

**To:** Commerce Township Board of Trustees

**From:** Commerce Township Planning Department  
David Campbell, AICP – Planning Director

**Date:** April 9, 2018

**RE:** April 2018 Monthly Planning Department Report  
(covering March 8 through April 9, 2018)

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### Development Proposals

- **Five & Main (Aikens mixed-use development)** – The Planning Commission held a public hearing during a special meeting on March 19, 2018 at 6pm for the Five & Main mixed-use development (public hearing required because Five & Main is proposed as a Planned Unit Development, PUD). The public hearing was well-attended, although only one member of the public spoke during public discussion. Bruce Aikens and his team (incl. his engineer, architect, and landscape architect) gave a comprehensive presentation of the development, including the site’s layout, mix of land uses, circulation, landscaping, and public amenities. After closing the public hearing and a discussion amongst the members of the Planning Commission, the Planning Commission by a unanimous (6-0, one absence) vote gave their formal recommendation of approval for the Five & Main PUD. Five & Main now proceeds to the Township Board, who have the option of granting final PUD approval as early as their regular meeting on April 10. If the Township Board grants final PUD approval, a fully-detailed site plan must go back before the Planning Commission for PUD Site Plan approval.
- **Windwheel Estates (SW corner of Loon Lake and Benstein Roads)** – The Township Board granted approval of a 23-unit single-family residential site condominium at their meeting on March 20, subsequent to the Planning Commission’s recommendation of approval on March 5.
- **Medical marijuana caregiver growing operation (2044 Winner St.)** – The Primary Caregiver Cultivation Building special land use was approved by the Planning Commission on March 5. Subsequently, the Primary Caregiver (Elias Akouri) has withdrawn his application and forfeited his approval. The review process made the Township aware of concerns from neighboring residents of the odors being generated by the existing Caregivers currently operating within the Winner Industrial Park, and the owner of the three buildings within the park is working with the Township on installing filters to better control the odors. The existing Caregivers within Winner Industrial Park are considered legal non-conforming uses, as they were allowed after the passing of the State’s Medical Marijuana Act of 2008 but prior to the Township adopting new standards for Primary Caregiver Cultivation Buildings in 2015.
- **Michigan Schools & Government Credit Union (Pontiac Trail and Walnut Lake Road)** – A new drive-through credit union is proposed on vacant land at the corner of Pontiac Trail and Walnut Lake, just west of the former Dick Morris Chevrolet dealership. The

property is zoned B-3 (General Business) and a drive-through is a special land use in B-3. A public hearing for the special land use has been scheduled for the Planning Commission's regular meeting of April 16, 2018. The developer's hope is to get special land use approval and corresponding site plan approval at the April 16 PC meeting.

- **Metro Environmental (1025 Metro Dr)** – Metro proposes to double the size of their building at Metro Drive and Ladd Road. The existing site is nonconforming in that it doesn't meet the current standards of the Zoning Ordinance relative to site design and outdoor storage. The Planning Commission's role any time a nonconforming site seeks approval for an expansion is to require the site be brought into reasonable compliance with the current standards of the Zoning Ordinance in proportion to the scale of the improvement they hope to make. Metro Environmental hopes to be on the Planning Commission's agenda for April 16, 2018.

#### **Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)**

- **Regular meeting on March 22, 2018** – At their regular meeting on March 22, the ZBA took the following action:
  - Removed from the table, then approved a Dimensional Variance for a proposed deck at 5860 Waycroft that would encroach into the minimum rear yard setback.
  - Tabled action on an application for a Sign Exception for a new ground sign at 700-810 Welch Road (Welch Tech Center), such that the applicant could work with the Planning & Building Departments on the location of a solar panel that would illuminate the sign.
  - Denied an application for a Dimensional Variance for an existing fence at 4980 Duck Lake Road that exceeds the maximum fence height requirement, encroaches into the required front setback from the road, and encroaches in to the public right-of-way.
- **Special meeting o April 12, 2018 at 5:30pm** – The ZBA agreed to hold a special meeting for the Sign Exception for the Welch Road Tech Center, an item that was tabled at the March 22 regular ZBA meeting. The applicant was willing to pay the fee for a special meeting to avoid waiting until the ZBA's next regular meeting on May 24, 2018.

#### **Planning Commission**

- **Special meeting of March 19, 2018** – See discussion above on the Planning Commission's review and action for the Five & Main PUD.
- **Regular meeting on April 16, 2018** – In December 2017, the PC meeting for April was scheduled for April 16 to avoid conflicts with Easter, Passover, and Spring Break for Walled Lake Schools. At the meeting, the PC is expected to review:
  - Site plan w/ special land use for MSG Credit Union (discussed above)
  - Site plan for expansion of Metro Environmental (discussed above)