



# Rochester Hills Agenda Report

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**File Number: 2005-0107**

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**Version:** 8      **Reference:** N/A      **Controlling Body:** City Council  
Regular Meeting  
**Requester:** Planning/Development      **Cost:**      **Introduced:** 02/01/2005  
**File Name:** Master Land Use Plan Update      **Final Action:**

**Title:** Request for approval of the 2005/2006 Master Land Use Plan Distribution Draft as required to be sent to adjacent communities, schools and required State agencies for a 95-day review and comment period

**Notes:** McKenna Associates, Inc.  
(Amy Chesnut)  
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Northville, MI 48167

**Code Sections:**      **Agenda Date:**  
**Indexes:** Master Land Use Plan      **Agenda Number:**  
**Sponsors:**      **Enactment Date:**  
**Attachments:** Agenda Summary.pdf, Letter McKenna 02-02-05.pdf, **Enactment Number:**  
Executive Summary.pdf, MLUP Distribution Copy.pdf

## History of Legislative File

Ver- sion:	Acting Body:	Date:	Action:	Sent To:	Due Date:	Return Date:	Result:
1	Planning Commission	02/08/2005	Discussed				
<p><b>Notes:</b> <i>Mr. Rosen explained that the first topic to be covered included information, discussion and a review of the progress that had been made regarding the Master Land Use Plan revision. The second item would be a potential Planned Unit Development (PUD) for Rochester College. He noted there were cards to be filled out to gauge how many people would like to speak.</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Delacourt stated that the City had recently begun an update of its Master Land Use Plan and that the consultants, McKenna Associates, Inc. would review its progress and talk about the direction the planning would take.</i></p> <p><i>Present for the McKenna team were John Jackson, the Project Director and resource for the team, who had been involved in communities' Master Plans for over 15 years; Amy Neary, Project Manager; Steve Gunnels, Specialist in Economic Development, Marketing Analysis, and Fiscal Impact Analysis; Steve Niswander of Niswander Environmental, who was working on the Natural Features Inventory for the Plan; Jim Brueckman, handling day to day operations and Jui-Pin Chang, Senior Landscape Architect. Mr. Jackson advised that they had also enlisted the help of a</i></p>							

number of graphic designers.

Mr. Jackson thanked the members for the opportunity to give the first of many updates planned. McKenna began work on the Plan in the fall of 2004 and there had been monthly Technical Committee meetings. He stated that one of the most important parts of the process was getting public input and involving the Boards and Commissions. He was impressed that the City had significant GIS capabilities, which would be very helpful for future mapping purposes.

Mr. Jackson advised that the first few months involved gathering data and organizing the project. An online survey was drawn up and put on the City's web site so people could register input and feedback to help the committee formulate goals and objectives by finding out what the residents and business owners wanted to see in the community. He advised that the consultants would look at land use, including the fiscal impacts of residential versus commercial and industrial development, and formulate future land use alternatives. This would be brought back to the public so they could see the results of their input and help refine the Plan as it approached the end of the project. He noted that the Plan would be sent to surrounding communities for review before it was adopted.

Mr. Jackson continued that there would be several opportunities for public input and the most immediate would be at the workshops on February 28, 2005 at Rochester College. The first would be at 2:00 p.m., for business owners, and the second at 7:00 p.m., for residential stakeholders. The intent of the latter would be to find out what people liked about their neighborhoods and what types of housing options and commercial services the City should offer. Following the workshops, there would be a summation meeting to further refine the plan. He noted that the public was welcome at any meetings at which the Planning Commission and City Council would receive updates.

Mr. Jackson advised that Dr. Niswander would conduct a workshop about the Natural Features Inventory on March 8, and people involved in the Clinton River, Oakland Land Conservancy, and similar groups would also be invited. Additionally, Mr. Gunnels would conduct phone interviews with the business community to solicit input for the Plan. Toward the end of the project, there would be a Public Hearing to unveil the comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Neary stated that the very first step in preparing a Master Plan, and the foundation of what would ultimately be implemented, was the survey and analysis of existing conditions. She explained that it gave a picture of where the City currently stood and analyzed past trends of the community. In the fall, McKenna updated the 1998 existing land use inventory. They took a windshield survey - they drove through the community - and updated the land uses. She pointed out that the key findings were that the community was approaching build-out. There was 9% of vacant land left, down from 24% in 1991. The average lot size was under 1 ½ acres, so any infill development would be more challenging and done on a smaller scale. They also identified that the overall distribution of land uses had remained relatively constant, including that the City was predominately single-family residential. They next identified neighborhood areas where services were provided on a smaller scale than City-wide. The areas were identified by major boundaries such as roads and natural features. Neighborhood areas were the building blocks of what made up the City, and used because land use change would be most visible

*in these areas. In each neighborhood they tried to identify areas of residential change over the next five to ten years. They looked at existing zoning and whether the larger parcels could be eventually split. They looked at the value of housing to see if there had been reinvestment. They looked at areas where there could be assembly of parcels for infill subdivisions. They also had to look at the marketing conditions and what the demographics were saying about the community, so at that point Ms. Neary turned the discussion over to Mr. Gunnels for an analysis of the City's economic conditions.*

*Mr. Gunnels explained that demographic issues pertained to the number of people, and their ages and household structures, and he said they used information from SEMCOG and the City's Assessing and Building Permit records back to 1969. It showed that the City's population was continuing to grow, but more slowly. There were more people in the 45 to 64 year-old age. He explained that was important because as the households continued to age, there would be more "aging" issues and families would look for alternative housing and services for seniors. They looked at the cost of housing, noting that people should not spend more than 30% of their income for housing. For people who owned homes in Rochester Hills, the City was affordable. The cost of housing was not affordable for younger or lower income households. This would be an important consideration for the City for the future. They expected continued, strong demand for housing in the City, and believed that attached townhouses and condos for single-family living would continue to grow in popularity in southeast Michigan. They would need to ask the question of whether that type of housing would address the demand of residents and whether it would be important to people who wanted to stay in the community but wanted to downsize their housing as children moved out or they retired.*

*Mr. Gunnels continued that the older housing in the City had a lower market value than newer housing, which he said was not a surprise. The City might consider how important it would be to facilitate and promote reinvestment in the older houses to expand the tax base. They would also need to address how the Ordinances responded to requests for additions for smaller houses to correlate with property tax revenue. Over the last ten years, over half the growth in the City's revenue came from increases in property tax revenues. What happened to those residential structures over time was very important to the amount of money the City Council could use to provide services to the residents. In about 12 years, if current trends continued, the revenue and expenditure curves would cross and the City would be faced with the issue of how to fund services without adequate revenues. He stated that the future development of land and what type of development the City should bring was important and would affect the revenue stream and expenditures of the City. To that end, they would look at what the market demand for land use would be over the next five to twenty years.*

*Mr. Gunnels referred to the market analysis, which was broken down into office, retail, industrial and residential. If the trends of the last ten years were to continue, there would be a little more industrial development, but it would be less than 1% of total new development. He stated that the scarcity of land would drive up land values and industrial development would be priced out of the market. That would also affect the existing industrial businesses. Office development would be very important to future land use. His materials included summaries of studies from the University of Michigan, which said that the economy of the future would be based in offices, schools and hospitals. The I-75 submarket, which included Troy, Rochester*

Hills and Auburn Hills, had 20% of all office space in the Detroit metro area. A large part of Oakland County's growth in offices would continue to occur in those communities, especially in Rochester Hills. Numerous fiscal studies showed that office developments were the most fiscally beneficial land use to have, in terms of the amount of services for each dollar in revenue. He added that the City would make money from office uses to help fund residential services.

The consultants looked at retail, which Mr. Gunnels noted was looked at in depth during the last Master Plan update. They analyzed neighborhood, community and regional retail development. Neighborhood entailed a five-minute drive and community scale meant within a three-mile radius, or about a ten-minute drive. They considered grocery stores to be in that category because most residents made a weekly trip to these establishments. They looked at the consumer spending habits and determined that the amount of retail space spending would support was 163 acres. The existing land use survey found 253 acres of neighborhood and community scale retail development. Regional uses, for a 12-mile radius, included Lakeside, Somerset, Great Lakes, or the larger shopping malls. Mr. Gunnels advised that Oakland Township's Master Plan referenced that they would not need further commercial development. The City could pick up more retail development to service this and other areas, but in five or ten years, he questioned what would happen if Oakland Township changed its direction. A lot of the people would no longer have to drive to Rochester Hills if Oakland Township decided to increase retail, and the potential long-term cost would be vacant shopping centers.

Over twenty years, if the trends continued, there would be 20 acres of new industrial building (that included vacant industrial land). If the retail development trends continued, there would be 116 acres of retail and 266 acres of office. With the same pattern, there would be 4,900 acres of new residential land needed. In the existing land use survey, there were only 1,900 acres of vacant land, and not all of it would be buildable. The City would be all right for five years, but could not continue as it was for ten years, or they would run out of vacant land. The important determination for the City would be to find out which of the trends to continue and which they like to see changed, and that would be how the Master Plan was utilized.

Dr. Niswander advised that he had looked at the natural features of the City and at the land that had already been put aside as parks or private open space. The purpose of including the Natural Features Inventory with the Master Land Use Plan was to document existing conditions and to provide guidance for land use and preservation of the areas that would see a lot of pressure for development. The work he was doing would provide a tool that would allow people to look at the natural resources from a landscape perspective and at the bigger picture. It would help with site plan development. He advised that the information would include floodplains, steep slopes, woodlands, wetlands and watercourses, and overall open space. He completed field investigations throughout the City, surveying 729 locations and producing 675 digital photographs. This data would be incorporated into a Geographic Information System (GIS) and the natural features would be a layer available to City Staff. Each location would have data associated with it and a photo available for the resource. The floodplain map would be available and the City's Engineering Department was working to make that information available to the community. The research would become a very dynamic tool.

Dr. Niswander stated that the steep slopes in the City were a concern for several

reasons. One regarded soil erosion and soil loss. The steep slopes were mostly associated with the Clinton River or its tributaries and if there were slope failure, it would oftentimes be detrimental to the water resources. He showed pictures of the River and homes along it, and homes where people had to address the erosion with costly retaining walls. He reiterated that erosion and slope failure situations were very problematic, and that in the next 15 years, hard Engineering steps would have to be taken to address this matter.

Dr. Niswander advised that he was developing a woodlands map and that the wetlands and watercourses were being digitized. He and Staff were developing attribute tables for the GIS and field data to be linked to those features. They could begin ranking the resources, based on a host of criteria, including adjacency to other natural features, water resources and parklands, open space, trails and quality of vegetation. The data would be summarized, and it was his goal to have a color-coded map that included the areas that needed the most protection and the tools to protect them. They would also like to include new tools, possibly overlay districts or revisions to the Ordinance, to protect the natural resources. He stressed that the tools should be used and not just left on a shelf. He suggested that the City would begin looking at restoration opportunities for the existing resources and look at linking them together to provide greater value to the citizens of Rochester Hills.

Ms. Neary reminded that there would be public workshops on February 28, 2005, and there was an on-line survey, both from which they would prepare preliminary goals and objectives and help identify future land use alternatives.

Mr. Schroeder advised that there were many groups involved in conservation, including storm water advisory groups for all the watersheds. Rochester Hills had four - the Clinton Red Run, the Clinton Main, Paint Creek and the Rouge Mains I and II. He advised that they had formed the Arc Assembly of Rouge Communities and had developed a State law to allow the groups to operate. He indicated that these were powerful tools and the leader of the Arc was a resident of Rochester Hills who would be available any time. He felt the City should use this source. Dr. Niswander said he had met with several of the people involved and that they would certainly try to gather as much information as possible.

Mr. Dalton questioned using grocery stores in the retail assessment and Mr. Gunnels said they were used as an indicator for a shopping center's function in the community scale areas. Mr. Dalton asked him for a definition of a grocery store. Mr. Gunnels replied that it included Kroger, Farmer Jack, Whole Foods, and Papa Joe's. Mr. Dalton asked if he was using a food store to determine the amount of retail, and wondered why they would pick food to determine the amount of retail. Ms. Neary explained that food was chosen for community scale retail because a resident would typically travel there once a week. Mr. Gunnels noted that they used it for overlapping trade areas. When they looked at spending for an area, they included all shopping centers in the City that were not classified as regional, but they did not just limit it to grocery stores. Mr. Jackson added that this scale included clothing and other retail expenditures.

Mr. Kaltsounis asked if the residents would be able to give input for the Master Plan during the stakeholder meetings or whether there would be other meetings.

Ms. Neary said that the stakeholder workshops would be the number one way

residents could voice their opinions; however, the residents could voice their concerns at the update meetings as well. She mentioned that they could also speak at the Public Hearing. Ms. Hill stated that there would be public Planning Commission workshops that would go into more detail about what the Technical Committee had done.

Ms. Holder stated that the City Council members got "beat over the head" when they made a decision contrary to the Master Plan. In the present crisis the City faced regarding the lack of revenue to fulfill services demanded by the residents, she wondered how they could affect the Plan to help the Council with decisions.

Ms. Neary indicated that they were creating a new plan for the community. Ms. Holder realized that the consultants would show what the City needed in the future, but as Council members, they needed to do things to bring in revenue because of the demand for services. Mr. Jackson noted that the residents had expressed that more office and retail development were not desired, so those would be choices the City had to make. He acknowledged that with less potential to generate revenue, there might not be an alternative. If the people wanted their services maintained or increased, the money had to come from somewhere. The consultants would show how to support the revenue-generating land uses that would be attractive and beneficial with the nature of the community. The City members would run into that challenge when they looked at the future land use alternatives. Mr. Gunnels said they would give an analysis of the fiscal implications of the different uses and that would be part of the planning process. They would show the fiscal realities for what people wanted. He indicated that the elected officials had to show the residents and taxpayers what they faced in a team effort.

Mr. Rosen reviewed that the Master Plan was a description of how people wanted the City to turn out and that it took into account where the City had been, where they were, and where they were going. He indicated that some areas could be controlled, some could not, and that the desire for things like housing, retail and office were market driven. They had to figure out how much made sense and how much the City could tolerate. The Master Plan would represent everyone's best thoughts and it would not be perfect, just the best they could do. It would be out of date the minute they stopped working on it, but the question would be how much out of date. If they did not have a Master Plan they would not have anything, and it was their best tool. Everyone knew for years that the City would have funding problems when the growth ran out and the City had to solve that problem. His thoughts were that Council could look at the Master Plan on a given day to help make a decision, but the Planning Commission tried to look at it in the long term for everyone in the City and there might be a difference of perspectives.

Mr. Rosen asked what was being done to publicize the forums and public meetings, noting that it was his goal to get as much public input as they could. Mr. Delacourt advised that Staff advertised in the paper, and also requested press releases. Public notices would be sent for each meeting. Channel 55 was being utilized to announce the update and the Public Forum. There were large mailings to the Homeowner Association presidents for distribution, and to the business owners in the City. There had been articles written in the Oakland Press and Rochester Eccentric. Mr. Rosen said that it could be mentioned at the City Council meetings, which were televised, and he suggested that if anyone had additional ideas, they should let the Planning Department Staff know.

Ms. Raschke thanked the McKenna group, noting that she sat on the Technical Committee. She said she had been in the City since 1972, when Rochester Road was a two-lane highway and Kmart was not in the City. She indicated that people accused her of making decisions that put developments in their backyards, but everyone had to remember that change was inevitable. She observed that the overlays revealed dated areas, but she was aware of cities which had turned older areas into unbelievable areas. She stated that the City needed revenue and remarked that this was the day of reckoning. She reminded that the public would have input into the Plan, and that the input was very welcomed, and observed that McKenna was doing a fine job.

Mr. Dalton agreed, and said the process McKenna was using was very comprehensive and thorough and that, as a result, the Master Plan would have a high degree of validity - perhaps more so than in the past. The more citizens were involved, the more they would understand the process and be willing to accept it.

Mr. Rosen indicated that he had been through a Master Plan update twice and realized it was a lot of hard work. He appreciated that McKenna was doing all the right things.

Recess: 8:50 p.m. 9:00 p.m.

2 Planning Commission 04/26/2005 Discussed

Notes: (Reference: Packet prepared by McKenna Associates, Inc., dated April 19, 2005 had been placed on file and by reference became part of the record thereof.)

Present for McKenna Associates, Inc. were Amy Neary, Senior Principal Planner, Steve Gunnels, Senior Principal Planner, and Jim Breuckman, Senior Planner. The address is 235 East Main Street, Suite 105, Northville, MI 48167.

Mr. Hooper opened the Public Comments for items unrelated to the Master Land Use Plan at 7:35 p.m. Seeing no one come forward, he closed the Public Comments at 7:37 p.m.

Ms. Neary advised that this was the second project update to the joint boards and that they would discuss the public input results from the on-line survey and workshops from February; the vision created with the Technical Committee as a result of the workshops; and the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis (SWOT) that was being done as part of the economic development strategy.

Mr Breuckman stated that as part of the public input process for the Master Plan, they used a two-pronged approach. First, two physical public workshops were held at Rochester College in February. One workshop was for the business community and the second was for the residential stakeholders. Participants heard a short presentation about the Master Plan process and then broke into small group discussions and interaction, from

which McKenna received feedback. The second component was an on-line community forum. There were over 400 residents and business owners who participated in the on-line forum and over 55 people in the February 28th public forums. The results were broken down by locations in the City, and he went over the responses for each quadrant (results on file in the Planning Department). He mentioned that the middlewest part of the City had the largest participation in the online survey and that the south central area had the largest participation in the public workshops.

Mr. Breuckman next summarized the results of the business workshop and said that four themes emerged: "Rochester Hills has good name recognition; property taxes are in line; there is good proximity to auto suppliers and the Big 3; and there is easy proximity to the regional thoroughfares of M59 and I-75." Business owners also appreciated the excellent police, fire and EMT services offered.

In addition to questions about what Rochester Hills had to offer, business owners were asked about the challenges of doing business in Rochester Hills. They identified that the City's codes and ordinances were not flexible enough and that the expansion of existing businesses was limited by the current regulations. Traffic congestion was an often-cited challenge and they noted the community opposition to development. When asked how to address the challenges, they suggested the following: "Streamline the development approval process; create performance-based zoning incentives, particularly in terms of redevelopment or upgrading of existing businesses; improve customer service at City Hall; and conduct community education about fiscal impacts."

The residential workshop followed the same format. The positive aspects cited were good location within the region, high quality of life offered in the City, good schools, family-oriented community, the natural features and open space character of the community, low taxes and increasing property values. Regarding aspects they would like changed or to remain the same, residents mentioned limiting commercial development into new areas, having more open space preserved, and encouraging office and research redevelopment. The landfills were seen as an opportunity for commercial retail and big box was not something they wanted to see. When asked how to address the challenges, the residents mentioned streamlining the development process; sharing services with surrounding communities; prohibiting commercial into existing residential areas; relaxing height restrictions for strategic areas (along M-59); and providing tax incentives for non-residential uses. It was stressed by some that Rochester Hills was not Southfield or Troy.

Mr. Breuckman offered demographics about the respondents of the online survey, noting that 73% were between 26 and 54 years of age; 98% were homeowners, and 72% had lived in Rochester Hills for six years or more. Respondents were asked to rate aspects of the City and in general, the City rated good or excellent across the board on almost everything. 35% rated



the City as a fair or poor place to retire. He felt this was important because as the population aged, there would be challenges to providing services for the elderly. 60% of the respondents rated the overall development in the City as good or excellent. The two most encouraged businesses were sit down restaurants and grocery stores. McKenna had asked where in the City it would be appropriate for commercial development and the overwhelming favorite was "nowhere." The residents were asked about housing needs and values and what types were needed in the City. 92% of respondents felt the existing housing stock was affordable and met the current needs. When asked what type of homes should be encouraged, 38% of empty nesters felt additional ranch homes were needed.

Mr. Breuckman explained that the last part of the survey showed pictures with unique architecture and without, and uses within each zoning category, and asked respondents to rate the pictures. Mr. Brueckmann went over the results for residential, commercial and office and showed which images rated the highest.

Ms. Neary advised that they compiled the information received at the public workshops and the on-line forum and also looked at previous Master Plans, and used that information to come up with a community vision and goals and objectives. The community vision represented the overall land use policies that would be used, the more specific goals and the objectives. She noted that the information would become more specific as they created the future land use alternatives and the implementation plan. The community vision had been tweaked slightly from previous plans, but was essentially the same. The broad policies were included in previous plans and they did not see a reason to change anything as they moved forward. The policies dealt with improving the overall quality of the community, fostering good relationships between City Council, Planning Commission, neighboring jurisdictions, and insuring that they looked at all types of land and civic uses as part of a holistic approach to preparing the Master Plan. They created different goals for residential, retail service, office/research/technology, industrial, transportation, recreation, community facilities and public safety, historic preservation, natural features and planning and community development. She noted that some related to other City Plans (Recreation, Thoroughfare).

Ms. Neary read the residential goal for the community, "Maintain the existing residential character within the community while providing diverse housing choices and ensuring that residential redevelopment and new infill development complement and enhance the character of the existing neighborhood." In order to achieve that, they came up with specific objectives, including, "Residential development should preserve important natural features such as steep slopes, watercourses, wetlands, and wooded areas." This information was developed from the forums and on-line survey.

Ms. Neary stated that there was a Natural Features component to the goals and objectives that would be forthcoming. She reported that the database

*for the Natural Features portion of the Master Plan had been completed by Dr. Niswander of Niswander Environmental.*

*Mr. Gunnels next discussed economic development, and stated that there was a bright future for the citizens and businesses of the City. He brought up the SWOT analysis and economic development goals, and Ms. Hill asked Mr. Gunnels to explain what SWOT was. Mr. Gunnels replied that it was a subjective analytical tool that was used a lot in businesses, communities, and non-profit organizations. McKenna looked at the community in terms of positive characteristics that would help the City achieve the goals and objectives, and negative characteristics and attributes that would get in the way of achieving those goals and objectives. They looked at issues internal and external to the community.*

*Mr. Gunnels advised that they were looking at economic development in terms of job creation and job retention. For a lot of communities in Michigan that was a very important issue as was tax base enhancement in other communities. The final goal for an economic development program would be to bring in things needed to improve the quality of life. Those goals were important, and there was a need to address the tax base so that the long-term fiscal viability of the City was maintained. He mentioned basic economic sectors - those businesses that brought new dollars into a community - and gave an example of the auto companies within Southeast Michigan. He explained that they sold cars all over the world and the money came to the Detroit region. There were certain businesses in the City that were bringing in new dollars. The non-basic economic sector businesses were those that re-circulated dollars in the City - the grocery stores and retailers. A community would direct its limited resources to the basic sector businesses.*

*Mr. Gunnels continued that he and Mr. Dan Casey, Manager of Economic Development for the City, had conducted 11 interviews with brokers and developers to get an analysis of what went on in the City, and the SWOT analysis came out of that. In trying to differentiate the City from others, they had to look at the strengths to attract new business. The question was what made Rochester Hills worth paying more money for than somewhere else. The interviewees mentioned the proximity to Daimler Chrysler and proximity to the businesses that wanted to be close to Daimler Chrysler; the undeveloped land along M-59 and that a lot of corporations still wanted a corporate office where they could advertise brand identity; freeway access connecting the City to the marketplace and the labor force; the SmartZone was special and not found everywhere in southeast Michigan; the City had a professional Economic Development Staff that would help elevate the City; and there was a really positive community image of Rochester and Rochester Hills.*

*At the other spectrum, there was a perception that City government was a little hard on businesses. Local traffic congestion and a lack of convenient*

business services was mentioned - industry was not located close to the retail uses, and it was further away for someone to go to lunch. Rochester Hills was not a distinguished location for a lot of businesses. For businesses that did not need to be close to Daimler Chrysler or did not need freeway visibility, they had to determine what would make Rochester Hills different from Madison Heights or another city. There was not too much and that was a weakness that had to be looked at when determining the economic development strategy. He indicated that there was a lack of parking, primarily due to the industrial businesses and restructuring of the economy. Business had less people in manufacturing and more doing office work, using more parking spaces. Employment was increasing in office-based jobs and hospitals. There was also a lack of public relations cited. The City had done a lot to try to overcome the perception that it was hard on businesses, but it was still there. The City needed more of a public relations effort to sell the City's story. He pointed out opportunities for the local economy externally and said Rochester Hills was particularly well situated with Crittenton, Beaumont, Oakland University, Rochester College and with the undeveloped land along M-59 for corporate office development. The auto industry has had an increasing influence among international automakers and parts manufacturers so they must have a presence in southeast Michigan to be a global player. That would be a positive opportunity for the City. Additionally, the County and State Economic Development programs, goals and objectives were very closely aligned with the strengths of the City.

Mr. Gunnels explained that a threat included the potential that Michigan would not recover, or that the loss of manufacturing jobs recently seen would not be compensated with an increase in knowledge-based jobs. That was a potential threat that the City needed to be aware of. Changes at Daimler Chrysler could happen. He noted that there were office vacancies in Troy and as long as that remained, the rental rates were down. There would be little incentive for a speculative developer to create new office space. It could take three to five years to absorb that vacant space.

In discussing some conclusions from the analysis, Mr. Gunnels mentioned the following issues. Developing M-59 as a premium corporate office corridor had limited retail support for businesses, but prohibited large scale retail development, which would bring the environment for corporate clients who were interested. Addressing road improvements for congestion at the interchanges was needed. Residents liked the fact that there were not five-lane boulevards every mile through Rochester Hills, but there were opportunities at the freeway interchanges for major improvements that would not affect the residential character. They had to determine how to differentiate Rochester Hills as a business location for those not attracted to the M-59 visibility and Daimler Chrysler. There were things the City could do to improve services to businesses - the City had to improve its business image and reassess the services provided to find out if they could be better.

Ms. Neary advised that for the next two to three months, McKenna and the

Tech Committee would complete the economic development strategy using the Natural Features information, and they would create the future land use alternatives. All would be intertwined and would be presented in another workshop in the summer.

Mr. Hooper opened the discussion to public comments at 8:12 p.m.

**Debbie Geen, 3128 Walton Blvd., Rochester Hills, MI 48309** Ms. Geen stated that she was the Chairperson representing the Residential Vision Committee. She read the following points concerning the consultant's survey: "1) How can the City receive over 500 calls about poor subdivision road snow removal service and not make effective and permanent changes to a perceived health and safety issue in the City? The snow removal issue hits home and it has left a bitter taste in the mouths of the people you need to support a tax increase or Master Plan land use zoning change; 2) There are no specific crises, compelling deficiencies and critical needs represented by the survey. It is interesting and enlightening, from the survey, that 56% of the residents found that the subdivision road conditions are acceptable. The Mayor and Council repeatedly tell us that the subdivision roads have deteriorated to a crisis level. This is contradictory to the survey results; 3) The question must be asked and answered - what subdivisions, aside from Shadowoods, have a subdivision road crisis? 4) My committee believes that the City's issue of credibility to residents is quite poor. This credibility gap needs to be addressed by the City before anything can be done - whether it is a tax increase or support from Master Plan land use zoning changes. The City's credibility problem was not improved by expenditures for costly surveys paid for at taxpayer's expense; 5) My committee took a survey of its own. They asked the residents whether the \$55,000.00 spent on the consultant's survey is preferred to spending the money on subdivision road snow removal. Ten out of ten residents supported the money being spent for subdivision road snow removal. Quite simply, the residents believe this is a basic City service, which affects their health and safety. The City's snow removal policy has further added to the credibility problem that the City has with its residents; 6) Tax money should be spent on the residents' perception of proper City expenditures. The Mayor and Council's budget priorities are not in step with the voters. The majority of residents are not interested in the meeting tonight but rather, they are interested in snow removal on the subdivision roads in front of their homes."

**Walter Popyk, 1210 School Road, Rochester Hills, MI 48307** Mr. Popyk asked the members to look behind them at the scenic view. He stated that he had seen a lot of woods like that cut down. He was speaking on behalf of his mother-in-law, who had been a resident of Rochester Hills for over 60 years. He noted that she resided on John R, opposite the Ferry Seed Farm and multitudinous homes - Hampton barracks, thousands of condos, and hundreds of condos behind Home Depot. He was glad to see Dr. Niswander's name on the screen and wanted to know when the natural features portion of the Master Land Use Plan would be addressed. Ms.

Neary answered it would be the end of July. Mr. Popyk said they were told there was to be a sewer installed along School Road. He noted there was a stream on their property that had been there about 60 years and Mr. Niswander came out and designated the stream as an endangered wetlands area. It took him quite a while to contact the MDEQ before anyone would come out. He still did not have guarantees the stream would remain. The reason he brought this up was because one of the focal points of the meeting was the open space and natural environment Rochester Hills had. He stated that more and more of the open spaces were being reduced, and a situation had come up in his neighborhood of Gravel Ridge and School Road, where a rezoning was in the process. It would possibly incorporate 120 condos in his rural community, one of the last rural communities in the City. He said he did not know what the alternatives for the Master Plan would be or if the City considered incorporating senior housing. A good place for senior housing would have been at the OPC Center. The condos being proposed for his neighborhood, under the guise of senior housing, were being forced upon his rural community setting and they were opposed to that. Wildlife and the residents' way of life would be threatened by the incorporation of a condo development in their community. He could understand tax dollars and economic development, but they were opposed to the condos and looked for consideration regarding that.

**Owen Winnie, 833 Hampton Circle, Rochester Hills, MI** Mr. Winnie mentioned Ms. Geen's comment about \$55,000.00 for a survey and that the exercise for the Master Plan was not important. He stated that Ms. Geen's comments about snow removal and roads were very important also, and they took revenue. The community had, on several occasions, attempted to get tax dollars for road improvements, and that was an issue the residents of the City had to deal with at the ballot box. He felt that the Master Plan exercise was a very important one as the City set goals and objectives for the future. He advised that the update was mandated by State legislation, and the City had to go through it every five years. He stated that it was a very important process. He asked McKenna if there would be an evaluation of the City's major corridors, including Rochester and Auburn roads, noting there was a study done several years ago for Auburn Road and nothing materialized with regard to aesthetics, land use, the parking and other issues. He stated that Auburn was an entryway into the City coming from the east and it was not a very pleasant picture. He suggested that City Council look at the automotive use at John R and Auburn, which was a disaster. He said that the entryways to the City should be updated because this was an attractive community and the residents were proud of it. It was mentioned that Rochester did not want to be like Troy, but Mr. Winnie stated that Troy was not a badly planned community. There was a good land use mix, a sound tax base, it had balance between being a bedroom community with good shopping, good recreation facilities, and housing for retirees, and he did not think it would be wrong to model Rochester Hills after it. Referring to the comments about condos, he said he did not think condos were all bad. He felt the community suffered by being primarily a bedroom community and that

the tax base was lacking. The Council should be patted on the back regarding the criticism they took regarding the Softball City site. He felt something should be done in that area and that the Council should be commended. He felt the residents that lived in that area would not have to worry too much and that they would benefit as well.

**Pamela Bratton Wallace, 168 Cloverport Ave., Rochester Hills, MI** Ms. Wallace indicated that she had been before the members previously, talking about balance issues in the community and some of the pivotal decisions the community would make over the next few years. The Master Plan update would be one of the most pivotal because of the challenges facing the City in terms of development, redevelopment, and preservation of character. What they heard so far was that most people valued the community as it was. The natural features, the housing, and that it was a good place to do business were things that stood out to people and things people would like to maintain. She stressed that they were going to be left with hard challenges and that input from everyone was important. She was encouraged by some of the input the consultants took into account, and the conclusions, and she felt that needed to be stronger. When areas were redeveloped and condos built, people in the community needed to feel that what they had come to Rochester Hills for, and the investment they made, was being preserved. The community would have to constantly reinvent itself, but it should happen with the level of mindfulness and consideration for what people had invested. She noted that oftentimes, when there were seemingly conflicted bodies coming together to make one overall plan, they tended to look at things where someone won and someone lost. She believed it would take more time to find ways and avenues so everyone won, but it would be well worth the time and effort and the City was now in that situation. She felt resident input would be critical in terms of looking at further development. The concerns of the residents needed to be listened to, as did the concerns of the business community. She noted a comment about redeveloping areas and that a lot of consideration would be given to the character of the area. The ideas seemed wonderful, but they had to be careful about how they implemented, who made decisions about the character of an area, and how the City left its residents and businesses feeling. She noted that she and her husband were educators and that they traveled across the country every summer, spending countless hours in hundreds of communities. They have had the opportunity to see what makes communities prosper and thrive. Rochester Hills had many of the things they consistently found thriving in other communities, but Rochester Hills was in a position where that could be lost if they were not careful with how things progressed. One thing thriving communities had in common was that they made the most of what they had. They knew what attracted people to live and do business in those communities and they enhanced and preserved that. They did not compromise it because there were some instantaneous, short-term decisions that might benefit some people. They had a clear vision and they maintained it on all levels. She encouraged the Rochester Hills community and the board members to consider what was special about the community. She

personally felt that thriving downtown areas were important. She stated that the community had affordable housing and beautiful natural features, and she observed that the natural features were something that attracted and kept people. She felt that was also the thing in the most danger of being changed. The City was at a build out point and they needed to consider the balance. She encouraged the members to consider zoning that would preserve what stood out and what was most distinctive about the community. She also encouraged them to maintain a creative vision that would be upheld to make a viable community where people wanted to live and do business now and in the future.

**Dan Keifer, 719 Fieldstone, Rochester Hills, MI 48309** Mr. Keifer said he thought the folks from McKenna had done a pretty good job and he thought the comments showed an understanding of the community that could really be used to formulate a plan to go forward. He stated that it was obviously a complicated issue. The community was large with many aspects and it was hard to narrow it down to a few bullet points. He thought Ms. Wallace's comment about a balancing act would be a key part of the plan. While the community was very diverse, some things were mutually exclusive. As important as the business side was, whether retail or commercial, from an economic standpoint, it would push against the quality of life, in terms of what it did to natural features. The more the residents pushed to keep the open space and natural features, the more it would push against the building community. He wondered if the sense of vision would also bring in the math behind everything, because it was the math that would show the sources of tax revenue. He encouraged the process to include the math. As they get closer to the give and take between the three basic sectors, they should be able to quantify the net impact. He said he was very strong on open space and natural features areas, and he was pleased to see how much was included in the macro view. On the micro view, he said he hoped everyone was getting the things that were happening in the community, like 25,000 steelhead trout being released into the Clinton River and 6,000 released in Paint Creek. He noted that the Clinton River Trail, thanks to the efforts of the City, would have a bridge behind Rochester College, and it would host the Michigander, with 800 people from all around the State for a week-long bike ride through the community in July. He stated that there was a sense of urgency, and he gave an example of an area (Cloverport) where there had been a single house built which was encroaching on the steep slope in a way, he described, that would break people's hearts. Mr. Popyk's comments about the creek also gave a sense of urgency to the open space the City had to protect right away. Regarding roads and congestion, he felt it went to the balancing act between the three sectors. The more they were at a place where Oakland County shopped, the more the traffic would never go away. That was an important part of the role of the transit system. There was talk on the news of \$70/barrel of oil in the near future. Car transportation was not the solution for what any City needed. The opportunities for mass transit along M-59 were strong, especially in light of the economic development notions from McKenna. He would have liked to see some mention about the

quality of life in the SWOT conclusions, rather than the strong economic side.

**Brenda Savage, 1715 Northumberland Drive, Rochester Hills, MI 48309**

Ms. Savage said she was before the members as Chairperson of "No New Taxes." She asked what percentage of survey respondents supported an increased business development; what percentage of those respondents paid taxes to Rochester Hills; and what percentage of the fee paid to McKenna Associates was paid by the survey respondents who did not ask for increased business development. She asked them to keep that in mind, in light of the encouragement by the presenter for increasing business development in the City. She stated that this was a residential community. Creating and inviting images for new business development in a City which was defined as residential was a waste of time and money - the citizens' money and tax dollars. She urged the Planning Commission to focus on protecting the residents and other investors in Rochester Hills. She stated that the beautiful community of Rochester Hills did not seek to become more like other neighboring communities. It did not seek to make lunch for office employees more accessible at the expense of protecting peoples' investments, which was still the largely residential environment. She indicated that taxes were another issue altogether and the 1,000 acres of undeveloped land would not greatly improve the tax problems. She encouraged the Planning Department to work as the public liason for redevelopment in business, industrial and commercial property uses. That would be a key to protecting the environment and the investment in the residential community. She urged the members to protect the investment of the majority of investors in Rochester Hills - the homeowners.

**Mr. Michael Wayne, 2817 Eagle Drive, Rochester Hills, MI** Mr. Wayne stated that eight years ago he and his wife moved to Rochester Hills from Troy. They moved here because they wanted to live here. He noted that his business was located in Troy and that he did not do business in Rochester Hills, did not shop in Rochester Hills and did not eat in Rochester Hills. He lived here and that was really all he did in Rochester Hills, so business development did not help him in any way. He could not see switching his ways. He saw that pinning hopes to Michigan's recovery might be very risky because the North American auto companies did not seem to be recovering. He said he would like to see Rochester Hills remain a bedroom community and he would like a lot of the frivolous expenses stopped. They should keep the roads fixed, have police and fire, and they did not need a phenomenal amount of City services. Rather than trying to find ways to develop and bring more businesses in when there was a lot of empty industrial space along Hamlin did not seem to be helping.

Mr. Hooper addressed the comments, noting that Mr. Winnie was curious about the evaluation of the major road corridors and wondered if that would be part of the Master Plan. Ms. Neary said it would be, and that the results would be included in the future land use alternatives. Mr. Hooper asked if M-59 would be included. Ms. Neary said they would look at all major



corridors, including M-59. Mr. Hooper asked about the status of the gateway project. Mr. Anzek confirmed that a gateway design and development concept was completed and approved by Council. Council suggested that they seek corporate sponsorship for the implementation and they were in the process. They had a few businesses that wanted to sponsor the gateways, and they hoped some would be built by the end of summer.

Mr. Hooper advised that the natural features portion of the Master Plan would be shown in a few months and anyone who had turned in a card would be notified about that forum. Ms. Neary pointed out that there would also be another workshop once the future land use alternatives were prepared.

Mr. Hooper referred to Mr. Kiefer's request for quantification of the economics, and he asked if that was considered for the SWOT analysis.

6 Planning Commission 01/31/2006 Discussed

Notes: Present for McKenna Associates, Inc. were John Jackson and Jim Brueckman.

Mr. Brueckman recapped the progress made to date and advised that the last few months had been spent working on the Future Land Use Map and text with the Technical Committee.

Mr. Brueckman called attention to the fact that Rochester Hills was entering a new era in its development - transitioning from developing community to developed community. Because the City faced issues of infill redevelopment of existing parcels, they tried to identify new tools to deal with those challenges. Three land use alternatives had been considered: Conventional, guided change and form based. Conventional was a use- first alternative, and the most common form of future land use. Guided change was based on conventional use regulation, and on reallocated land use areas within the City, to anticipate that some areas were changing drastically. The preferred approach was a blended alternative. That combined the best aspects of conventional with form based, or design planning. The traditional, use-specific approach was used for residential areas of the City, and the design approach was used for flexible land use areas, which corresponded with non-residential areas.

Mr. Brueckman introduced the latest version of the Future Land Use map. He pointed out the areas of the City planned for a conventional use base, mostly residential, and he noted that no change was planned from what existed currently. The places where form based planning would apply were shown in red, concentrated largely along Rochester Road. They also created a map that showed the natural features overlaid onto the Future Land Use map. It showed sensitive areas of the City, and would be an important tool for the City as infill developments came forward.

Mr. Jackson next discussed form based planning. He stated that

conventional zoning basically consisted of three areas of regulation to deal with what something looked like - setbacks, building heights and building designs. It also addressed uses permitted and at what densities. He advised that the difference between form based regulations and conventional regulations was the emphasis on different aspects of regulation, meaning that conventional would be heavier on use and density, and would not give elements of physical characteristics to a development. The form based approach dealt with the physical impacts of a development, and uses would still have to be regulated.

Mr. Jackson said that form based dealt with the streets - on street parking, pavement types - and how it affected the characteristic of the uses. It also addressed urban design standards - interaction with block structure, cul-de-sacs, setbacks from the street, building height, and architectural standards. Form based did not necessarily dictate a specific architectural style, but it was important to decide what characteristics a building would have. Something close to the street might have lots of doors or windows, porches, awnings and things of that nature. Uses would frequently be mixed, which had benefits. Entertainment and retail could be integrated, or where someone lived could be integrated with where they worked and shopped. Mixed-use developments could be more responsive to economic trends. If the office market went soft, a mixed-use development could be converted to retail on the first floor and residential above, for example.

Mr. Jackson next discussed the future land use categories, which were broken down into two categories - use-based land use categories and flexible future land use categories. The community was primarily single-family residential and everyone had a desire to maintain that. They developed the residential districts that reflected the desired patterns of development, such as lower density, one-acre lots, and density from 2-4 dwelling units per acre. They were developed to protect the existing patterns of development. Multiple-family districts were identified at 8-12 units per acre, which was largely characteristic of the existing uses. They developed a Residential Mixed Use category, recognizing that a lot of property had challenges. The concept behind that category was to give flexibility in terms of how sites would be laid out. Residential Mixed Use permitted a range of housing types, both attached and detached, for sites at least ten acres in size. The properties would offer a transition from the surrounding fabric of residential development already there. The parcels would have to be developed under the same density identified on the future Land Use Plan. They built in the possibility for density bonuses in order to get higher quality projects. Flexible use categories were also developed. The Regional Employment Center was developed after talking to the business community. It included light manufacturing, research and development and office headquarters. They also identified a number of mixed-use districts, which would take the place of conventional non-residential districts. The purpose of those districts would be to allow a range of uses, including residential, commercial, office, public and institutional. The need was because of the

changing market in commercial development and because the City would want high quality redevelopment. Mixed-use would be allowed on a site or within a building. For example, there could be residential or office above first floor retail. Higher density developments would be required to provide open space. The first mixed-use district, Mixed Use 1 (MU-1), would include residential and office but no retail. MU-2 would be slightly higher in intensity and would permit neighborhood commercial elements. MU-3 would be the most intense district and more commercial-oriented. It could house big-box development and higher-density residential. Mr. Jackson referred to the Landfill Planning Area, which he relayed presented a challenge (unfinished at the time of meeting). They did not know what the best approach would be for that area. They did want to have certain development standards in place to ensure appropriate transitions, and so sites adjacent to the landfill area would be held to the same high standards.

Mr. Jackson said that one of the most important things for flexible zoning, after setting density, form and use parameters, were the design standards. Mr. Brueckman continued that the design standards were about setting expectations. They identified interior site guidelines, including building location, building height, how the inside streets would look, pedestrian circulation, public and civic space and parking standards. He stressed that there were only about ten parcels in the whole City where the interior site design guidelines would be applicable. Most were along Rochester Road and they would be applicable in the case of a redevelopment.

Mr. Brueckman indicated that they had to insure there was a blend of uses and not too much of one type of development. The method suggested to regulate that would be floor area ratio. He explained how it would be calculated, and said that if you had a 10,000 square foot building on a two-acre site, for example, it would have a floor area ratio of .115. Three different buildings could have the same floor area ratio with different heights. Each use type would have a maximum floor area ratio and there would be standards for different types of uses. He referred to table 7.1 and discussed how ranges for commercial could be calculated. In the MU-1 district, retail commercial development would not be allowed to be any more intense than a typical pharmacy. Amenities would be required - plazas, parks, gathering spaces - and would have to equate to at least .05 percent of a development. He gave an example of a five-acre site in a MU-2 district where a developer was proposing commercial, office and residential townhomes and how much of each use would be allowed. Of the 217,800 square feet (five acres), the maximum area for commercial would be .2; the maximum area for office would be one; and the maximum area for residential units would be .2. That would allow up to 43,560 square feet of commercial, 217,800 of office and 43,560 of residential.

Mr. Brueckman discussed perimeter road frontage types: Type A, where the building would come close to the street with a front setback between 0 and 15 feet and Type B, which would require a front yard setback of 25-50 feet,

neither with parking in the front yard; Type C would require a setback of 70-90 feet and would permit one drive isle with parking on either side; Type D would allow more than one row of parking in the front yard with a 50-foot landscape buffer required. The building could be set as far back off the road as possible. He stated that even if those types were next to each other, they would want unified development. They identified where in the City each type of frontage would be allowed.

The final component Mr. Brueckman discussed was the interior site layout design standards. They were intended to create pedestrian-oriented development. Internal street design was a key focus and he talked about standards and types, and also about internal sidewalks and parking. He explained what would be appropriate in each district, but acknowledged that each case would be unique. They also added general standards for architecture with some pictures.

Mr. Brueckman pointed out some changes to the Future Land Use Map since October 2005. They showed all the private open space areas. They changed the underlying land use to R-3 from R-4 in the mixed residential area along Hamlin, east of Livernois. He recalled there was quite a bit of discussion about the intersections of Hamlin and Livernois, Auburn and Livernois, South Boulevard and Crooks and at South Boulevard and Livernois where changes were incorporated. Three corners at Hamlin and Livernois were now MU-1. At Livernois and Auburn, two parcels were removed from MU-2 and planned for R-4. Two parcels at the entrance to the multiple-family development were planned for MU-1, and the parcels at the southwest corner were planned for MU-1. All parcels at the corner of South Boulevard and Livernois were planned for MU-1, as were the corners at the northeast corner of Crooks and South Boulevard.

Mr. Hooper opened the public comments at 9:06 p.m.

**Floyd Vitale, 604 Grace, Rochester Hills, MI 48307** Mr. Vitale said his comments were in regards to the rezoning of the intersection at South Boulevard and Livernois.

Mr. Hooper advised that it was not being rezoned and that a developer had come forward to discuss the northwest corner at the last meeting because the Avondale Schools had decided to sell the school. Mr. Vitale asked if the zoning had changed. Mr. Hooper agreed that it was now planned as MU-1, and that Mr. Vitale was welcome to comment about that.

Mr. Vitale stated that as the area grew over the years and as Rochester Road was planned for more development, the subject area had always stayed residential and it had created a community there. To see it change into anything other than residential would impact the area greatly, as far as the residents were concerned. They were concerned traffic would increase. They were also concerned about the soccer field on one of the parcels.

**Peggy Shodowski, 983 Hillsborough, Rochester Hills, MI 48307** Ms.

Shodowski stated that she was at the meeting because of a similar concern about the intersection at South Boulevard and Livernois. She felt it was quite an entryway into the City and she was very concerned about mixed-use planned there. She referred to the pictures McKenna showed for a development in Troy, at Maple and Coolidge, and said she took the same pictures and that McKenna's did not depict what was really shown. The townhomes and retail were very close together and the sea of parking was not shown. She was concerned about density and parking issues. She noted the proposal for a glass-sided building for the intersection and she showed a picture of another glass-sided building for comparison (her documents were placed on file in the Planning Department). She stated that traffic was a huge issue and she had also taken pictures of the intersection at 8:45 a.m. on a weekday, showing cars backed up to the next road. She concluded that if the City was going to add mixed-use, there would be more congestion and they would need to seriously address the issue of traffic.

**Craig A. VanBibber, 3586 Hazelton Ave., Rochester Hills, MI 48307** Mr.

VanBibber also addressed the issue relating to the intersection of South Boulevard and Livernois. He stated that the general consensus of the residents in the vicinity was disapproval of what would potentially be qualified as progress. He understood that the tax base might benefit, but the general temperament of the area would be negatively impacted by an influx of traffic already compounded by gridlock. He gathered signatures on petitions and found that many people were outraged. The overall sentiments were that many people would be compelled to leave the area because they would be driven out by what they tried to get away from. They came to Rochester Hills for a rural area with trees, greenery and play areas. The idea of tearing down a historical building was very sad in the spirit of progress. Children played in that area routinely and it would turn into the start of a sad trend. Residents who came in the last 10-20 years had seen a tremendous growth spurt. The infrastructure would be impacted and roads would have to be widened, compounding the loss of the temperament and flavor of the area. He stated that it came down to greed and trading all the niceties of the Rochester Hills area.

**Jeff Buikema, 3610 S. Livernois, Rochester Hills, MI 48307** Mr.

Buikema mentioned a petition he brought, with 121 signatures by residents of Rochester Hills. He stated that he was really disappointed to hear that the Master Plan had already included the parcels rezoned to mixed-use. All the people who signed would like to keep it residential. The Commission had discussed the building as historic, and they also had import to unique properties, so not only was the building historic, but the entire parcel was unique and integral to the neighborhood. It was the only real usable green space within walking distance for most of the neighborhood. He appreciated the thought put into green space and asked that they consider keeping the area green. There were other uses than what Talon proposed. He

acknowledged that people could not stand in the way of progress, but he felt that progress was considered moving forward in a positive fashion and a better life, and that development and progress could not always be considered synonymous.

Mr. Delacourt clarified that the Master Plan, even if adopted in its current state, would not rezone a property. That was separate legislative action by City Council and the adoption of the Plan could not change zoning.

**Celeste Stimmel, 1297 Ruby Ave., Rochester Hills, MI 48307** Ms.

Stimmel was a resident in the neighborhood, and she opposed any change to the corner of South Boulevard and Livernois. When she first heard about the proposed change, she felt very passionate about keeping it the way it was, and found that others in the neighborhood felt the same. She stated that they did not need another store or office building. Regarding the historic part of the school, three people in her neighborhood thought it was supposed to stay as it was, in perpetuity, although the paperwork could not be found. She was also very concerned about safety at that corner because of traffic.

**Dan Brake, 4239 Sugar Grove Ct., Troy, MI 48098** Mr. Brake said he was present as the parent of an Oakland Steiner student. He advised that the Avondale School District put the property up for sale last year and there were a number of bidders. The land use issue came into play because Oakland Steiner School was one of the bidders, and they believed they made a very reasonable bid for the property as residential. Other bidders were much higher on the caveat that the property would be rezoned to commercial use. The school would very much like to stay, and it was very much consistent with their values; the soccer field would remain as open green space and be used by the neighbors. In the last three months, the land use designation for the three parcels got changed from residential to mixed-use. They were very much in favor of anything that would keep the land open. The presentation from the Parks people showed that area designated as semi-public parkland (as all schools were, Mr. Hooper advised). If the area were turned into some sort of development, with two and three stories of glass, it would look like commercial.

**Elizabeth Kata, 550 Lake Forest Road, Rochester Hills, MI 48309** Ms.

Kata said she was an 11-year resident of Rochester Hills, and she and others saw it as an area of open green space. A lot of people held that in very high esteem and that was why they moved from other areas. She wished to caution the Commission about the mixed-use designation. It seemed to her that it could be a slippery slope. As she viewed how the mixed-use would be divided into residential, office and commercial, it seemed that the residential portion was rather small. There were a fair number of commercial properties in Rochester Hills that were already vacant. She also cautioned about developing any open green space into more commercial property that might not be leased. Rochester Hills had a rural feel to it. The mixed development in other communities had made them become more and more urban. A good

example of that was Royal Oak. She did not think that was the desire for Rochester Hills. She noted Mr. Kaltsounis' description of his subdivision and the open space, and said that people held that in high regard. Mixed-use raised a red flag, and she felt they needed to be very cautious about how that was used, if at all. There was already heavy development on Rochester Road and that was starting to creep into the other parallel main roads. Little by little they could lose the rural feel of Rochester Hills, so she wanted them to be very careful about decisions made.

**Melinda Hill, 1481 Mill Race, Rochester Hills, MI 48306** Ms. Hill advised that she was a member of the Commission while on City Council, and she also had been a member of the Master Plan Technical Committee. She noted that the Plan had a great deal of information in it, and the chapter presented had some of the most technical information to date. Regarding the mixed-uses, she noted that most of the areas being talked about were already designated as some type of commercial development. She was concerned about what could be included in MU-1; specifically, business and personal service establishments (page 7.8). Some of those businesses could be considered retail, which was not allowed in MU-1. She would prefer that business and personal services uses be put under professional and general office or retail categories. That would truly eliminate retail in MU-1. The way it was worded currently would leave it open to dry cleaners, hair salons and so on. Another concern was that regarding amenities, she would like more done to identify the historic and cultural resources. She said that some detail was given in the last Plan, but she did not think that was improved after five years. There had been studies done, and they needed to recognize that those resources existed as amenities. She was concerned about the Hamlin/Livernois and Auburn/Livernois intersections changing to mixed-use. She thought other planning could be done, and she did not think they needed to call those areas out for the possibility of more office or retail.

**Paul Miller, 1021 Harding Ave., Rochester Hills, MI 48307** Mr. Miller said he found it somewhat disingenuous to say that they would not plan to do certain things when they would plan to do them at some point. He thought it was very important to include historical and natural resources. The City spent a lot of money to do a Natural Resources Inventory, and he felt it was important to include that information on the Future Land Use map. There were various parcels that were the most sensitive, high-ranking, priority one sites and they would be zoned for fairly dense uses. He thought it made sense to get all the information on the table and look at it all together rather than piecemeal, without a comprehensive view and common vision.

**Steve Kosmas, 3832 South Livernois, Rochester Hills, MI 48307** Mr. Kosmas said that the soccer field was very important because soccer balls ended up in their backyard and they were pretty happy about that. The soccer field was free. His son started kicking a ball at one year, at a friend's house, even though he did not have one at his own house, probably because he learned it watching the soccer field activity. It was very personal

to them and had a separate community. Many of the coaches were very friendly and he felt he was part of that community. The open green space was extremely important to them because they lived right there. The mixed-use bothered him because it sounded like a euphemism for what he did not want. The sense of community and the area staying the same was what everyone that lived there would like - with the school, the soccer field and the open green space. He would consider moving if they put in mixed-use.

**Beth Tilove, 769 Snowmass, Rochester Hills, MI 48309** Ms. Tilove said she noticed that quite a few site guidelines would be required with development, such as pedestrian walkways through parking lots, and she wondered if they would consider requiring trees to be planted in parking lots. She commented that in the summertime, the spots under the trees always went first. It would also reduce the heat buildup from the asphalt. She referred to not allowing a piecemealed look along the perimeter road and said that in other communities, they allowed for connections between parking lots. Those were very useful, because people could go from building to building without going out onto the traffic. It would also give many places to re-enter traffic and keep people off the road during rush hour traffic. She asked if connectors between parking lots would be feasible.

Mr. Hooper closed the public comments at 9:33 p.m. He referred to the intersection at Livernois and South Boulevard, and the proposed sale of the property, and indicated that two weeks ago, people came forward at the Planning Commission meeting to voice the same concerns. They wanted the City to do something about stopping the sale of the school. He advised that the City could not get involved, and that it was between the school and a prospective developer. If the developer successfully purchased the property, the City would then look at any proposed development. The City could not prohibit the sale or get involved with private deed restrictions. The property was a potential historic site and was undergoing analysis currently. Mr. Delacourt added that the Historic Districts Study Committee would consider the preliminary report at their next meeting. Mr. Hooper said that might affect development of the property.

Mr. Hooper advised that the purpose of the meeting was not to rezone properties. They were discussing a Plan for the future of the City and how development should proceed in certain areas. He referred to comments about the mixed-use designations and how little residential would be in each. He asked Mr. Brueckman if someone could develop 100% residential in MU-1, 2 or 3.

Mr. Brueckman replied that someone could propose just attached residential. Mr. Hooper confirmed that the mixed-use districts would not limit residential. He agreed with Ms. Hill's comments about business and personal uses in MU-1 and said that the Commission would talk about modifying it, and also about adding historical amenities.



Mr. Hooper advised Mr. Miller that the Natural Features Inventory, including steep slopes, was included in the Master Land Use Plan. It was not shown on the Future Land Use map, but was incorporated and well documented throughout the Plan. He also advised that there was currently a Steep Slope Ordinance under review, which would affect development of steep slope properties in the City. He referred to Ms. Tilove's suggestion about adding trees to parking lots, and he informed her that the Ordinance currently required that. Mr. Anzek added that it was in the more recent development standards, so some of the older developments were not subject to the requirements.

Mr. Kaltsounis referred to comments regarding keeping the neighborhoods the same, and he said that as a member of the Technical Committee, that was also his desire. The last Plan showed everything south of a certain line as R-4 (most dense residential). The new Plan preserved open space and showed it throughout. In the new Plan, McKenna kept the average of what currently existed. For example, Christian Hills sub had larger lots, so it was planned that way for the future.

Mr. Brueckman reiterated that the planned mixed-use areas, in most cases, lined up with existing commercial development. The areas would be called mixed-use areas, but that did not mean that mixed-use would definitely happen. It was really flexible use, and the intent was to provide a failing development the flexibility to facilitate redevelopment so it did not remain an eyesore, for example.

Ms. Brnabic said that standards to limit uses by square footages was mentioned, yet it said that a desire of mixed-use intensity was possible. If there was a standard to limit the use, she questioned how they would create a proper balance.

Mr. Brueckman responded that the floor area ratios, which established the maximum of any one use on a site, were identified by looking at existing developments. Ms. Brnabic rephrased the comment and said there was a standard for use, which could create a proper balance, but there would be versatility by demand, so a development might occur where there was a mixture of office, residential and commercial, but the office demand could drop, for example. She wondered at what point there would be a proper balance or, for example, if it would matter in MU-1, with office and residential, if office did not work out and it became totally residential.

Mr. Brueckman indicated that he did not think from the beginning that they could create the perfect balance of uses. They hoped to do that through the Plan. The point was to allow flexibility over time to help with the balance. When they talked about residential space turning into office - or vice versa - that would typically be seen if there was a two-story building with a different use on each floor. If office was not working on the second floor, for example,

they could change to lofts, for example. Someone might only build an office building on a site. If that did not work, they could change the use without having to go through a rezoning. They were the most concerned about the commercial because of the impacts. Within buildings, they would be able to create spaces for different uses.

Ms. Brnabic said that since they began reviewing the Plan, the Commission had to gain an understanding of form based and blended alternatives, and about protecting the integrity of the residential communities. They spent a lot of time on the mixed-uses because that was new. In the process she was told they were matching the existing pattern of the residential and that nothing would really change. However, she went through the material and found that was not true. They changed the categories from R-1 through R-4 to Residential 2, 2.5, 3 and 4, but the patterns were not being matched because the density was changed. She was not happy that they were encouraging higher density. She foresaw problems with certain areas and what could result.

Mr. Delacourt explained that none of the categories would replace the zoning districts unless they were changed during the Zoning Ordinance re-write.

Ms. Brnabic stated that the way they were categorized showed higher density. Mr. Delacourt said it was planned based on existing densities in the subdivisions. Ms. Brnabic referred to page 7.1 and said that a Residential 4, for example, would be four dwellings per acre. Currently, R-4 allowed 3.4 dwellings per acre. Mr. Delacourt said that the current Master Plan had one single-family residential district, and it did not make any density differences between the districts. The updated Plan tried to tighten that up on the map and they showed the prevailing land use more accurately. This was not intended to change the restrictions in the Zoning Ordinance or the densities allowed.

Ms. Brnabic said she understood what Mr. Delacourt offered, but noted that the Zoning Ordinance would have to be updated and if they wanted to match the Plan, they would have to re-write the density categories. Mr. Hooper indicated that was not necessarily the case and that they could keep it the same. Mr. Delacourt agreed, and stated that the Master Plan would not create a category that would allow an area to be redeveloped more densely than it was currently. Ms. Brnabic clarified that the density measures in R-1 through R-4 would not change due to the Plan. Mr. Delacourt said they were two completely separate issues - existing land use and the Zoning Ordinance regarding how the City zoned property.

Mr. Brueckman explained how they mapped the lot areas and said that based on that, they created density categories. He said they could change Residential 2 to Residential 1.9, noting that the intent was never to change the lot sizes in the Zoning Ordinance. The City was developed, so there was no point changing zoning district lot sizes. Ms. Brnabic agreed that was not the intention, noting the City was built out and in a stage of redevelopment,

but she wanted to make sure they would not overbuild.

Ms. Branbic mentioned that the multiple-family category was expected to be between 8 and 12 dwelling units per acre. She asked what density was required currently for multiple-family. Mr. Delacourt responded that RM-1 was based on a formula in the Ordinance, which allowed 8-12 units per acre, and the Plan was done according to the existing. Mr. Hooper advised that the density would be dealt with in the Zoning Ordinance, noting that the essence of the Master Plan was zoning.

Ms. Branbic said she had some concerns about the R-4 zoning for the area east of Livernois and north of South Boulevard. She pointed out that there was a lot of acreage off the main road that could eventually be sold and developed too densely. Her biggest concern with the density currently allowed was that someone would be able to put a dense development in the middle of the area. As the remaining acreage was developed in the area, high-density developments could be built in the middle of existing neighborhoods. She indicated that she would like to have another discussion later regarding that. She also realized that the new map showed the area as R-3 and questioned it because it was not mentioned as a change from the last meeting.

Mr. Hooper clarified that Ms. Branbic did not see a change from R-4 to R-3 for that area as problematic. Ms. Branbic felt it would be more in keeping with the area and that it was appropriate. Mr. Brueckman explained that when he discussed changes, he specifically brought up changes from the last iteration of the Future Land Use map. Mr. Hooper asked if anyone objected to it being shown as Residential 3. Mr. Kaltsounis agreed with R-3, noting he had lived in the area and that it was being more and more developed.

Mr. Kaltsounis indicated that he had a big problem with Guideline A in Table 7.3, which showed a 0-15 foot setback for street frontage. He said that if allowed, developers would definitely use the 0-foot setback and would try to pack as much commercial close to the road as possible. He pointed out the areas for Adams, Auburn, Walton Blvd., Tienken and Sould Boulevard, and noted that 0 feet was allowed a great deal of the way. He stressed that A (0-15 feet) should only be reserved for the Olde Towne area on Auburn Road, where needed. For the other areas, he recommended B (25-50 feet) as the minimum.

8 Planning Commission / 06/27/2006 Recommended for City Council  
City Council Joint Meeting Approval Regular Meeting

Notes: (Memo prepared by Derek Delacourt, dated June 24, 2006 had been placed on file and became part of the record thereof).

Present for the applicant was Amy Chesnut, McKenna Associates, Inc. 235 Main St., Suite 105 Northville, MI 48167.

Mr. Delacourt gave a brief overview of the process regarding the Master Land Use Plan Distribution Draft. He recapped that for over a year, a Technical Committee, comprised of members of the Planning Commission, City Council, Historic Districts Commission, Planning Staff and McKenna Associates, Inc. had been working on an update to the Master Land Use Plan. He emphasized that the draft was not going to be approved at this point, but just released for distribution to surrounding communities and reviewing agencies required by State law for a 95-day comment period. He advised that the draft had been available on the City's web site for over a month and that an electronic version was sent to all members. He introduced Ms. Chesnut of McKenna Associates, Inc., who outlined an agenda, including that they would discuss the adoption process, and go through the basics of the plan, the implementation and the next steps.

Ms. Chesnut advised that stakeholder workshops were held in February of 2005, and that there was an online survey to solicit additional comments from the public. That information was used by the Technical Committee to formulate some of the goals and objectives in the Plan, which occurred in the last quarter of 2005. For the past five months, the Technical Committee had worked on refining the Plan and had developed the Implementation chapter.

Ms. Chesnut noted that the adoption process was different than that of the previous Master Plan. It was now a multi-stage process. The first part was a 95-day distribution to surrounding communities and required governmental agencies for review and comment. During that time, there would be the opportunity to review and discuss the plan in more detail. She advised that there would be an open house on August 29, at which the public would have further time to comment on the plan. After they received comments from all surrounding communities and entities, a Public Hearing was planned, and the Planning Commission would be the body that approved the Plan.

Ms. Chesnut explained that the Planning Commission would make a recommendation to City Council about approving distribution of the draft, but it could not be sent out until City Council approved it. City Council had the option to approve it or send it back to the Commission. If the Plan was approved for distribution, it would be sent to the surrounding communities, the County, SEMCOG, and other agencies for 95-days. She reiterated that the Plan was being reviewed for a recommendation only and that it was not being approved in any manner. There was still a lot of time for Planning Commission, City Council and the public to comment on the Plan. The main public opportunity would be at the open house, an informal event with booths set up at City Hall to view different components of the Plan and get answers to any questions.

Ms. Chesnut continued that after the 95-day comment period, the Planning Commission would take all the comments received and consider them in any revisions to the Plan. All the comments received would be advisory and it would not be required to incorporate them, but they would be considered.

*Subsequent to that, the Planning Commission would hold a Public Hearing to received additional comments and the Plan could be adopted at that time.*

*Ms Chesnut gave some background information on the Plan. She stated that Rochester Hills was entering into a new phase of development, going from a growing community to a built-out community looking at redevelopment of existing sites, as opposed to green field development. New development would be on smaller, infill sites and new development on large, vacant parcels would become increasingly rare. She noted that of the large parcels left, many had environmental issues that had to be taken into consideration. She referred to the existing zoning regulations, noting that they had been tailored for a growing community and had served Rochester Hills as it had grown, but they did not anticipate redevelopment. New planning and zoning tools were needed to deal effectively with growth in the community. The future land use plan included tools to deal with conditions affecting the City, including flexibility in land uses for nonresidential areas. Flexibility meant there were areas planned for nonresidential uses where several uses on a site were permitted. Something might have traditionally been all commercial; now commercial and office and some residential would be allowed. A traditional use-specific approach had been planned for many areas, but primarily, the residential land use areas would stay the way they were. The key goal of the Technical Committee and McKenna was protection of the residential areas. No density or land use changes were proposed for single-family areas. Secondly, they heard from the public that expansion of commercial uses beyond where they were currently located or zoned was not desired. They also needed to maintain the nonresidential tax base, while keeping the nonresidential properties from becoming obsolete. Another goal was to have quality development to improve the appearance of the City. They encouraged more timeless architecture and amenities within a development, and encouraged pedestrian connections - or emphasized the pedestrian focus - while taking into account that there were auto-oriented uses.*

*Ms. Chesnut showed the Future Land Use Map on the overhead projector, noting that there were essentially the same categories from the past meetings. The Mixed Use areas were changed to Flexible Use, because mixed use was not required on a site. Flexible would allow mixed use, with the provision that design criteria be followed. She advised of the four Residential categories, which had been planned based on existing development patterns in the City, and were intended to preserve the character of the neighborhoods. There was a Multiple-Family designation, which included apartments, townhouses, and condos; and One-Family Cluster housing, which included open space developments. There were now Flexible Use one through three designations (FU-1 to FU-3), all of which were based on conventional, or use-specific, zoning with an overlay option that would allow a developer to choose between conventional or an overlay, and permit a variety of uses on the site. FU-1 would permit residential and office, but no retail; FU-2 and FU-3 would permit office, retail and residential.*

The difference between 2 and 3 was the intensity of retail. The overlay would allow mixing the uses or a single use on the site, but there would have to be compliance with the design standards and guidelines set up in the Master Plan. The specifics would have to be worked out in a Zoning Ordinance amendment. There was an Office category and those areas were planned in general along Barclay and along South Boulevard. Ms. Chesnut pointed out a proposed new designation called the Regional Employment Center, which essentially encompassed the SmartZone boundaries. She advised that the Landfill Planning and Private Recreation areas were also new, and they would help make sure open space areas stayed open and preserved. (Ms. Chestnut had a brief problem with the laptop so several other comments were taken).

Mr. Kaltsounis stated that as a member of the Technical Committee, it was important to him to try to preserve the density of the current residential areas. He mentioned that he used to live on Hazelton (east of Livernois, south of Auburn) and the area had homes in the R-1 and R-2 density range. It had become more dense over the last few years because there were a lot of R-4 developments being added. He noted that Ms. Chesnut mentioned the density did not change. It was recommended that it be less dense than the current R-4 zoning, and they proposed preserving it through the Plan. They hoped to change the Zoning Ordinance to help protect what was there and keep the neighborhoods the way they were.

Mr. Boswell advised that anyone wishing to speak would need to fill out a card and turn it in to the Secretary.

Mr. Delacourt stated that the Technical Committee wished for input from the members regarding the Distribution Draft. They wished to know if anything had been missed, or if something changed that required discussion or resolution before they went forward with the distribution.

Ms. Chesnut showed the existing commercial zoning and where Flexible Business areas were planned. There were some areas along Auburn that were currently zoned, but not planned, commercial in the future. There were areas with PUDs that were planned to be Flexible areas and there were existing areas zoned commercial that were not planned for future Flexible use.

Ms. Chesnut explained that new overlay districts were proposed for the Flexible Business areas and the Mixed Residential areas. The properties would essentially have two zonings; the base zoning and an overlay of Flexible use. It would give the property owner the right to choose which standards they wanted to comply with. The overlay zones would permit more Flexible uses than allowed in conventional zoning. The development standards would be tailored to make sure that the overlay zones were compatible with conventional zones. A benefit of the overlay approach would be that property owners would retain the rights they currently possessed

*under conventional zoning and would also have another option to develop their property. The benefit to the City would be that a clear vision could be established for redevelopment - how the City would want things to look. It could include how tall the buildings should be, the materials that should be used, where parking should be, etc.*

*Ms. Chesnut stated that the implementation of the Plan was something the Technical Committee had worked a lot on over the last couple of months. She noted that a plan was only as good as its implementation, and it was a very important part of the Master Plan. Some specific implementation tasks included Zoning Ordinance amendments; natural features activities (Steep Slope Ordinance, woodlands map); that significant economic development activities were needed to retrain and recruit businesses and to find ways to encourage redevelopment within Olde Towne and the Regional Employment Center (REC); identifying Historic Districts; and continuous planning. She advised that new zoning districts would need to be created for the Regional Employment Center, as would overlays for the Mixed Residential, Flexible Use areas and Landfill Planning areas. They needed to look at existing development standards for parking, landscaping, and other design guidelines, to make sure they were compatible with the vision of the Plan. They needed to ensure that the conventional development was compatible with the Flexible overlay districts. She advised that there was a Natural Features Inventory prepared by Dr. Steve Niswander, and some recommendations from that analysis included updating the City's floodplain map, adopting a Steep Slope Ordinance, riverbank restoration, protecting woodland areas, looking at a stormwater management program, and looking at Leed (green) building.*

*Ms. Chesnut referred to implementation of economic development and stated that they discussed establishing an Economic Development Committee to investigate the continued relevance of the Olde Towne Corridor Study; promoting redevelopment of key corridors in commercial areas; developing the M-59 corridor as a premier office location, and addressing parking and other related issues.*

*Ms. Chesnut talked about designating historic and cultural resources as an implementation of the Plan. She stated that they should raise public awareness of the Historic Districts, and make sure they incorporate historic preservation into the land use and zoning decisions. The Plan must be looked at every five years, but some things dictated that it be looked at more often. They must update the Parks and Recreation Plan (done) and the Master Thoroughfare Plan, and implement the Gateways Plan. Ms. Chesnut asked if there were questions. Mr. Delacourt added that they would like any input and wanted to make sure they had come up with a Plan both boards felt comfortable moving forward.*

*Mr. Yalamanchi asked if they tried to take into consideration the parameters of Rochester Hills and the potential changes in other communities when they*

developed the Plan.

Ms. Chesnut agreed they took those items into consideration. She reminded that other cities would have an opportunity to comment on the Master Plan and see if it impacted them. Mr. Yalamanchi asked if we looked at other cities' Master Plans, which Mr. Delacourt affirmed. Mr. Yalamanchi asked about residential density and keeping it the same or lowered. Ms. Chesnut responded that one of the concerns heard loud and clear from the public was about making sure the neighborhoods were preserved. The four single-family Residential zoning districts were identified, which corresponded to the development pattern that had evolved. In some areas, development evolved that was less dense than what it was currently zoned. If there were a lot of parcels divided, it would change the neighborhood's character, so they planned areas as they existed.

Mr. Delacourt indicated that there were a couple of areas in the City where that was the case. He explained that some areas were currently zoned R-4, which was the most dense of the single-family designations. Much had been redeveloped by people assembling parcels, but the underlying parcels had been the size of R-2 or R-3 zoned parcels. The updated Master Plan identified those areas and planned lower density zoning - and rezonings - which could be implemented through amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Yalamanchi asked if they would try to amend the Zoning Ordinance in accordance with the Master Plan. Mr. Delacourt said that the current Master Plan did not have various residential density categories, so there was not a basis to recommend that the City implement the rezonings. The proposed Plan would provide a basis, should the Planning Commission and City Council want to rezone parcels.

Mr. Yalamanchi asked for clarification about the three Flexible Use designations. He asked if the business areas would change to include business and residential. Ms. Chesnut said there was an option in FU-2 and 3, but FU-1 would not permit retail. Mr. Yalamanchi asked if there was retail in FU-1 areas currently. Ms. Chesnut said she did not believe so, but it was pointed out that west of Crooks, south of Auburn there were parcels with retail development that were planned for FU-1. Ms. Chesnut explained that there was a lot of "hodge podge" along Auburn, and they tried to organize and improve the Auburn Road corridor, and tried to determine if different types of land uses would be appropriate. In some areas, there might be commercial that was now being planned for single-family because they were in a single-family area of Auburn.

Mr. Yalamanchi asked if FU-2 would allow retail and residential and if it added retail. Ms. Chesnut corrected that none of the Flexible Use areas added retail; they allowed other uses in the commercial areas. Mr. Delacourt said that there were areas along the Auburn corridor that were zoned B-1, and only allowed small retail or small professional offices, but under the new Plan, if those areas were redeveloped, they could only have office or



residential and the retail would become non-conforming. The Master Plan would not make the existing retail non-conforming because of the underlying zoning, and the City would have to initiate rezonings.

Ms. Hardenburg read the first paragraph of page 7.2 : "It is intended that development in the residential land use categories be tied to overall density in terms of units per net buildable acre." She asked if that meant if there was a site with nine acres of wetlands and six buildable acres, if the density would be based on the six acres, not the total 15. Ms. Chesnut agreed it would. Ms. Hardenburg thought that was wonderful to hear. Mr. Delacourt pointed out that the Zoning Ordinance would define what was buildable. Currently, it was defined that 50% of open space could not be counted toward buildable density. An applicant could be granted a Wetland Use Permit by City Council and a portion could become buildable. Ultimately, City Council would make the determination about a buildable area in a zoning district should an amendment come forward. Ms. Hardenburg clarified that if they kept the current zoning, 50% of a wetland area would be counted as buildable under the Open Space provisions of the Subdivision Ordinance. She commented that she like the wording in the new Plan.

Ms. Brnabic asked for an explanation of the objective on page 6.3, 12: "Seek to overcome the perception that the City may already have enough medium and high density development."

Ms. Chesnut explained that part of the goal was to identify areas for alternative types of housing. That could be senior housing, attached condos, or other developments that appeared denser. The objective was to work together to assert that those types of uses could be encouraged and could happen in an appropriate fashion in the City. Mr. Delacourt said he did not really remember where the term "perception" came from, and said they would go back and look at that. He did not really like that term. Ms. Chesnut added that the intent was to deal with alternative types of housing.

Mr. Dettloff referred to the Economic Development Strategy and asked Mr. Delacourt if it was the intent that a strategy be put into place once the Plan was adopted or if it could be done simultaneously with the final steps or as an on-going process. Mr. Delacourt believed it was being done simultaneously, but they wanted to identify what the City did regarding that in the Master Plan, and to make sure that the Planning Commission and City Council were supportive of the goals and objectives for economic development.

Mr. Casey said it was true that when they began the process, the decision was made to develop an Economic Development Strategy as a part of the Master Plan, and as soon as the Plan was accepted, it would become the vision of the community. It was a general strategy in that there were bullet point items the City needed to develop item by item over the next few years. Many of the strategies had already been implemented, and he referred to a

business retention and attraction program, which the City already had. The goal was basically to continue establishing and growing those programs in the future.

Mr. Kaltsounis pointed out another feature that was added. Throughout the residential areas, there was a lot of green shown, which was open space used to retain certain densities. The Committee identified those areas in the proposed Plan so the properties could not be touched. He mentioned that in his sub, there was a large parcel which was a wetland considered open space, and it had been identified so no one could try to develop it.

Mr. Boswell opened the public comments at 8:23 p.m.

**John Gaber, Williams, Williams, Ruby and Plunkett, P.C., 380 N. Old Woodward, Suite 300, Birmingham, MI 48009** Mr. Gaber thanked the boards for the opportunity to present. He asked Mr. Boswell if it would be appropriate to speak about senior housing with reference to a particular area on the map, and Mr. Boswell asked him to continue. Mr. Gaber stated that his client owned the corner and four parcels to the north and two to the east at South Boulevard and Crooks (northeast corner). The property was currently zoned R-4, and was currently master planned Senior Housing. That category had not been carried through to the new Plan. He suspected that one of the Flexible Use categories would be appropriate for senior housing. His client believed it was a great area for senior housing, and he noted that one of the goals of the Plan was to foster that type of development and help residents stay in the City. He suggested that the owners of the property not be penalized for trying to develop senior housing, consistent with the current Master Plan. Under the proposed Plan, the corner showed FU-1, which would allow office, residential uses and senior housing, but the lots to the north and east would continue to be zoned and master planned Residential with a Mixed Residential overlay. He did not believe Mixed Residential permitted senior housing because it only permitted the same density that was currently there - 3.4 units per acre - which he did not believe would be feasible for a senior housing community. He believed that the area would be good for senior housing because there was commercial across the street in Troy and across Crooks. He said they would like to request the ability to build senior housing under the new Plan. They believed senior housing with a retail component would be appropriate if the retail were on the corner. He requested that the area be master planned for senior housing and some retail, which could be done with FU-2 for the whole area, or FU-2 for the corner and the lots surrounding that as FU-1. That would be consistent with retail on the other three corners. He concluded that they would appreciate not being penalized with the new Plan and precluded from doing senior housing, and he asked for consideration in that regard.

**Owen Winnie, 833 Hampton Circle, Rochester Hills, MI 48307** Mr. Winnie referred to the Hampton area between John R and Rochester and Auburn and Hamlin, and asked if it had changed since the May 4 draft. Ms. Chesnut

said that area had not changed. Mr. Winnie referred to the Olde Towne Corridor and asked if that referred to Auburn Road, which was confirmed. He said he was involved in committees relative to a study that had been done ten years ago for that area, and asked if the study they had referred to was the same. Ms. Chesnut said it was a component of the 1999 Master Plan. Mr. Winnie asked what the recommendations in the Master Thoroughfare Plan were relative to Auburn Road.

Mr. Delacourt responded that the component of the 1999 Master Plan talked about different roadway configurations, including on-street parking and redefinition of the lanes, and the proposed Plan tied back to that study. There were no other changes proposed that were not part of the first study. Mr. Winnie said that when he was involved, the business people were not receptive to many things related to control of traffic, the possibility of curbing the street or the possibility of providing parking to the rears of the businesses. He had lived in Hampton almost 30 years and had looked at Auburn for all that time. There had been some improvements, but he stated that the area between John R and Dequindre was an absolute embarrassment to the City. He had not seen anything positive done to improve it. He referred to an operation on the southwest corner of Auburn and John R that had gone out of business and said it was a mess. He felt it reflected on the environment of that corridor from at least John R to Dequindre. He reiterated that it was an absolute disgrace. Although it was a gateway that was somewhat upstream, people coming into the City westward down Auburn saw a terrible appearance. He stated that it would be really nice if they did some action planning as it related to Auburn Road. He also thought the Economic Development strategy was extremely critical. He stated that economic development and planning had to go hand in hand. The Planning Commission and the City Council had to embrace an Economic Development Strategy, and that strategy had to be in the Master Plan. If not, there would be economic development going in one direction and planning in another. It was oftentimes difficult when the economic development people were involved in pushing new development in the City and the Planners were saying it was not part of the strategy. He complimented the Planning Commission and Staff, and especially McKenna Associates, Inc. for doing an absolutely good job on the proposed Plan.

Mr. Boswell closed the public comments.

Mr. Rosen said he still had doubts about eight stories along M-59 in any significant amount. He thought they had to be very careful about using the words "encouraging development" in the Regional Employment Center (REC). He thought "encouraging" might be a little too strong. In all areas, he felt the emphasis should be on "allow" or "accommodate" and not "promote" or "encourage," because when they promoted or encouraged, he was not sure they knew how to do that to make the right decisions for economics and substitute their judgment for sound business practices. When he first saw the REC, he asked himself if someone looked at the Master Plan and saw

the big, blue REC, if it would change their decision about where to live. If so, the members might want to think about not doing the whole area. For example, the REC included the mobile home park, so he wondered if they would be suggesting that it go away and if it was something the City should do. He was not sure. He thought they might be overdoing the incentive concept for redevelopment. He believed they did not need it, and he thought there was enough money to be made in the City and that good landlords would keep their areas current due to competition. He noted that Mr. Frankel was doing it at Hamlin and Rochester because the center had become functionally obsolete and it was time to tear it down and rebuild it. He would get double the rent and be far better off. On having residential plus another use on a site, whether it be office or commercial, he felt it would be very lukewarmly received, if at all, because the City was not a downtown and never was intended to be. It was intended to be a nice, residential, suburban community. He thought the Lorna Stone development at South Boulevard and Adams would be the test. If that succeeded he would be surprised, but it would tell the tale. He hoped it did not fair poorly because it would be hard for that part of town.

Mr. Winnie referred to Mr. Rosen's comments about the REC and said he did not quite understand what he meant about it changing whether people would want to live there. He asked him to elaborate.

Mr. Rosen said that there were a lot of subdivisions at Adams and Hamlin going east to Crooks and to the east of Livernois and south down to South Boulevard. With the area identified as it was, he wondered whether people would say they did not want to be near it, and if it would have an effect on decisions people made about buying houses in the future. If they saw the area as ORT, it would not be such a general concept.

Mr. Winnie said that he had looked at the corridor of M-59 for many years. He watched Softball City grow and saw the halo of lights they had at night, yet south of Hamlin and east of Squirrel there were very substantial residential communities being built and people buying expensive homes in that general area. Those people backed up to Volkswagen and other high rise buildings, and it did not discourage them from buying, and their homes were still attractive. The areas south of Hamlin were buffered by open space, and homes sat beyond that. In terms of discouraging any residential development, he did not think it had happened yet, and the area was a mess before they got into the consent judgment. There was going to either be vacant land there (Softball City) or property that would be developed for economic purposes in that corridor, and no new residential development on the landfill site. He did not see that as a discouragement for people who wanted to live in the area because there were already homes there. They were being built while other nonresidential developments were being built. He did not think it was a negative; it was more of a positive. He referred to the City of Troy, noting that it had a well-balanced land use plan - a strong commercial and office base and a strong residential base. He remarked that

*Rochester Hills should be so fortunate, but it was not. The founding fathers decided when it became a City that the best way to sell city-hood was to take the things the township had and put them in the Charter. The thing they wanted first was to be a bedroom community, and bedroom communities meant that those that lived there had to pay the fare for the needed improvements. He thought it was a step as far as they could go in the City trying to balance the land use component. He did not see that as being a discouragement or making people shy away from the City. He thought it would be fine when it was developed. He had a lot of faith in the Planning Commission and City Council that whatever materialized would be in good taste and would not scare people away. It was a residential community and that was not going to change. He thought it was unfortunate, to some degree, that there was not a better land use balance in the City.*

*Mr. Delacourt stated that there was an effort to coordinate the REC area, which included the SmartZone, existing land uses of residential, industrial, some office and retail, and various master planned areas. They proposed a phased, or integrated, zoning district to allow coordinated redevelopment of the area. That was the consensus from the Tech Committee meetings and from initial Planning Commission meetings. The intent was a vision for the entire area, and he agreed that it was a large area of change on the map, which had yet to be defined through the Zoning Ordinance. They did not know if people would request rezonings or if the boards would initiate them.*

*Mr. Kaltsounis spoke about living in the area and said that it was one of the things throughout the process that he really had to fight with, because no one was more affected than he was. He noted that he lived south of Auburn across from the mobile home park. He spoke with a lot of people in his subdivision and one thing people said was that the City should come up with something new to get the area moving. They talked at the Tech Committee meetings about the height of buildings off of Auburn. He was concerned about having higher buildings transitioning to Auburn so it was palatable to the people who lived in the area. He said he would love to see ORT there, and he would be interested to see how the area would evolve if what they did helped. He pointed out that there were a lot of good comments and offered the following motion.*

**MOTION** by Kaltsounis, seconded by Hardenburg, that the Planning Commission recommend to City Council the Distribution Draft of the Master Land Use Plan of 2005/2006 as presented at the Planning Commission meeting of June 27, 2006.

*Mr. Hooper referred to the REC text and said the description was what bought him: "This district, Regional Employment Center, is intended to be the economic engine of the City and will accommodate a wide range of business types, such as light manufacturing, research and development and headquarter operations." He stated that how the district was written would be how things developed, but it would provide flexibility, and that was the*

*whole form-based plan they were going to for redevelopment of the City. He indicated that it would always be a residential community, and that was not going to change. The areas that were blighted or becoming blighted needed flexibility to encourage redevelopment and to provide an economic base for the City. He thought that was a primary focus of the district. How it turned out would evolve, but he believed the REC would be a key component.*

*Mr. Delacourt said he made notes about the use of the terms "encourage" and "incentive." He also made a note about eight stories. He thought the intent was there, but before the final, those issues had to be looked at and discussed by the Planning Commission. He pointed out that Mr. Gaber was correct that the area he referred to was master planned for senior housing and was taken out of the proposed Plan. He advised that FU-1 did allow senior housing, but the density had not been determined. Mixed-Residential allowed senior housing, but tied it to the underlying zoning.*

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### **Text of Legislative File 2005-0107**

..Title

Request for approval of the 2005/2006 Master Land Use Plan Distribution Draft as required to be sent to adjacent communities, schools and required State agencies for a 95-day review and comment period

..body

Whereas, the State's Municipal Planning Act, Act 168 of the Public Acts of 1959, as amended, requires that cities update their Master Plans every five years; and

Whereas, a draft of the Plan is required to be sent out for a 95-day review and comment period to surrounding communities and other required agencies; and

Whereas, the 2005/2006 updated draft of the Master Land Use Plan was recommended for approval for distribution by the Rochester Hills Planning Commission at a publicly noticed meeting on June 27, 2006.

Resolved, that the Rochester Hills City Council hereby approves the 2005/2006 draft of the Master Land Use Plan for a 95-day distribution period to adjacent communities, the County, schools and State and other agencies registered with the City of Rochester Hills.