona's proposal might be the first one to get built. If it did get built, he thought that people would start coming to the City and it would be like wild fire. They needed to make sure the rules were in place, because then they would begin making investments. When the City tried to be forthcoming in the past, something popped up that they never expected. They needed to have the pieces in place to handle something when it showed up, and he really thought that if the Aragona property were built, the City would be stacked with developments like that. They had to determine how they should handle those within the current rules, because they could show up in places they never expected.*

*Mr. Breuckman maintained that the City could handle that under the current rules. There were square pegs for round holes. Mr. Kaltsounis said that was what PUDs and other tools were for.*

*Mr. Anzek said that having worked in Rochester Hills for 13 years, he had gotten to know the Commissioners' thought process and support for what might be "edgier" development. It helped him communicate that to prospective developers. He knew the Commissioners' expectations for design quality, lighting, landscaping, etc. They were going into new territory, however, and Staff was not sure what the Commissioners might want or expect. They had not done any plans for Old Towne, but he had made three concerted efforts to organize the ownership there. They did not have the horsepower to make something like a great area plan happen. If something new were going to happen in Old Towne, it would have to be done by several outsiders getting it started and building momentum. The big hurdle with that site was that the State owned Auburn, and there were extensive curbcuts. The City's Engineering Standards dictated a wide road. Design quality would dictate a more pedestrian-friendly road. Those were the things they needed to start working on, design wise. Regarding the office buildings on South Boulevard, the City had interested parties for office at that location, but there was no water and sewer. The City's policy was never to extend water and sewer to incentivize development, but at that time, he and Mr. Davis spoke with City Council and said there was an opportunity. They expected the return on investment to be 7-10 years. Once they put the*

water and sewer down South Boulevard and three office buildings went up, the debt was retired in seven years. He mentioned Auburn Hills, which years ago spent millions on the downtown. It sat rather dormant for a long time, and very few businesses went in. They were now building four-story residential units and a big parking deck for Oakland University students. Mr. Aragona was targeting the young resident doctors at Crittenton Hospital. He felt that Mr. Kaltsounis' point about Mr. Aragona's development being an example for spring-offs was very much a possibility. The City could control a site by informing people where they would like a small area plan - that plan being a creative, unique densification of a site that was a fun place to go. Staff was working with Oakland University's Community Outreach Program, which was trying to seek out adjacent communities. They were working with the retailers at University Square across from the Village, which was one of the more successful shopping centers. If there was a vacancy, it was filled in a few months. The retailers were reaching out to the University for employees. Mr. Anzek advised that they would not stick something in the middle of a neighborhood, but there were some corners that were still close enough to do reasonable pedestrian crossings. Rochester Rd. was a tough road to cross. Crooks and Auburn had possibilities. The southeast corner could potentially be redeveloped. There was an old hardware store, an old liquor store and a couple of other small things that could perhaps become something else. The offices behind the shopping center on the northeast corner were 100% leased. The owner was very happy, and he might want to do something on the south side. There were a couple of sites that stood out to Staff, but they were not trying to create five different Rochester downtowns.

Mr. Kaltsounis responded that they already did some of that type of planning with the Master Plan. If there were certain areas determined, he would like Staff to look at what the City had and be on top of the trends, and keep the Commissioners abreast of any changes they might have to make to the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Breuckman said that they were ready to handle it if someone wanted to be the first mover. If someone came in the door now, they were ready to do it by right. Mr. Kaltsounis was not sure if someone would walk in and say he wanted to invest \$100 million.

Mr. Anzek said that people would be amazed at how much developers spoke with each other. Oftentimes, they competed, but they also looked to each other for trades, for example. If one came to the City and had a good experience, they should put it in the Ordinance so people saw it.

*They could say something was permitted, "provided it was of high design." Those were tweaks they could put into play to say they supported something. Mr. Kaltsounis commented that Staff was the City's best seller. Mr. Anzek said that it would be a shift for the City. It had been traditionally developed for the last 40 years, and they wanted to start the conversation about whether the Commissioners were interested in pursuing some of the innovative and different things like Mr. Aragona's proposal. If it was successful, Mr. Anzek believed it would be a tremendous statement for someone that wanted to do something across the street at Twist Drill, for example. They could not support 44 acres of retail there, but he thought there could be support for some neat housing.*

*Ms. Brnabic said that she had the same concern as Mr. Hooper about developments that came before them but never were built. Mr. Aragona's development would be catering to a small, select group and a small percentage of people rather than building 400 apartments. There would only be 66 units, and that was why it would work. She commented that it seemed like they were stepping back in time with what they would like to do, because 80 or 100 years ago, that was how communities developed, especially to the south. People lived above their stores and shops or bars, and restaurants were built in the middle of residential. She stated that walkability was a great thing in any community. She commented that they could say they were being innovative, but it seemed as if they were going back in time to try to capture a different demand. It had all been there, but as time went on and the suburbs were built, the concept changed. She still thought a lot of people were being forced to rent. Some chose to rent, but because of the economy or due to people's credit, there were a lot of people in the position of having to rent. She indicated that it might not stay that way over the long term. She noted that she had read the article Mr. Breuckman put in the packet, but she felt that there were a lot of reasons driving had gone down. Everything was more expensive, including gas, so there were a lot of financial factors involved. People were conserving, whether it was with gas, health insurance or something else. People had a lot of different out-of-pocket expenses. If the economy did not improve, those factors would weigh in even heavier and stay in play for a while. She used to drive farther to go to a favorite restaurant, but at \$4.00 per gallon, she did not visit those places once a month like she had. She did think the proposal was a good idea, but they had to determine the right scale.*

*Mr. Anzek said that they were talking about fun stuff like boutiques and art galleries. He thought that a lot of people were renting by choice. When he got married, he and his wife were apartment dwellers for about seven*

years before they purchased a house. There were newlyweds, for example, that could not afford to buy immediately, but who wanted to get their children in the school district. Hopefully, they would eventually buy in Rochester Hills when they were ready. It was important to get people into the community, get them to really love it and get them to stay and buy a home. He noted that there was still a demand for single-family homes.

Ms. Brnabic observed that for a long time, Rochester Hills was a transient community. A lot of people came for a variety of reasons regarding business or employment. Although there was a solid base, and most people really loved the community, she wondered if Staff had any statistics regarding the people who came for business reasons and left. Mr. Anzek said that they had not really followed those trends. When he first came to the City about 13 years ago, a lot of the car companies were bringing people in from around the country for certain projects for a couple of years, and then they went back. He noted that the Cider Mill Village apartment complex was built for that reason. They were able to change floor plans to build more three and four bedroom apartments because the demand was for a high-end apartment for families. Ms. Brnabic said that she was just curious and wondered whether that had changed. Mr. Anzek was not sure, and he added that Cider Mill Village was getting rents in the \$2,000 plus range.

Ms. Brnabic asked Mr. Anzek if he had checked into the Amber Alert program for the City. Mr. Anzek said that he asked Ms. Presta in the Mayor's office about it, and she was looking into it. The sign in front of City Hall had not gotten the alerts in the past, but they were trying to arrange for it.

Mr. Hooper commented that it all came down to money, like everything else, and who put it up and who rolled it out would matter. For example, to have a downtown Rochester, what was missing was the parking and infrastructure that supported the retail. The Rochester DDA developed the parking, and now they were going to build a parking garage. That was the significant, up front nest egg someone would have to come up with, whether it was the City or a developer, to start the ball rolling. Someone would have to put up the tens of millions of dollars to make something happen. Mr. Breuckman stated that the commitment would be more important than the actual dollar amount. Mr. Hooper said that being a risk-avoidance person, he was not sure that he could put the City at risk for something. It would be hard to vote for a \$100 million bond for an "if it comes or maybe comes" type of development. That was the risk he saw.

*As far as the concept, he had no problem, and he hoped it took off. He had put together a list of about ten areas at which he thought it would work. There were older, tired areas that needed redevelopment that could use freshening where there could be more mixed-use development. He stated that he had no problem supporting the concept or spending some funds for design assistance or rewriting some of the City's Ordinances. When it came down to who would put up the money to make it happen, that was where the rubber would meet the road.*

*Mr. Anzek felt that the City had been successful because it had been very conservative and fiscally responsible ever since its inception. He gave a "hats off" to those that went before them and to those who continued with those policies. The City might be able to do things like extend water and sewer if they knew they would recover the money. They always used the LDFA for seed money for incentive, not necessarily using it, but making it known that it was there as an incentive for someone that wanted to develop in that area. He did not think it was as much about the City spending money as it was to write policies and guidelines to help people understand that the City was committed.*

*Mr. Reece thought that the concept was phenomenal. He thought that the City had to look at something like this to stay above the curve. He was afraid that some on Council were looking up at the big bright light from the sky asking what it was, and it would fall on them. He did not think they might have the foresight to think out of the box because they had been so comfortable for so long in the box. Without some form of tax incentives or Federal funding or dollars to help support it, they would continue to do what they had done. The City was built out, and they were comfortable with the tax base. There had been some decline over the years, but it was mostly steady. He believed that they had to move to the next level and continue to reinvent, or they would de-evolve from where they were at today. He brought up comparing downtown Rochester to some areas in Rochester Hills, and he said that there was a difference. There was a synergy in a downtown Rochester or Birmingham or Royal Oak, because those were about as close to a walkable community as there was in metropolitan Detroit. They did not have light rail, subways or mass transit that people would use to get somewhere to walk around. He said that he loved going to the Village of Rochester Hills in the middle of winter to do Christmas shopping. There was something that reminded him of his days as a kid growing up in Detroit and going to Gratiot and Seven Mile and shopping in the wintertime. The difference was that a downtown had history and an energy that he did not think they could replicate. As much as he liked the Village, it was kind of sterile to a certain extent. He*



*thought it was wildly successful, however. On Christmas Eve or a few days before Christmas, there was no place to park. They could take that concept and move it to the next level in some locations, like the Bordine's location, or perhaps combine the Bordine's location with the center to the south to get a little larger land mass and make it walkable. They would never make Rochester Rd. like downtown, walkable Rochester, because it was too wide and busy. He felt that the concept was great, and he was all behind trying to look at some areas to make them work. He felt it was important, looking at current statistics, to remember that all the members had witnessed the great depression of their times. He felt that the statistics were going to be skewed as far as renting versus home buying. People were afraid. When he was younger, he never would have thought that home buying would be a concern. It was for people today, and he saw that fear in his kids, who were now young adults. They were not sure what the future held. They had seen something that none of them had ever witnessed. It had changed the statistics. He thought it would revert back, noting that Clear Creek Subdivision No. 5 was sold out. People were buying \$400-500,000.00 homes again. On the other hand, he felt that there was a demand and need for young professionals (although he was not sure how many could afford \$2,000/month rent), and they needed to keep them in Rochester Hills in order to make the City sustainable. Otherwise, they would move out, and it would be older people with no one coming in because there was no energy to the City. In the past, it used to be there because things were good, and people were not afraid to buy a house. He was all for the concept. They were probably going to be their own worst enemies because of their regulations, but he really loved working on the Planning Commission because they had the vision and wherewithal to push things forward. He would love to have a discussion with Council, perhaps after the next round of elections, and talk about the future. They could either continue with the status quo and hope things were like they had always been or plan the future for the kids and keep them in the community. Otherwise, he warned that they would be gone, and the City would not survive.*

*Mr. Anzek agreed it would be a good idea to plan a joint meeting with City Council. Staff wanted to start with the Planning Commission because the Commission was charged with the aesthetics of the City. Council did more with safety and maintenance. If there was support at the Planning Commission, he and Mr. Breuckman could start developing concepts, and then they could sit down with Council and show them what they felt the City needed to do. He thanked the Commissioners for their comments.*

*Mr. Dettloff thought it was a welcome discussion item. In his opinion,*

*status quo just did not cut it. He thought the City might stay successful, but they needed to start engaging these conversions, because it was their future. It was somewhat unchartered waters, but at the same time, he thought they needed to get ahead of the curve. He was constantly in meetings where the questions of how Cities can attract young professionals and why they were leaving the area came up. He thought that the future was in how they could become more innovative. They had the core, with the universities and hospitals and medical schools. He heard the word "trend," and it made him a little nervous because trends came and went. He stated that they had to be very careful as they moved ahead so they did not become overly trendy. He thought there was opportunity, and that Rochester Hills could become the home of a very diverse group of citizens, but there were some voids that could be filled.*

*Mr. Breuckman said that Mr. Dettloff raised a really good point about trends. They talked about efficiency or sustainability, but they did not talk about resilience. If they were efficient, they would operate in a certain range, and if all the conditions stayed the same, they would be very efficient. If conditions went outside that range, they would no longer be efficient. They had to do scenario planning for the future. He asked what would happen if gas shot up to \$20 per gallon and whether Rochester Hills would work any longer - that was the foundational premise of the town. They were talking about restoring a type of element that was resilient and that could be reused. They should not rely on one form of transportation, but they should do something to rely on many forms of transportation. They did not know what would happen in 20 or 30 years, but as a Planner, he liked to think about accommodating many different potential futures, not just the one they existed in today.*

*Ms. Brnabic was not sure she would jump on the fact that people were selling \$400,000.00 homes, but she hoped that there would be a different reflection moving forward in society. People had been more self-centered and had wanted instant gratification and got in over their heads, and they lost what they could not afford in the first place. She hoped there would be a change in the banking community's mindset and values as things moved forward.*

*Mr. Breuckman said he was talking about small bets. Old Towne would be a perfect example of where something could happen. Auburn Road was a 50 mile per hour State highway with 11,000 cars driving down it per day. He remarked that it was nothing. Downtown Rochester had 30,000 cars per day, with on-street parking. Downtown Royal Oak had 20,000 cars per day driving down Main St. He stated that there was no reason*

*Auburn had to be a 50 mile per hour road. There was a reason that Old Towne was neglected and was suffering. It did not have to be a \$100 million project. They could work with MODT and start to rationalize. They knew what a successful, walkable street looked like. Maybe they could build a third of a mile and drop the speed limit to 25 miles per hour for that stretch of Auburn. All of sudden, the buildings that were built right up to the road would make a lot more sense. It would not be a huge expense, because they would not be redoing the road. They would just be adding some context. It might be a small bet that could start to spur some action in the Old Towne area. If that spurred activity, it might let sidewalks in the neighborhoods occur and create some synergy and excitement there. It would be a 30-year process, but it might just take a little nudge.*

*Ms. Brnabic thought that the problem there was that there was a lack of participation from willing investors. Mr. Breuckman said the area had the bones; they needed to perhaps push the thinking towards the next generation of property owners. They might have to rely on people who could come in and see the possibilities. After the City did the public realm, maybe people would come in and invest. They would have to look at the stormwater requirements. He stated that they could not have walkable developments and onsite detention ponds. A detention pond would create a huge void that people would stay away from. They had to start thinking about different ways to handle stormwater management.*

*Mr. Dettloff asked Mr. Breuckman if he was initiating any discussions with some of the property owners. Mr. Anzek said that they had not recently. Old Towne was an area that had been difficult, because there was no common thought. He had made good attempts to knock on doors and try to talk to the owners and try to get them organized, but they did not have a common thought. The ownership had different ideas for what they would do with their businesses. Over time, with small area planning, they could develop a better conceptual, illustrative plan that the owners could begin to buy into and start to speak as one voice. There was no business association and no one speaking for the group, and it was very splintered. That was why DDAs and Chambers worked. Mr. Dettloff said that he hoped DDAs would stay around, because there were some scary things happening in Lansing.*

*Mr. Breuckman said that Staff probably had picked the same places as Mr. Hooper had. They would not all be done. The next step might be to get a map at a future meeting and identify the areas. They then had to identify where the City might be committed to putting small bets. He did*

*not want to spend a lot of money, but spend a little bit in the right way. He indicated that downtown Rochester had a value per acre that was four times higher than the City's typical strip center. The City would be paid by property taxes over time. He could see a process where they could identify areas and get a commitment from the City to invest a little in the projects, and then it would be like an open call for participation. If they found people in those areas who were willing to partner with the City, they could make things work in many different ways. With Auburn Rd. in Old Towne, they would just fill in the existing street. In some of the other areas, they might build a parallel street from the main road. It would be like Birmingham, where the downtown was actually off of Woodward. If they built it, the node off the main street would draw people.*

*Mr. Anzek pointed out that The Village had created a parallel main street, and they saw that on the Bordine's plans. He referred to Hampton Village at Rochester and Auburn, and stated that it was not a walkable shopping center. No one went from Best Buy to Target without getting in a car. They could envision that center reconfigured with streets and to be more compacted. It would still have the same square footage, but it would be walkable. The owners had met with Staff, and they were thinking about doing something like that. The City could put forth policies of support, and the developers would be more inclined to go to the bank.*

*Mr. Brnabic thought that they could have a good concept or plan, but the key was having something in place for implementation. There had already been consultation with owners in Old Towne years ago, but there was no implementation. They could have a great plan, but if there was not a way to move it forward, it would not matter.*

*Mr. Breuckman said that back in school, they were taught that they should not do a plan without a pot of money to implement the plan. When people were taking on debt, they used proven models.*

*Mr. Schroeder indicated that they could not do anything with Old Towne unless they got additional property. They would have to move back into the sub a couple of streets. He said that he had looked at that area for years. Mr. Anzek added that the State would want to continue allowing 50 miles per hour, but to make that area survive, it would have to be dropped to 25. Mr. Schroeder noted that if the City got the future right-of-way for Auburn, it would go into the buildings.*

*Mr. Schroeder suggested that they could not forget about the increasing number of senior citizens. They had to provide for them, or they would*

*move away also. Mr. Breuckman agreed, and said that walking was the best thing for one's health. He did not think that putting seniors on a bus and shipping them to a shopping center was viable for public health.*

*Mr. Dettloff mentioned that the Area Agency on Aging was doing some cool studies on downtown Clawson to find a way to attract more seniors. He agreed that the areas should have something for everybody.*

*Mr. Breuckman said that regarding Mr. Schroeder's point about Old Towne, he agreed that they would need about two to three lots back from the alleys. He suggested that they could bring back a couple of options and discuss it further.*

*Mr. Anzek said that they wanted to start the discussion, but they did not want to start placing some of those innovative standards only to find out that they did not have support. They wanted to make areas fun places to go. They could create sidewalks and pathways for walking and biking, as opposed to people having to drive everywhere. It would be a new way of putting something in the City. He felt that there was pretty good consensus for doing some innovative designs and policies. They would do it right and make it the appropriate scale that worked. He spoke with someone involved in Fountain Walk in Novi, and they said that they really blew the scale of that project. The scale of the Village was correct, and people flew in from all over the country to look at it and take that idea back with them. The City was fortunate that the investment was made, and it was certainly sustained. They still had a long list of retailers that wanted to locate there, and they were very selective of whom they let in, and they were getting top dollar.*

*Mr. Schroeder related that there was a trend now to stay away from a five-lane boulevard and go to three lane roads. Mr. Anzek said that was something that needed to be seriously considered. Mr. Schroeder said that it was already happening in Troy. Mr. Anzek did not think three lanes would support the City's tax base, so they had to find ways to make all that work better and slow people down. Mr. Schroeder mentioned that his very first project was I-375 in Detroit from Jefferson north, and they were talking about filling it in now and making it a boulevard. Mr. Breuckman felt that would be fantastic if they could come up with the money to do that. They would basically be putting back what was there before. He thought that it was interesting that they would give the freed up land to people who would help pay for that project and be able to build on it. Mr. Anzek thanked the Commissioners for their input.*

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

*There was no further business to come before the Commission.*

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

Chairperson Boswell reminded the Commissioners that the next Regular Meeting was scheduled for May 21, 2013.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing no further business to come before the Planning Commission and upon motion by Kaltsounis, Chairperson Boswell adjourned the Special Meeting at 9:23 p.m.

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William F. Boswell, Chairperson  
Rochester Hills Planning Commission

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Nicholas Kaltsounis, Secretary