

**FINAL  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

Monday, March 9, 2026  
2009 Township Drive  
Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

**A. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairperson Parel called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

**ROLL CALL:** Present: Brian Parel, Chairperson  
Joe Loskill, Secretary  
George Weber  
Caitlin Bearer  
Mickey McCanham  
Absent: Brian Winkler, Vice Chairperson (excused)  
Brady Phillips (excused)  
Also Present: Dave Campbell, Township Planning Director  
Paula Lankford, Senior Planner  
Bethany Miller, Associate Planner  
Debbie Watson, DDA Director

**B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION** by Loskill, supported by McCanham, to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Agenda of March 9, 2026. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION** by Weber, supported by Loskill, to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of February 2, 2026, as written.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**D. UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES**

Caitlin Bearer – Zoning Board of Appeals

- We have not had a meeting since our last meeting.
- We are having one this month, but there are no petitioners.

Dave Campbell – They are overdue to do some housekeeping. They have to elect their officers for the year and approve their bylaws, something they couldn't do at their January meeting because we did not have a quorum. We had a last minute absence.

Debbie Watson – Downtown Development Authority

- I really have nothing new to update since our last meeting.
- I would just say that we're excited to have two items on your agenda this evening for Five & Main. We're looking forward to those. I did review the Planning Department report, and also Brian Winkler's comments that he submitted via email, and I am in agreement with those suggestions.
- Lastly, I would note that Randy Thomas called this morning. He got called out of state at the last minute today, so he sends his regrets that he couldn't be here tonight.

George Weber – Township Board of Trustees

- The last Trustee meeting was February 10<sup>th</sup>. A few items of note.

- First, we appointed Susan Spelker to another 4-year term for the DDA, expiring in 2030.
- We've again hired a local Michigan company to do a rate study for our water and sewer.
  - As most people know, our water bill is greatly out of our control since all of our water is supplied by the Great Lakes Water Authority. However, the sewer rates are directly in control of the Township, so we can figure out how to stay ahead of the curve, ahead of the maintenance curve, and keep our rates as low as possible, we do a study at least every other year. With the amount of disruption with the water supply lately, we're starting to do it every year to make sure we're on top of it.
  - Part of that study also goes into how and what our plan is for reviewing all of our infrastructure, and making sure we don't have some of the issues that we see in some of the surrounding communities with water, main breakage, sewer breakage, etc. So, we're trying to stay up on that.
- We've introduced two ordinances, mostly as it relates again to water and sewer and moving to a private contractor for managing our water and sewer, which should ultimately equate to about a 50% savings for our residents over the long term.
- We approved an ordinance for our property exemptions for our property taxes. So, if you meet a threshold which is basically double the government threshold for the poverty level, there can be an exemption for those individuals within the Township.
- We approved new employee job descriptions and employee policies. Basically just an update for something that's normal housekeeping that we do every so many years.
- It might be new information for some, but the owners of Uptown and Zerbo's are selling their businesses, or have sold, and so we have transferred the liquor license to the new owners. The new owners have extensive experience within the hospitality and restaurant business. We think they've got their heads screwed on straight and we're looking forward to working with them going forward.
- We approved the DDA cash advance for the next six months.
- Finally, we will be listening to bond counsel and engaging in some of the financials on what it might take to have a bond for the pathway system, should the residents so approve that at the November election.

#### **E. PUBLIC DISCUSSION ON MATTERS FOR WHICH THERE IS NO PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULED**

**Chairperson Parel opened to Public Discussion on matters for which there is no public hearing scheduled.**

No comments.

**Chairperson Parel closed Public Discussion on matters for which there is no public hearing scheduled.**

#### **F. TABLED ITEMS**

None.

## **G. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

## **H. SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None.

## **I. NEW BUSINESS**

### **ITEM I.1. PPU#17-0001 – FIVE & MAIN PUD TENANT HANDBOOK**

Dave Campbell – I.1. and I.2. certainly go hand in hand. I'm going to pull up the overall development plan for Five & Main. This is something that the Planning Commission is certainly very familiar with. We have been working on this for over 10 years, and it's really coming to fruition, and hopefully tonight is part of having this come to fruition.

For anyone in the audience who needs to get their bearings, this is the big roundabout at Pontiac Trail and M-5/Martin Parkway. This is all the land next door to Walmart. Walmart sits right about there. These are all the apartments that you see under construction. Several of these buildings are occupied and the residential developer who is running that part of the project, Continental Properties, tells us that they should be complete with their apartment development by the middle of this year.

Also, within the Five & Main development, the Dort Financial Credit Union, which sits on that lot right there, is under construction as we speak. Their steel has gone vertical over the last couple weeks. Another sign of progress is the traffic signal right here at what is now a 4-legged intersection of Pontiac Trail, Walnut Lake Road and the new road called Pinewood Avenue. The signal was hung in January and it was energized and became operational about two weeks ago now. So that's where things stand overall with the Five & Main development.

What's going to be discussed this evening is the next commercial building to be considered within Five & Main, which is this building right here, which we've interchangeably called either Building G or shopette. Every building within the Five & Main development has a letter assigned to it, and this happens to be Building G, and this is what the development team is seeking approval of this evening.

The development team is led by Jim Fielder, who is the Operations Director for Aikens. He brought with him tonight a team of architects, engineers and landscape architects, all of whom look really expensive, so I will make sure Jim gets his money's worth and let them have an opportunity to present probably better than I can.

As the Township has looked at Five & Main through the years and all of the evolution that it's gone through and some of the changes through the years, one of the things that has always been a question is once it comes time to build these buildings within Five & Main, what are these buildings going to look like? What sort of materials are we looking for? What sort of color palette? What sort of architectural styles? It has been a question that's been perhaps punted a couple of times. It was maybe punted the first time when the apartment component of Five & Main was approved and those buildings, as I mentioned, are going up and are becoming occupied as we speak.

And then perhaps it was punted again around this time last year when the Planning Commission reviewed and approved the Dort Financial Credit Union. The logic there was that Dort was proposing a very attractive building that we were all confident would be complementary to the design guidelines that were developed for Five & Main. And part of what we looked at when the Planning Commission approved the Dort Financial Credit Union was the overall signage plan for Five & Main because we needed that overall

signage plan and to understand how the Dort Financial Credit Union would fit into that signage plan in terms of what Dort wanted for their freestanding signs and for their wall signs. But what the Planning Commission said when the Dort Financial Credit Union was approved is, okay, before the Planning Commission can consider approval of whatever is the next building within Five & Main, which we were confident was going to be Building G at the time, that's when the Aikens team needs to submit and have the Planning Commission have an opportunity to review and approve these overall design guidelines for the overall development. As I said, architectural style, building materials, the types of amenities that were going to be shared throughout the development, when we talk about benches, bike racks and light poles, and all of those things. There needed to be guidelines guiding the entire development.

And so that's what the Planning Commission is going to look at tonight, and if you're prepared to do so, take action on, prior to any consideration and any potential action for Building G, what those design guidelines are encompassed as is what the Aikens team is calling their Tenant Handbook which was included in your packet this evening. The Tenant Handbook, as I mentioned has all the parameters and the standards for building materials, materials mixes, and minimums and maximums for different types of materials. Some materials the Planning Commission was hoping to see a lot of, quality materials like brick, stone and glass, and some materials the Planning Commission was hoping to see minimal amounts of, with the most notorious of those being the EIFS material. To their credit, the Aikens team and their architectural and design partners listened to what the Township and members of the Planning Commission were suggesting relative to these design guidelines, and it is my opinion that what's encompassed within this Tenant Handbook is very much in line with what the Planning Commission's, the Township's and the DDA's long standing expectation for what we all hope Five & Main will look like, as we've all had visions of a first-in-class, destination, mixed-use development.

So, if the Planning Commission is so inclined, they do have an opportunity to consider the Tenant Handbook and take action on it tonight, as we've been wanting to do for some time. The next item on the agenda is Building G, and the intent is that Building G is fully compliant with the standards within the Tenant handbook, and Building G is something of a template for what future buildings within Five & Main can, should and will look like. The idea is that the Tenant Handbook would have action taken upon it by the Planning Commission before any action is taken on Building G.

There are some suggestions noted within the Planning Department's review letter of potential revisions to the Tenant Handbook that we think would be beneficial both to the Township and to the developer as the handbook is applied to Building G and to future buildings. A specific example of that and something I've talked to Mr. Fielder about as recently as today is a lot of the standards within the Tenant handbook seemingly apply specifically to the "storefronts". So, this exhibit being an example, the storefront design criteria, where it speaks to materials, awning types, glass, a mix of window treatments and so forth. One of the questions that I posed to Mr. Fielder is, what do we define as being the storefront? Is it only intended to be the publicly accessible portions of the building, or will all sides of the building be expected to comply with these standards? And again, as I scroll through here, you're looking at the different suggested materials for the mix of materials that are envisioned within Five & Main.

When Mr. Fielder and I talked today, what he thought might make sense, and I tend to agree, is if we had a plan that looks comparable to this one; this is an overall plan with red lines showing where different types of signage is permitted, and this was approved as part of the signage plan. But the thought is that we could develop something

comparable to this with some sort of notation of what is considered to be the “storefront” side of the building. The storefront sides of the building would have to meet these material standards that are noted throughout the Tenant Handbook, but there may be portions of certain buildings where the Planning Commission might agree that the high storefront standards might not apply.

I'll zoom in on one specific area. This is Building D that we're hopefully going to be seeing sometime in the near future. This is intended to be the gourmet market that's going to be one of the anchor tenants within Five & Main. As you see, this is something of a U-shaped building with a loading area right in here where I'm moving my cursor around. The Planning Commission might be agreeable to some of these walls within these buildings, on the backs of these, that are not as prominent to public view, perhaps those sides of the buildings would not have to meet the high storefront criteria standards that these sides of the building would be expected to meet.

That's something that I think could be revised or enhanced within the Tenant Handbook, again, in an effort to help both the Township and the developer. As the years go by and as tenants turn over in some of these buildings through the years, it would help everybody understand what the standards are for approval of the buildings within Five & Main.

If the Planning Commission agrees with that logic, that's something where you might consider approving the Tenant Handbook this evening, conditional upon a revision such as that. I also mentioned the possibility of maybe creating a work group that could work with the Planning Department to finalize the Tenant Handbook before we give it our final approval. That's another approach that we've taken in other contexts on other projects, so we can talk about that this evening.

I know Sue Neumann and her team at JPRA are here to present on Building G specifically. I don't know, Sue or Jim, if anyone in your group wanted to speak to the Tenant Handbook, or if you wanted to reserve your presentation until we get to Building G.

The Robert B. Aikens team was present, including; Jim Fielder, Director of Operations, Paul DeSchepper, Director of Construction, Sue Neumann and Jeremy Gascho, Architects, JPRA Architects, Sue Grissim, Landscape Architect, Grissim Metz Andriese Associates, and Lucas Driesenga, Project Engineer, PEA Group.

Jim Fielder – I just wanted to thank you, those people who have participated in trying to put this Handbook together. It has been a tedious process, especially with the DDA's participation and the staff. I think we have a pretty good product. The thing about tenant handbooks is that they're always subject to change and as a new material or a new tenant comes along, you end up in negotiations and sometimes they don't end up being exactly what you intended to start with, and sometimes they're better. So, the thing that I wanted to point out is that this has been a work in progress and continues to be, and it will change from time to time. You know I've included at the back the lease exhibits, and the reason I did that was the fact that it really doesn't matter what we agreed to if I can't get the tenants to do it; we're sort of wasting our time. So, I used the exhibits in the lease to give you an example of what we're trying to accomplish by tying it together with the legal side of it to ensure that we get what everybody's looking for here.

Dave Campbell – Jim, how comparable would you say this Tenant Handbook is to what's already in place and has been used for 20 plus years for the Village of Rochester Hills?

Jim Fielder – We used a lot of those types of drawings out of it to show that particular areas, such as the display zone, or where we're promoting tenants to enhance their

lighting so that it's not just an overall storefront with a giant glare, or a huge light on it. It actually accents the areas where they're selling products, and their sign in the entry to create a warmer sort of feeling for the customer. That carries through when you see the storefront landscaping that Sue has put together; accent the storefront and the access to the building, and provide something to break up the long expanse of glass and concrete. That was the intent and I think in large part, we've hopefully succeeded. We look to your opinion on that. If you have any questions, I'm here with my group. I think cumulatively, we can come up with an answer.

Weber – You brought more people than we have this time.

Dave Campbell – Do you find the handbook effective in its use at the Village?

Jim Fielder – Oh, yes. One thing I didn't mention is the tenant information package which has more detail in terms of the structure and the actual storefront, and those types of things until we actually get working drawings. That is an additional step that we take to ensure that they can't say they didn't get the message.

Dave Campbell – I will mention too that Mr. Winkler, who couldn't be here this evening, but definitely is one of our voices that we listen to in particular when it comes to architecture and design, given his background; he was able to provide his comments from sunny Florida, and I gave a copy to all Planning Commission members. He did have some specific suggestions as it relates to the sequence of when the landlord would approve a tenant's buildout, and having it happen after the Township has had a chance to take a look at it. And then he also suggested some specific language as it pertains to the screening of rooftop equipment, presuming that as different tenants come and go, they may have different needs for their rooftop equipment depending on the use, and ensuring that equipment is screened from view as best possible.

Chairperson Parel – I suppose that conversation in regard to utility screening is relevant to both our conversations tonight.

Dave Campbell – It is certainly relevant to Building G, which when we get to it, we will all be reminded that Building G would back up to Pontiac Trail, but what we're hoping to avoid is having it look like the back of a building. That's something we can talk about more when we get to Building G, but I think that same logic would apply to any of the buildings within Five & Main; where they're publicly prominent we would want them to put their best face forward.

Chairperson Parel – But we do understand that it's a work in progress. At least me personally, I understand that this is a Tenant Handbook which all of the tenants will abide by, but sometimes you get pushy tenants and it's going to be difficult. I'm sure you will have your hands full trying to appease them and get exactly what they need from a retail standpoint in their storefront. My only question about that is, Dave, if we get into a situation ... We're looking to approve this tonight.

Dave Campbell – That's up to you. If you feel it's ready.

Chairperson Parel – It's on the table tonight and I don't see why we wouldn't, but in the event that we approve it and 6 months to a year from now, or hopefully before that, a

tenant comes by and says we want something totally different, what's the means to addressing that? Because we're obviously not bringing every tenant back here.

Dave Campbell – No, the intent is that the tenants and the individual storefronts can be reviewed and approved administratively, because I think it would be logistically very challenging to have to bring every storefront to the Planning Commission; first, when the users come along to occupy the buildings initially, but then as the years go by and you have some turnover. So, the idea is to set these guidelines up so that administratively, we can review and approve any new storefront, ensure its consistency with the guidelines, and keep it moving administratively, rather than the potential delays of coming to the Planning Commission.

In terms of changing the guidelines, in my mind, it would be something of an administrative determination by the Planning Department. If it's a minor change, then the Planning Department will use our discretion and approve it administratively. But, if it's a significant change, we would say this is a bigger ask and we would bring it back to the Planning Commission for an amendment.

Chairperson Parel – And I'm not suggesting that everything comes back. I think the path you've laid out makes sense. But I would like this group to be in the loop if something comes down the pipeline that deviates significantly from this, we have given the authority to your Department to approve things, and any significant changes would be nice to take a look at. And not necessarily formally either if we can avoid that.

Dave Campbell – Again, I think I said it in my letter, and I think Mr. Fielder said it. The intent is that this is something of a living, breathing document that we fully expect will evolve through the years. It might make sense if, at least initially, there is a work group with three members of the Planning Commission to meet on a more informal basis between Planning Commission meetings and provide some guidance, at least in the initial stage of putting the Tenant Handbook into practice. If challenges come up with the first few buildings where the Tenant Handbook is not quite fitting, maybe the hybrid would be to have a work group that the Planning Department could consult with, rather than waiting every month for a Planning Commission meeting.

Chairperson Parel – Okay, that sounds good. It doesn't sound like we have to establish that group yet.

Dave Campbell – I think you just volunteered, but yes.

Chairperson Parel – Sure. On that note, my thought is that we address this Tenant Handbook. Let's go down the line and see if anybody has any questions or comments for you.

Jim Fielder – Sure.

Chairperson Parel – Then Dave, we will take a vote on that and we can move on.

Dave Campbell – That makes sense to me.

**Commission Comments:**

McCanham – I have nothing.

Weber – First of all, I have gone through the Tenant Handbook a couple of times. Thank you for the level of detail. I particularly like the palette of materials that have been chosen. Dave, I think you addressed the question regarding what defines a storefront. You also addressed the question, the same question Brian had, which had to do with screening of rooftop mechanicals, et cetera.

For my own knowledge, in Section 6, Page 23, where it says; *any equipment visible from surrounding roads or property shall be screened in accordance with project standard details*. So, “project standard details” – what is that?

Jim Fielder – Project standard details we have done for Building G because we raised the parapet up, so we’ve taken care of the issue. I think that, again, if we get into it, it’s going to be a combination of raising parapets, and there may be some cases where we have to actually screen.

Weber – Okay, so basically, each building could be unique. You’re thinking project is really almost building by building, it’s not the development in itself. Each one could be a little different in how you screen it.

Jim Fielder – Well, each individual tenant we hope is different. As you see in this, there are different heights, slightly, but they’re all high enough to where they cover the air conditioner. It’s the same kind of thing. And of course, each tenant that comes in wants their own identity, so you have that issue on top of it. It has to get worked out tenant by tenant.

Weber – But basically, there will be screening of some kind.

Jim Fielder – Absolutely.

Weber – Okay, that answers my question.

Chairperson Parel – George, regarding the question on what constitutes a storefront, Dave, you mentioned taking a site plan, marking it up and designating what actually is a storefront, and giving us an example. Is that something that you’ll handle administratively?

Dave Campbell – I think our Department is capable of handling it administratively, but if it makes more sense for something like this to involve the input of a work group, sometime in the very near future, that could make sense too.

Chairperson Parel – I don’t want to force another meeting or delay this at all, but maybe it would be good to have a work group. I think Joe volunteered to be on that.

Dave Campbell – Okay, so you and Joe are my two volunteers, and I just need one more. Maybe make Winkler do it since he’s not here to protest. I think for something as significant as defining the storefront, I would feel better knowing there is some input from at least three members of the Planning Commission.

Chairperson Parel – The two to my right, and the one that is currently not here have extensive knowledge in construction.

Dave Campbell – Agreed.

Loskill – If you're going to put a sign on that face, it should be the storefront.

Jim Fielder – That's sort of what we came to, and that's the reason why we suggested this drawing.

Open discussions continued regarding the storefront features, building materials and review procedures.

Loskill – The main thing I wanted to bring up, and get other members opinions on, is the allowable signage as noted in the Tenant Handbook is at least double what is permitted in our Zoning Ordinance. I wanted to make sure of that, coming in at the end of the process, I've not been up to speed on everything that has gone on in the last 15 years. I didn't know if this essentially had already been agreed to, and if this had been discussed, or whether it was up for discussion.

Jim Fielder – Certainly everything is up for discussion. The fact is that we had a smaller number in there when we started with the Handbook and went through it, and I, in my own way, tried to figure out the size of the sign and how the whole thing would work. Of course, when we got to Building G, and because we had a higher parapet, our illustrious designers decided that the signs were too small and so we had to go through the whole thing again. That was the reason why it changed. With the parapet, we think the signs are in scale with what the Township is really looking for.

Loskill – Well, it works great for this building, but it's setting a precedent that's going to affect the next half a dozen buildings, so I wanted to make sure that that had been addressed in the discussions at some point. That's all I have. Everything else has already been mentioned.

Chairperson Parel – Dave, any further comment? I know we've talked through signage on this project as it related to the first couple buildings, but if I'm hearing correctly, this is another example of different buildings with different needs, different measurements and different parapets. Do we have a thought on if we can even establish this signage? I know I saw the calculations in the Tenant Handbook. Are we okay to say that those apply to every building within the project?

Dave Campbell – So, we did take a look at sign guidelines when Dort Credit Union came before the Planning Commission about a year ago, in April of 2025. We did approve sign guidelines as part of the approval of Dort. Those sign guidelines were then migrated into the Tenant Handbook. Now Paula is just pointing this out to me; when we look at some of the maximums for signage allowed based on tenant lease space, it looks like these numbers may be different than what we ...

Jim Fielder – Than we originally dealt with, yes. But if you recall, when we got into Dort in our first criteria, those numbers ended up being slightly different than what we originally anticipated too.

Dave Campbell – Okay. So, this might be an example of something that we want to take a closer look at and refine as a condition of approval of the Tenant Handbook. Maybe take another look at these numbers. That being said, it might be tough to compare the guidelines for Five & Main to what's otherwise allowed in the Zoning Ordinance, just on the logic that Five & Main, for a lot of reasons, is a unique animal. I think there has to be some logic of Five & Main having standards that are different than what otherwise applies in the Zoning Ordinance. I don't think the intent is to throw the vision and intent of the Zoning Ordinance completely out the window. There has to be a middle ground there. So, if the Planning Commission is comfortable with it, you could potentially take action on the Tenant Handbook tonight, with the added condition of having an opportunity to take one more look at these ratios as they pertain to the maximum wall signs.

Weber – Jim, how do these ratios compare to Village of Rochester Hills?

Jim Fielder – They are larger than what was originally anticipated at the Village, but as time has gone on with later tenants, they were pretty much in line. Like if you want PF Changs, you get their big horse and whole nine yards with the sign. You might think the sign is too big, but sometimes ...

Weber – I think that's maybe what Dave or Brian addressed earlier, that when the one-off's come, if it is something of that magnitude, then let's take a look at it and sort that amongst ourselves. I don't think it would be that difficult. Obviously we're going to get to Building G here in a minute, but personally Brian, I like the idea that as we're addressing the screening and the storefront term, I think we approve the Tenant Handbook conditional upon getting a resolution on these two to three items.

Jim Fielder – That page there, we put that in to show how we could do the size calculations for the endcap space and the in line space. It could almost be an alternative.

Weber – To have it to scale.

Jim Fielder – Yes.

Loskill – It's always easy to approve more. It's hard to get somebody to do less.

Chairperson Parel – At that point, I wonder what this should read now. Should this be reduced and then it comes to the work group?

Loskill – He was saying that he increased these. I would be curious, I wonder what the previous numbers were.

Dave Campbell – We were just looking at it. It may be a little challenging to do an apples to apples comparison in the sense that what got approved last year was maximum size with a ratio based on gross leasable area, whereas now it's relative to linear feet of frontage. So, it's tough to do.

Weber – There's no rational comparison; the leasing space, the lineal frontage is ...

Loskill – Generally, bigger tenants, a lot bigger signs.

Jim Fielder – Well, yes.

Weber – My recommendation would be, one, I like the concept of this. I don't know that I know enough to know about how those ratios would really apply in look and feel. But if we move forward with the Tenant Handbook and just say, we've got these three items that will be resolved by the work group, then we can move forward.

Jim Fielder – And the idea here is that when you start doing sizes or whatever, and when you have old signs and how you deal with those, and when you have a big letter “C” or something like that as part of the sign, how you deal with all of those things. So, we ended up saying, 5 or 7% of the actual storefront would be the maximum, and that ratio we think is going to be pretty much in keeping with what we're trying to accomplish, and at the same time, allow for variation.

Chairperson Parel – I think that makes sense and unless Caitlin's going to add something, the work group will work on signage, the storefront definition and screening of utilities, right? Does that work for you?

Jim Fielder – Yes.

Chairperson Parel – Caitlin, is there anything you'd like to add?

Bearer – There is not.

Chairperson Parel – So that works for everybody. Dave, anything else or should we take a vote on approving this Handbook?

Dave Campbell – It's obviously the decision of the Planning Commission more than it's my decision, but I get the sense that you've covered the things that were necessary to be covered. I think this is a good approach, potentially approving it tonight, subject to addressing what I'm seeing as three things; defining storefront, having better language regarding screening of mechanical equipment, and now taking another look at the signage ratios.

Chairperson Parel – Okay, with that, someone could make a motion.

Weber – Jim, have you seen this potential language that Dave put together?

Jim Fielder – Yes.

Weber – Then I'm assuming you're okay with it and what we just described.

Jim Fielder – Yes.

**MOTION** by Weber, supported by Loskill, **to approve** Item PPU#17-0001, Five & Main PUD Tenant Handbook, consistent with the language that has been reviewed by the applicant and the Planning Commission, **with the conditions as stated below.**  
Move to approve the Tenant Handbook developed by Robert B. Aikens & Associates for the Five & Main mixed-use planned unit development (PPU #23-01), consistent with the

conditions of approval of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amended & Restated Five & Main PUD approved by the Commerce Township Planning Commission and Board of Trustees during their respective meetings of July 10, 2023 and August 8, 2023 whereby the Township required “highly-developed Design Guidelines” for Five & Main. The Planning Commission bases their approval on a finding that the Tenant Handbook shall be the standards by which the developer, the Township, and the Downtown Development Authority achieve our collective goal of Five & Main becoming a best-in-class destination for shopping, dining, entertainment, gathering, and living.

**The Planning Commission’s approval is conditional upon the following:**

1. The Tenant Handbook to be revised and administratively approved by the Planning Department, subsequent to input from a workgroup comprised of up to three Planning Commission members, to include the following:
  - a. Definitions for terms including “storefront”, “tenant work”, and “landlord work” to better define which portions and/or sides of each building within Five & Main will be subject to the Handbooks design and materials standards;
  - b. Standards for screening/concealing building elements including rooftop mechanical equipment, utilities, dumpsters/compactors, loading areas, downspouts, etc. particularly in prominent locations in public view;
  - c. Review and approval of appropriate sign ratios and dimensions.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**ITEM I.2. PSP#26-02 - BUILDING G/SHOPPETTE FIVE & MAIN**

Robert B Aikens & Associates is requesting PUD site plan approval to construct a new 5-unit retail building at 3249 Main Street, located on the north side of Pontiac Trail and south side of Main Street upon Unit 2 of Phase 1 of the Five & Main PUD.

PIN#: 17-24-402-002

Dave Campbell – So I'm pulling up this aerial of the Five & Main development site. This aerial is a little bit outdated now. This was taken in spring of last year, so there's more buildings here now and as I mentioned earlier, the credit union is under construction here. Why I wanted to bring this up is this aerial includes the boundary lines of the condominium units within Five & Main. So, Five & Main has been subdivided into a site condominium. This is the residential component that's under construction. This is one of the units within that condominium. The Dort Credit Union is one of the units within that condominium. And tonight, the shoppette that's going to be considered by the Planning Commission is on this piece of property where I'm moving my cursor around, which is Unit 2 of the Five & Main condominium. Dort Credit Union was Unit 1.

Unit 2 is about 1.65 acres and the shoppette that is being proposed is a multitenant that will include a drive-through on the eastern endcap of the proposed building. The shoppette will be laid out like this. Here is Dort Credit Union next door to the east. Up to five tenants, 15,400 square feet, with the drive-through around the south side of the building, between the proposed building and Pontiac trail, with the pickup window for the drive-through on the east side of the building. So, the east side of the building would house the drive-through tenant, which we expect to be a coffee vendor, and the west side unit is hopefully going to be a quality sit-down restaurant. I think the Aikens team can speak more to that and reveal what they're allowed to reveal with respect to how those tenants might come to fruition.

The building is proposed this evening, the drive-through is proposed and the parking that goes along with it. This line around here identifies what's being proposed in terms of the

improvements for Building G. Obviously at this time, all of the other buildings within Five & Main are not under consideration, and so the internal roadway network that will serve all of Five & Main is not being proposed at this time. What is being proposed with respect to roadways, and this is significant, is the Main Street; the Main in the Five & Main name, the Main Street that traverses east to west through the developments and then will punch out right there on northbound Martin Parkway. Main Street would be constructed as part of the development of Building G. It would only be the base course of Main Street, so it would be uncurbed for now. The idea being that it would be curbed with its final course sometime in the foreseeable future, and Mr. Fielder and his team can maybe speak more to the timing of that. The idea is that this road is going to be heavily traversed with construction equipment, heavy vehicles as Five & Main develops, and so they're only putting down the base course now because it's going to get beat up over the next couple years. It will be significant that there will be a new point of access to Five & Main along northbound Martin Parkway, about midway between the existing roundabouts at Pontiac Trail, and the existing roundabout to the north at Library Drive.

Building G will have its parking constructed as part of its development, so this portion of the parking immediately adjacent to the building. It will share a driveway with the Dort Credit Union to the east, and then there will be a new driveway to the west, both along the south side of Main Street. There is proposed to be a temporary linear retention basin along the north side of Main Street. This may or may not be necessary. There's some drainage stormwater system details that they're working out as we speak with the existing stormwater system. If this temporary detention basin is necessary, it's my understanding, and again Mr. Fielder and his engineer can help me, once the existing pipe stormwater system gets extended up to this area here, which is to include the hotel and the gourmet market, once the storm system is extended that far, then that would eliminate the need for that temporary detention basin. But it might be necessary as part of bringing Building G online.

The drive-through use itself; in any other context a drive-through would be considered a special land use that the Planning Commission would review and approve as part of a public hearing. However, the overall development plan for Five & Main has been reviewed and approved by this Planning Commission and the Township Board several times as it's evolved and had amendments through the years. And so the drive-through use at this location, for a building that's shaped like this, has always been envisioned with the overall Five & Main development plan. So the drive-through use for Building G has effectively already been approved and therefore no separate Special Land Use approval is necessary for the drive-through use itself.

We obviously just talked a lot about the Tenant Handbook and all the architectural standards that go into the buildings within Five & Main, and then the intent is for Building G to be something of a template for what the other buildings within Five & Main will look like with respect to architecture, design and material mix, and so forth. Within your agenda packet are the prospective building elevations. We can zoom in on some of the pretty pictures to remind everyone what the idea is for how Building G will look. This is the west side of the building with what we hope is the restaurant. This is the east side of the building with the drive-through coffee user. This rendering is meant to represent what the building would look like from Pontiac Trail. As you're looking at the back of the building, what we've talked to the design team about all along is that we do not want the backs of the buildings within Five & Main to look like what is typically the back of the building. The expectation is that things like dumpsters and dumpster enclosures would be well screened, and things like utility meters, gas piping, electrical connections, downspouts and so forth, those

would be well concealed, well-hidden so that as traffic passes this building, and all the buildings within Five & Main along Pontiac Trail, you're not getting the impression that you're looking at the backside of the building.

These are the more detailed elevations with the notes of all of the different materials that are proposed within Building G of Five & Main. Again, I'll talk about the backside of the building. Some of the improvements that the design team has made include things like adding windows along the backside of the building, again, to give the building more of a finished appearance from the Pontiac Trail side. Here is what would be the west side of the building. The yellow awnings are representative of the restaurant tenant.

This is now the front or the north side of the building. And again, what I hope the Planning Commission agrees with is that this is a quality mix of materials that are different from one another to kind of break up any monotonous look, but also complementary to one another. There's a lot of brick of different color palettes, the composite fiber cement materials to represent a wood look on the front and side of the coffee tenant. And again, as I mentioned before, the architectural team is here and looking to make a presentation on their own behalf, so I'll let them speak to this better than I can.

Also included is a photometric plan for the lighting that would be installed as part of Building G, and then I want to get back to the landscape plan. There is an overall landscape plan for all of Five & Main, and then there is a detailed landscape plan that the Planning Commission already approved for Dort Financial Credit Union. And now there's a detailed landscape plan for Building G. Staffing consultants had a limited amount of time to look at the site plan, which was by design because we really wanted it to be on tonight's agenda. The development team did a really good job rushing it to us, and then we did everything we could to get in on tonight's agenda. I tell you all that because the Township's landscape architect has not had an opportunity to look at this landscape plan in detail. They were able to give it a cursory review and feel that this is certainly a well-landscaped site that's consistent with the expectations for Five & Main, and consistent with what has already been approved for Dort Credit Union, which would be next door.

They are proposing to extend the sidewalk that Dort is going to put in along their frontage, along the Pontiac Trail frontage and extend it westward across the extent of the shoppette's boundaries for Unit 2. These are some details on the shared light fixtures and light poles, and benches and trash cans that have already been approved as part of the overall design standards for Five & Main.

This is my best effort to summarize what you have this evening. There are some details such as the landscape plan that still need to be reviewed and worked out. Again, we did everything we could to get this in front of you this evening. What the staff is suggesting is that if the Planning Commission is comfortable with the look and the material mix of Building G, that you would be prepared to make a motion on PUD site plan approval, conditional upon staff and consultants working out some of the loose ends with respect to landscaping, engineering, the Fire Marshal's review. I know he had some questions about hydrant placing and where the Fire Department connection would be. Those are things that could be worked out administratively after the fact if the Planning Commission is prepared to take action this evening. But before the Planning Commission takes that step, I know that the architectural team would like to come up and make a presentation on their own behalf. So, I'll pause here and see if there's any questions for me. Otherwise, I'll turn it over to Sue Neumann and her team.

The Robert B. Aikens team was present, including; Jim Fielder, Director of Operations, Paul DeSchepper, Director of Construction, Sue Neumann and Jeremy Gascho,

Architects, JPRA Architects, Sue Grissim, Landscape Architect, Grissim Metz Andriese Associates, and Lucas Driesenga, Project Engineer, PEA Group.

Chairperson Parel – Sue, welcome.

Sue Neumann – Thank you. Actually, Jeremy, our Principal and Head Designer from our firm is going to lead the presentation.

Jeremy Gascho – I'm the Principal and Design Lead for Building G at Five & Main. I work with Sue Neumann. I'm going to walk through the design presentation for Building G here and then the architectural aspects. Then I will hand it off to civil and landscape also to share those parts of the projects.

Thanks, Dave, for walking through most of it already, but I'll add on to it a little bit here. Building G, we're aware is down here in the southeast corner of the property. You're seeing the current design for the rest of the development here in plan, but we're focusing on Building G for this design presentation. What we like to do in our process ahead of time is research other properties that are comparable, things we can take from and learn from those properties. We stuck to the Midwest here. There are a few examples that we'll walk through. This is Pinecrest in Beachwood, Ohio. I think it's a very comparable property. It has a lot of mixed-use components like multifamily residential, bigger boxes and great street retail. I think that's what we take away from here, it's a very cohesive design, it all works together and the activity is on the main streets. There's great landscaping, great storefronts, varied materials, and even the backs of the buildings do carry some of that around with some articulation, signage, different materials and the landscaping as well. So that's kind of the big take away here. We definitely want this building to set the tone for the rest of the full development, which this kind of shows, I think, a great image of that.

Another example that is more to scale with Building G is in Troy City Center. There's a four-sided retail, multi-tenant building and it's the articulation. There's not one parapet that's one straight line. There are ups and downs, depth, shadow lines, canopies, and varied materials as well. It also abuts Big Beaver Road, which is a major road, so you don't read this as the back of the building.

The next one is Melody Farm in Vernon Hills, Illinois, and this is a larger development also with different size out parcels. The four that you kind of see in that middle image on the left, they're right up against the main road. The service is on the back of that right against the road, and they dealt with it in a pretty nice way with different articulations, materials and landscaping. That's where the service is, the trash, everything's back there. You can see the quality of the materials really stands out.

Here's some general examples of outlot buildings, shoppettes. There are some good things here, and some bad things. I think we can all see the bad things as a straight line parapet, no depth on the facades, two materials maximum which is not enough variety. If we start to focus on the parts that we like, there's varied depths, there's varied parapets, there's more than two materials. So again, that's what you already saw in some of the elevations. Beyond that, it's the signage, the canopies, the tenant aspects, they all kind of layer into the facade of the building, the elevations. I think even though they're simple materials, brick is a great material, and it can look great no matter what the tenant is. The signage, the lighting, it all works together.

So, the building itself, these are the four corner perspectives and I think you see some of those aspects here with the varied parapets, the different materials, there's kind of a

neutral color palette, so there's not a lot of bright colors, but where there are, it can draw your eye there. There's a nice backdrop of the light grays, the dark grays, and not a lot of color, and then you pop the accent materials on the corners. That's where that fiber cement wood tone comes in on the front and the back, so it wraps all four sides.

You can also see the windows that Dave had mentioned on the rear elevation. We added those because it will allow natural light inside, even though it's the back of the building, they could have some natural light in their storage areas. Because they're high enough, the walls will still allow shelving, and that sort of thing. So, we thought that was a good solution there.

The dumpster enclosure, which you can see on the bottom right, they're the same materials as the facade treatments, so again it kind of blends in, and there's canopies at a certain height there, which this is south facing on that wall, so the shadows will hide a lot of the gas meters, the gas piping, that sort of thing. It's not going to be in your face like on a corner, for instance. It's all within that enclosure space. So, we're pretty intentional about hiding those aspects. These elevations, a couple of things to note, you can't really see it very well in this PDF, but there's a datum line at that 18 foot line, and that is the height of the roof itself. So, the parapets extend beyond that, and the intent would be that the rooftop units are all screened by that height difference there. So, no visible rooftop units is the intent. This is the roofline, and you can see the windows again just below that which would allow natural light to the backs of the spaces.

I mentioned the accent material, the fiber cement, the wood look panel; that does wrap the corners onto the back as well. So again, we're kind of bookending that real elevation and your eye is going to be kind of focused on that as you drive by, not the utility area, the gas meters, the dumpster enclosure; that's going to be secondary.

This is the Main Street perspective rendering which is facing the rest of the development for the future. And again, the varied parapet heights, all the elements I mentioned before, I think it helps the building have variety, and the neutral color palette kind of ties it all together without getting too busy.

From Pontiac Trail, you see the landscaping here and Sue Grissim can talk about this in much greater detail. You'll notice that the parking area and the drive-through are actually set below the road height. The landscaping layers mixed with the rest of the pad are set down, which I think will also help hide the dumpster enclosure and the service area, all of those elements as well.

This is looking West on Pontiac Trail. So again, once you look really closely, you're not really seeing much of that service area. You can see a little bit ... Actually, I think we show the gas pipes right there in the middle. The intent is that that would stop at that canopy line and be hidden by the architecture there, the depth of that, where the pipes would go up through there to the parapet.

Chairperson Parel – A couple slides ago, you were showing the outside seating. Remind me, are you anticipating outdoor seating for both the coffee user and the restaurant?

Jim Fielder – Yes.

Chairperson Parel – Which sides? Toward the interior?

Jim Fielder – Coffee seating would be to the north, and the restaurant on the corner has seating to the north and the west.

Chairperson Parel – But nothing on the Pontiac Trail side?

Jim Fielder – No. The signs that you see over there do meet the criteria.

Chairperson Parel – Thank you. Sorry to interrupt.

Jeremy Gascho – That's okay. The last couple slides here for the architecture focus on the material palette, which you've already seen in the Tenant Handbook. It's a mixture of brick veneer, fiber cement panels, some standard burnished CMU within that utility area, and a little bit of EIFS which you might not have even noticed, but it's up high at the cornice around the side and back elevation.

So again, the color palette is fairly neutral here, but you get those pops of color at the accents on the corners and some of the tenant finishes with the awnings and that sort of thing. Of course, that will be expanded upon for the rest of the future development. We can layer in other materials such as manufactured stone veneer, other metal panels, aluminum siding, but they're all durable materials. That's something to note. It's not going to be real wood which would rot fairly quickly.

Then the site lighting and furniture, you've already seen those as well. These just kind of show it in a different format for this presentation. I believe the same color will apply to each of those. We're creating a complementary cohesive backdrop for the tenants. That's our goal. And that's it for architecture. Do you have any questions?

Chairperson Parel – No, thank you.

Lucas Driesenga – I'm with PEA Group, the Civil Engineer for the project. Dave did a pretty good job discussing the site. I guess something I can add regarding that stormwater; the reason for that temporary retention pond we're looking to put it in over here is that the storm sewer for Pad G and most of the Five & Main development is all designed to be tributary to the pond that was built for the Springs; however, some of the stormwater on the west side of Pad G wasn't able to make it into the stuff that was left over here from Springs. There are stubs up to the north on Library Drive that are meant to accept this stormwater; however, since none of that stormwater infrastructure is currently in place, the idea is to keep it in this temporary retention basin for now until a future phase of the development will allow the rest of that stormwater to be built.

Other items for engineering sake; the sanitary sewer is going to connect into Pontiac Trail, to the south of the building. The water main that was constructed for the Springs along Main Street, we will be connecting it off of that to bring the water services and hydrants up for Pad G.

Otherwise, the site layout is pretty straightforward. We've got the connection to the road that was stubbed right here off Main Street, to bring that in so people can circulate in and out to the shared drive with Dort. And then the dual lane drive-through is around the back here. This should provide plenty of stacking. That's about it from the civil engineering side. If you have any questions, we can get into that after the presentation.

Chairperson Parel – Thank you.

Dave Campbell – Lucas, one of the comments from our Fire Marshal was that he is hoping to see a more complete truck turning plan. There was one that was submitted initially, but I think it wasn't the right size or axle configuration, or something. So, he's looking to see

a truck turning plan just to confirm that they'll be able to get their vehicles in and out of there in case of an emergency.

Lucas Driesenga – Yes, like I said, we'll handle that administratively after the fact. Let me know exactly what he's looking for. We showed a turning plan similar to Dort's that came in through here and out. We figured that would be the ideal route that they'd be using. If he's looking for any other turning configurations, we can certainly show them.

Dave Campbell – Okay. You've got to give him whatever he needs. You've got to keep the Fire Marshal happy.

Sue Grissim – I'm with Grissim Metz Andriese. We're Landscape Architects out of Plymouth Township. We've been in business about 60 years, and we've worked with Aikens and JPRA on several projects. We were involved in the initial concept plan, which I kind of want to go back to just to tell you how this piece is going to fit into the whole development and how we got there.

Dave Campbell brought up the site plan on the overhead.

Sue Grissim – So when we started all this many years ago, as you guys had mentioned, working as a team as you saw with JPRA, we started looking at natural materials; the stone, the wood. We looked around the environment of Commerce and this area and realized, you know, it's the land of many lakes, and there's beauty here. We really wanted to express the beauty through the whole development, using it together with the architecture, so we could be distinct, engaging but a little bit like showcase Michigan. One thing we've got going for us, as we well know, is all of our four seasons. So, we wanted to have different plantings that would show spring, summer, and fall to bring you through. But as you can see, along Pontiac Trail, we took that walkway that Lucas was mentioning earlier and we meandered it, just carefully curving it. So just by taking a sidewalk and curving that, and then wrapping the plantings with it, it really puts this beautiful thread. And you saw earlier in those renderings, you could see when you're on the walkway, you kind of go through these mass plantings of beds. It's not just a hodgepodge, it's all fluid and gorgeous. It has to look well, not only travelling at speeds on Pontiac Trail, but when you're walking on it. So, we want to engage that where you're walking through things.

Where we do have large parking fields, we want to screen with evergreens, but where we've got buildings, we want to showcase and frame them. And then we want to be selective about how we screen, like we said, on the backs when we have utilities. So, that was a lot of the idea, but then you can see, it becomes very distinct. It sets the tone and we're cohesive. That was kind of stepping back to where we were.

Then what happened was Dort came along a year ago, and we worked with them many times, going back and forth to say, here's the concept. You can do your material, but let's work together, so now we're into this next phase and we've got it tied together. So that's kind of a little back story about how we got to where we're at.

So now, Dave, I don't if you can get us forward. I just want to zoom in on this one parcel here. So again, we're trying to meet your ordinance requirements, but we're trying to be very creative and very distinct. You can see on the bottom is Pontiac trail with the sidewalk where we've got these big fluid bands of plantings, so you're going through them. We have light poles, that you had seen in that rendering, along the walkway to have light pools to progress you and have that architecture. That light fixture was very sculptural.

That's another thing we're trying to do is not date it and make sure whatever we do is good for all time. So, everything we're picking is not going to get dated and they're soft colors and they're natural sweeping beds.

When you see the drive-through lane, on the other side is back to that area where they've got screen walls that are going to blend in with the building. Then we have plantings in between the walls and the drives, so we can soften them, and then the green is lawn. So, we're measuring lawn against balancing the beds, and it all works together for a really fluid experience, as well as all the plants are native to Michigan. They handle our climate, they handle salt. Anytime we're near the roadway, we've got to deal with the salt and we're trying to pick materials that we're not pruning. We're letting them be the right size so they grow naturally. That was a lot of how we chose these. There are three types of ornamental grasses out here. Each one of them have different distinct forms. Through our winter, you can leave the foliage up, as you guys know, and you can get that winter interest with the Evergreen. So again, it's each season, there's a new look. So that was important.

On the right side of our property, we're blending into Dort. So, we worked with Dort then we brought our landscape to tie together with theirs. That was another very important thing and we're going to keep doing that as we go along and develop further. On the east side of the building is that drive-through pickup window. We have a lot of foundation plantings there, which your ordinance requires, but we're softening between the drive lane and the building to get these plantings in there.

On the front side by the stores, you guys saw in that handbook, we had an exhibit for a storefront. But where we can, with the architecture, we're going to have plantings adjacent to the building where it makes sense, but never ever hide the goods inside, so they'll be lower. We've got grasses, we've got different perennials. And then you can see next to the parking, we've got trees and tree planters. Again, balancing so people can see the signage for the stores. It's very important. That's a battle with tenants, as Jim was saying, but to soften and get things in scale with the building.

And then out into the parking lot, we've got the large island out there, which is consolidated versus little pieces of islands, so that the plants will do much better. We've got the trees, shrubs and some lawn out there. And then finally, along Main Street, we've also got those lights that are setting the tone. They're an architectural standard and we are providing that screening between the parking and Main Street with a low, juniper type shrub that Dort did as well. We've got the street trees that you require, but we've got a type of Maple that's a little bit different than Dort's. We don't want to use all ash trees, or this or that. We've got to be careful, but we want to have some consistency. That's the idea of having your street trees, that Evergreen screen, and then when we get to the entrances, we add some color coming in. You can see on the right, that's a perennial. It's yellow and has a long blooming season. The purple you saw in the graphics. That's super tough and loves salt. It's all these different factors that we look at so that it's going to thrive, requires little maintenance, and also showcases our area with the materials we have.

You can see the outdoor seating you asked about before. We're proposing to put a tree planter in there in the nose at #7 to create a little bit of shade and softness, so it's not just hard next to the drive. We're really trying to soften where we can. I think that's kind of it in a nutshell. I don't know if anyone has any questions.

Chairperson Parel – Thank you. That's great.

Sue Grissim – Good, thank you.

Chairperson Parel – All right, David. We are at a point right now where we can go down the line to see if anybody has questions or comments.

Dave Campbell – I might regret bringing it up, but the width of the parking spaces. They're proposing a mix of 9-foot and 9.5-foot parking spaces. The Township typically has held the line with 10-foot wide parking spaces. I know Mr. Weber has his monster truck and he wants to be able to pull it into a 10-foot space. That's what was required for Dort as well. Maybe we want to have that conversation in the context of consistency, because seemingly what's approved for Building G in terms of parking dimensions will probably set the precedent for the rest of the development; whether we want to set a precedent of the narrower spaces, or whether the 10-foot spaces are what we want to stick to. Obviously if they were to push their parking to 10-foot spaces, they're going to lose a few spaces in their overall count, which Mr. Fielder and his team may have some thoughts on that. But I did want to bring it up before we get to a point where you might be talking about taking action on this.

Chairperson Parel – If you didn't, I would have. With that, Caitlin?

**Commission Comments:**

Bearer – So, are we going to address the parking spaces? I would like to hear what they have to say.

Chairperson Parel – We could do it now, absolutely.

Sue Neumann – As stated in your review letter, this layout is in keeping with the approved development plan. So, the development plan always had the 9x18 spaces. The Springs has been approved at 9x18. It is also important to state that if we follow the ULI recommended dimensions of 9x18, the varying dimensions you're seeing that you noted in the review letter is whether it was dimensioned to the back of the curb or face of the curb. But the intention is for the stalls to be 9x18.

Dave Campbell – The shorter stalls is something the Planning Commission has pretty regularly approved, on the condition that if they abut a curb, that the curb be a 4-inch rather than 6-inch, which allows more clearance for a vehicle to have an overhang. The 18-foot length is something we've seen before. The narrower parking spaces, I may want to go back now and look at the Springs. A lot of those were garage spaces. We did look at the Dort site plan and those were 10-foot for Dort.

Weber – Personally, I don't have an issue with the 18-foot with the 4-inch curb. I do have heartburn with moving off of the 10-foot in this area, and I guess I'd like to know what the ramifications are from going from a 9-foot to a 10-foot.

Sue Neumann – They're huge because it's not just a 10-foot by 20-foot stall, it's also a 25-foot drive aisle. So, you're talking 65-foot on center, with each parking bay that runs through the site plan, through the rest of the development, versus 60. You're talking an additional 5-foot.

Weber – Okay, but that's as it relates ... Forgive me if I'm wrong. I understand the 18 to the 20-foot and what that can do in terms of drive lines, but the width to 10-foot; help me understand the impact on that, other than just fewer spaces.

Sue Neumann – You are losing a significant amount of parking spaces over the whole development, which means that we would have to shrink the GLA, gross leasable area. So, what that amounts to is you're going to have a sea of asphalt and less building through the development, to not proceed with what we showed on the approved development plan. And with Springs, to qualify, you thought it was just the garages?

Dave Campbell – It wasn't only garages. There were also carports and parking spaces.

Sue Neumann – All the surface parking is 9x18 at The Springs.

Weber – Here's what I'm wrestling with. The impact ... I don't want to change the general spacing for leasable area and greenspace in here, but I don't know that I have an issue with just straight reducing the number; however, I don't know the impact of reducing the number of parking spaces. Keeping everything else the same, and just strictly reducing the number of spaces, and maybe this is a question for Dave. There are some areas that are going to be much more predisposed for employee parking versus customer parking. Whereas with employee parking, maybe I wouldn't have as much heartburn with that being a narrower lot, versus customer parking. I don't know what that means from a design and engineering standpoint.

Sue Neumann – Well, let me see if I can explain this a little differently. With the stall width, we'll just talk about the width, we were parking the overall development at a 4.5 per 1,000 square feet ratio. If we go to the 10-foot stall, we can't meet that 4.5 and keep the amount of development that we've shown. It was important to achieve critical mass to have the Village plan. If we have to start taking away from the GLA, then that's starts to break apart. We won't have the size buildings we have on the development plan.

Dave Campbell – Can you help us understand why the 4.5 is a line that just can't be crossed?

Sue Neumann – Bruce and I went back and forth with this discussion quite a bit. He would like to see a lesser ratio. I'm a little apprehensive to go there because of the number of restaurants that are planned within the development. If you have restaurants, entertainment, the market, retail, it all has to work together. If you start reducing that ratio to a significant amount, then you're starting to compromise the workability of the whole plan and compromise the amount of parking that you're providing and supplying to all of these tenants. I'm not saying 4.5 is necessarily cast in stone. We may find over time that we do less restaurants and things could push and pull, but as the development plan was envisioned, I believe there's 11-12 restaurants within the development. Restaurants demand more parking than retail, but in this kind of environment, you get a sharing of parking because those that are shopping are also going to the restaurants. You get a little bit of cross pollination if you will with the parking. That's the comfortable number, given the dynamics of the development plan.

Weber – So you and Bruce have had the discussion. What does a lesser ratio mean? What's the linear relationship to the width of a parking spot to the ratio? Does it take it to a 4.2?

Sue Neumann – I would have to work through the whole plan to tell you how much we lose, and where that ratio drops, but it would be a drop in the ratio.

Weber – It's still not clear to me, out of ignorance, why the 4.5 is so important.

Loskill – I think a general standard for retail work is one parking space for every 200 square feet. That has been the generally accepted number, and due to the sea of asphalt in a lot of developments, that benchmark number has gone down from 5 to 4.5. That's where that comes from.

Jim Fielder – The big thing is that in order to have functioning restaurants that are high volume, these guys require 100 dedicated parking spaces each.

Weber – I get where a restaurant ...

Jim Fielder – But you can't make up the fact that you give the restaurants 100 spaces, and then give the rest to the tenants. That's the problem you get into when you start changing this and you just cut the ratio by 10%.

Sue Neumann – It's a battle.

Jim Fielder – We have pushed Sue to the breaking point about how to do it. Just moving Building G 10 feet in order to get the bypass lane in. It caused all kinds of tremors into the adjacent building and what happens on both sides of the street. It's a puzzle that has been put together very tightly. Once you start taking pieces out-

Loskill – Why didn't they just follow the Zoning Ordinance when they did that?

Jim Fielder – Why? Because if we didn't get enough GLA on there, and we didn't get enough tenants, we weren't going to be able to afford the building, because you guys want premium finishes and various other things that ...

Sue Neumann – And I can tell you that a number of projects across the country are developed in the same manner, with the 9x18 stalls. It's not unusual.

McCanham – Can I ask you about the customer experience? There's nothing worse than getting into a lot of these parking lots and, with the smaller spaces, it's aggravating for people. You've got all sorts of different kinds of vehicles. You've got people who have mobility needs. The other question I have is, why are the handicap spaces in the spot they're in?

Sue Neumann – Honestly, those were placed sort of central to the overall building. They're flexible. They can be moved.

McCanham – If you look at where they're placed and the landscape plan, when you get out of one of those vehicles and you have a mobility problem, you've got to wind your way around to that restaurant opening. That's not really helping handicapped people. And why are there only four of them?

Loskill – One option might be to go to the 9.5-feet.

McCanham – See all of those landscape beds there in front of the handicap spaces. If someone gets out of their car there with a cane and tries to make their way around there to the front of the restaurant, and add in snowy walks in on top of that, it's not conducive to go into that restaurant. Handicap numbers are growing. I see that as an aggravation for me.

Sue Neumann – The placement of those accessible spaces is flexible. They were more central before the outdoor seating came into play at the east end tenant, but they're flexible and we can move those.

Weber – In your plan, you've got 9-foot or 9.5-foot versus 10-foot. So, what does it mean to maybe go to a 9.5-foot?

Sue Neumann – I would have to run it through the whole plan to see what the impact is on the overall development.

Jim Fielder – There may be redesign challenges.

Sue Neumann – It's possible.

Jim Fielder – I mean you don't think it works that way, but that is how tight this whole thing happens to be.

Loskill – But this is a PUD so we can take whatever parking ratio we accept and we don't have to have ...

Weber – I know, but ...

Sue Neumann – But they have to have a development that functions.

Weber – We get that. It's trying to understand the trade-off for the balance.

McCanham – It has to function for the guests, the customers.

Loskill – Considering that about 85% of the vehicles on the roads right now are SUVs. It's not compact cars, it's SUVs. It's Excursions and F-250s and 350s. It's tough to get in and out of these spaces with those kinds of vehicles, and actually get your doors open if you're parked next to them.

Weber – Let me ask, as it relates to the Tenant Handbook and the requirements, I don't want to hold up moving forward with Building G. I don't want you coming back next month. But the parking is a big enough question for me and I'm wondering if we do this similar to the Handbook, and we say let's look at the numbers. What is the impact of going to 9.5-

foot spaces? And we make approval, but say we're going to leave that as an administrative decision to the work group.

Dave Campbell – If you're asking my opinion, I'm good with it. I'd like to even see what the workload might be to evaluate how shifting from a 9 to a 9.5 to a 10 could impact the entire development. I hear what they're saying. This is one piece of a bigger puzzle. So, I might look to, is evaluating parking spaces something that could be done.

Jim Fielder – Evaluating the parking space widths could be done, but the issue is still that the whole plan that was approved was designed and predicated on a certain square footage and certain size spaces, and now we get to the ninth hour, and we're saying, well, maybe we ought to change that. And, maybe that's right, but-

Dave Campbell – Well, what I'll say to that is, you're correct, we saw an overall development plan that showed parking spaces. We did not get into the nitty gritty detail of how wide these spaces are when we were looking at a 300,000 square foot development. It was something where we said, we'll get into those nitty gritty details once we get into individual site plans, and that's where we find ourselves now. This was not intended to be a gotcha or anything like that.

Jim Fielder – No, I'm not suggesting it is. I'm just saying it might turn out to be that, whether it was intended or not.

Sue Neumann – I don't recall any discussion with the Springs regarding those spaces.

Dave Campbell – It was a little while ago now, so I will say I don't remember it either, other than to say that Springs is residential, and so it has a different dynamic to some degree in terms of how the vehicles come and go, whereas this is, by nature, going to be a higher turnover use. There are cars coming and going more frequently, so it might not be a fair comparison to look at the parking dimensions in a residential component versus parking standards in a commercial development. But I think I'm agreeing with Mr. Weber that it's not anyone's intent to try to hold things up with this. I think there are some solutions that can be found, and potentially solutions that can be found administratively after tonight. Any other questions?

Chairperson Parel – Caitlin, anything else from you?

Bearer – Not specific to the parking, but I do have specific questions about the landscaping and elevations. I probably should be able to read the elevation on here, but this is above my pay grade. So, I'm wondering, from the back of the building, what is the elevation of the walkway compared to where the drive-through lane will be?

Jim Fielder asked Dave Campbell to bring up the grading plan on the overhead to show the elevations.

Bearer – I'm trying to picture, if I'm driving down Pontiac Trail, where is my eye going to start on the building?

Lucas Driesenga – Compared to the finish for the building, Pontiac Trail, you're driving around 957 to 958 as an elevation, and the finish for the building is 955.5. So, it's about 3 to 4 feet above the main floor of the building, and you're sitting a couple feet higher in your car.

Bearer – Okay. Then as far as the landscaping goes, obviously the drawings and renderings are beautiful, but we have 6 months of ugliness. You mentioned the grasses that would be year round. How much space do you anticipate that taking up?

Sue Grissim – We have layers with Evergreens and grasses. Do you want to go back to the plan?

Bearer – I'm more interested in the back of the building. The back of the building, as nice as it looks compared to a lot of buildings, it still looks like a back of a building to me. I'm just trying to picture it in January, when everything is gray and dead, what the back of the building is going to look like.

Sue Grissim – See these guys there, that's all Evergreens. That's a whole row of Evergreens that are going to get 4 or so feet tall, and then back here, those are 6-foot tall Evergreens so we'll never see that transformer. Then, here is a screen wall they're going to have that matches the building, so you won't notice that. But we didn't like that, we wanted to soften it. So, right in here are grasses, a type that will get about 4-foot tall. They're still up right now. We have to cut them within this month, and then they'll come back up. It's all these different layers between the Evergreens and grasses, and then we have color perennials to add different looks. We have colorful shrubs and that kind of thing. I was trying to make the best of everything we can.

Bearer – Okay, great. No more questions.

Loskill – I only had one concern. On the back elevation, you mentioned some windows in the back that you're going to make active. Based on the height of your deck, all you're going to see is the structure up there and lights hanging down. I'm not sure that's a great look. Would these be better off as spandrels versus actual windows?

Jeremy Gascho – That's a good point. It depends on the depth of the structure. Depending on how that ends up being detailed, it could be spandrel if you don't want to see that, where those joists land.

Weber – A fake window?

Loskill – Spandrel is glass you can't see through.

Jeremy Gascho – It appears like any other window from the outside.

Loskill – Your deck height was just above the top of the window, so all you'd see would be the sealed joists and lights. It's a stockroom and we all know what stockrooms look like in retail stores. They're never really attractive, and at night when the lights are on,

you would see in from Pontiac Trail. I think spandrel or something more decorative might be a better choice to examine.

Jeremy Gascho – Something that's translucent even could diffuse the light.

Loskill – Even if it was translucent, you could get the light out of it, but not see directly through it. That would be a better choice.

Jeremy Gascho – Yes, we'll look at that.

Weber – Jeremy, I have one question for you. First of all, the building and landscaping looks outstanding. I appreciate that you took our input and the finished result of what you've done is great. The only question I have is a little bit to Joe's point. On the café, the back of the building where you have the two windows, is there any advantage where you would use your yellow awnings on those two windows? From Pontiac Trail, you can see that it truly is a unique building as it wraps around to the west and the north. It's just a consistent look in that it makes it look much different than the east side of this where you have the three windows, which makes it look maybe all like one building.

I like what you've done with the dumpster and the screening of that. I don't think you could do anything better to make that look less like the back of a building. And I think the landscaping, even if it's only three feet from the drive-through to Pontiac Trail, with the berm and the landscaping, it's going to be hard to see the cars that are queuing up.

Chairperson Parel – Excellent. Mickey?

McCanham – I'm good.

Chairperson Parel – Dave, I had a question. I remember we had some lengthy conversations regarding the sidewalks surrounding the credit union. Are there also sidewalks here?

Dave Campbell – There's a sidewalk along the Pontiac Trail frontage.

Chairperson Parel – I just want to verify how people would walk from that sidewalk to access this building.

Jim Fielder – There's a cut-through.

Dave Campbell – When we approved Dort, we approved this cut-through is Jim calls it, aligning with the sidewalk along the front of Dort and Building G.

Chairperson Parel – That makes sense. I love how they meandered the sidewalk on the Pontiac Trail frontage. Dave, do we feel comfortable that we could make a motion that incorporates our discussion on parking width?

Dave Campbell – That's a question I should be asking you. I think you could be comfortable and you should be. I think the parking space dimension is something we can work out, and if we can't, we can bring it back here.

Chairperson Parel – I would not want to do that. My hope is that we could work it out. I think George may have also mentioned an alternative method to accomplishing what we want, which is maybe the spaces are not all the same. Maybe some of the employee parking areas can have the smaller widths. My concern is, with this building in particular, I know how many people a coffee shop of that fashion could service in an hour, in a day. It's going to be very intense parking situation.

Dave Campbell – I would agree. Based on the mix of users, it will be a high turnover.

Chairperson Parel – With that, George, I don't know if you had another comment, but do we feel comfortable making a motion, noting our comments and passing those onto Dave's group administratively?

Weber – While we had some recommendations, I think the only comment of substance is the parking, and I think that could be specifically as we're talking site plan approval for this building, understanding its ramifications for the rest of the development. Specifically for approval of this, I think we can make it an administrative review with the Planning staff and the work group to make that decision on whether it's 9, 9.5 or 10. I think we can capture that in the motion language.

Dave Campbell – So coupled with that, speaking of the motion language, the Planning Department's review letter does have recommended motion language, and if you choose to utilize it, the changes you might want to make as it relates specifically to parking; there is a "finding" #4 – you probably want to strike that. Then as an additional condition of approval, you might want to add #2 on Letter E as it relates to parking space dimensions.

**MOTION** by Weber, supported by Loskill, to approve Item PSP#26-02, Building G/Shoppette Five & Main, the request by Robert B Aikens & Associates for PUD site plan approval to construct a new 5-unit retail building at 3249 Main Street, located on the north side of Pontiac Trail and south side of Main Street upon Unit 2 of Phase 1 of the Five & Main PUD. PIN#: 17-24-402-002

Move to approve PSP#26-02, a PUD site plan for Five & Main Building G (shoppette), a 15,392 sq ft multi-tenant retail building with a drive-through to be located upon Unit 2 of the Five & Main site condominium and Phase 1 of the Five & Main PUD, the second amendment to which was approved by the Commerce Township Board on Aug. 8, 2023.

**The Planning Commission's approval is based upon the following findings:**

1. The PUD site plan for Building G is consistent with the development plan approved as part of the second amended PUD agreement for Five & Main;
2. The sequencing plan submitted as part of Building G's PUD site plan confirms that Building G represents a commitment toward shared improvements (private roads, infrastructure, traffic signal, etc.) necessary for Building G to operate safely and successfully, specifically the extension of Main Street's base course to northbound Martin Parkway;
3. The PUD site plan complies with the applicable standards of Articles 35 and 38 of the Commerce Township Zoning Ordinance;
4. That the location of the trash compactor enclosure on the south side of the proposed building is screened satisfactorily in-lieu of the original location on the overall Five & Main PUD development plan.

**The Planning Commission's PUD site plan approval for Building G is subject to the following conditions:**

1. Review and approval of engineered construction plans by the Township Engineer, Fire Marshal, Building Department, and the applicable departments of Oakland County and the State of Michigan;
2. Administrative review and approval of a revised PUD site plan that addresses the following:
  - a. Any revisions required by the Fire Marshal, including but not limited to submittal of an acceptable truck-turning plan;
  - b. Review of the landscape plan by the Landscape Architect;
  - c. Screening of rooftop mechanical units, via a raised parapet, screen walls, or a combination thereof;
  - d. Confirmation of a quality/finished appearance of the south side of the building by screening/concealing "back of house" elements including utility meters, connections, piping, downspouts, etc;
  - e. The agreement to administratively approve the width of parking spaces, either 9-foot, 9.5-foot or 10-foot, by the Planning Department and work group to be determined.
3. Sign Permits to be issued by the Building Department after Planning Department review based upon design/quantity permitted within the Five & Main Tenant Handbook approved by the Planning Commission.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Chairperson Parel – Thank you, all of you.

**ITEM I.3. MARATHON RESIDENTIAL – CONCEPTUAL REVIEW**

Property Owners Farah Orow & Marah Karana are requesting a conceptual review for the development of a ten-unit condominium in a two-story building located to the south of the Marathon gas station at 519 Commerce Road.

PIN#: 17-10-404-002, 023, 024, 025, & 032

Dave Campbell – Most of you on the Planning Commission are very familiar with the Marathon station at 519 W Commerce Road, approved several years ago for a new convenience store, replacing what had been there for quite a while. I think we all agree that turned out very nice and is a great improvement for the Commerce Village area. I think the owners can be very proud of what they did with that store.

What they're considering now and what is before you as a conceptual plan, as you say, Mr. Parel, to share non-binding and informal comments; the property owners are not necessarily committing to anything tonight, and the Planning Commission is not necessarily committing to anything tonight. It's just an opportunity to discuss the concept and see if it's something that could potentially be viable. What's being proposed this evening is attached residential condominiums on the back half of the existing gas station property. So, back in this area here and extending across into a collection of properties where there is an existing home with an address along Broadway Street, which is this stub road here that extends as far to about there. That's the existing right-of-way/easement of Broadway Street, which history tells us was actually meant to be a horseshoe that was going to loop around here and punch back out over here somewhere when this was originally approved to be a subdivision back in the 1920s. But, the only thing that remains is this stub of Broadway Street.

What's being proposed is a 2-story, 10-unit condominium building that would kind of extend across here. We're going to pull up the concept plan in a moment with two points of access, one being the aforementioned Broadway Street which would be extended at least as far as here to connect to the proposed residential, and the second point of access would be a sharing of the existing westerly driveway of the gas station. The dumpster enclosure would be relocated and this driveway would be extended and so you'd have something of a loop through here providing two points of access to the proposed condominium building.

I'll go to the concept plan. As I mentioned, the existing gas station building here, the gas canopy here, and this is what is being proposed, the 2-story condominium building, 5 units on the ground floor, and 5 identical units above. It's important that these are condominiums, so these are for-sale units. These are not intended to be apartments. These are not intended to be rentals. The parking for the units would be along here and with a few spaces here. The gas station owners might be able to clarify whether these are intended to be employee parking spaces for the gas station, or whether they're to be shared with condominium units. Each unit would have its own dedicated entrance, including the upper floor unit. The ground floor units would have their own ground floor entrance. The upper floor units would have their own private stairway up into their unit. It would be a mix of units with six 1-bedroom and four 2-bedroom units.

What's interesting about this property is the existing zoning. To help everybody get their bearings, the portion in the red here is the front portion of the gas station property, which is zone B-3, and that's where the gas station, the fuel pumps and all of that are. The back half of the property is zoned R-1D, which is our smallest lot single-family zoning district. In other words, the gas station property is split zoned with B-3 in the front half, and R-1D in the back half.

As part of this project, they would be combining the gas station property with the L-shaped property here, between the gas station and the dentist office there, and these three properties, which currently house the existing home that would be demolished as part of this plan. If we go back to that aerial and help everybody reestablish their bearings, here is the existing house, here's that little dinky triangle, here is an undeveloped property that has a portion of the house on it, up here is the L-shaped property between the gas station and the dentist office, and this is the back half of the gas station. It is notable that there is an overhead DTE utility that comes across this portion of property that presumably would have to be relocated again. They already had to relocate it once to make the gas station fit, and seemingly would have to relocate that again.

So, because you're potentially mixing uses on what should probably be one combined piece of property, and when I say it should probably be combined, it would be problematic if these property lines wto remain, and the property lines of this dinky little triangle to remain, because now you're going to be contending with setback issues across property lines. Therefore, there is some logic of combining this into one continuous piece of property, and because you're mixing uses on that one continuous piece of property, then it might make sense to pursue this development as a PUD, a planned unit development, because that would then allow the mix of uses, the residential component and the commercial component on the same piece of property. It would also create one continuous piece of property and avoid the property lines in between. Where it could create some challenge is that this property is within a platted subdivision, the Mount Royal Subdivision, whereas the other properties are not. So now you're potentially impacting the boundaries of a plat which is a process in and of itself.

Going back to the concept plan that was developed by Ghassan Abdelnour, who is here this evening and can speak in better detail about his plan. We talked about the prospective layout of having two points of access, one along the west side of the gas station and looping into a new point of access that would probably be the primary point of access, via Broadway Street. There are also some perspective conceptual renderings of the building. Here's the floor plan. As I mentioned, the upper floor and the lower floor units would essentially be identical to one another from one floor to the next. And then this is the very conceptual elevation of the building. Every unit will have either a ground floor patio or an upper floor balcony. If and when this project got to that point, we could certainly have more discussion about the mix of building materials, elevations, and potentially breaking up the elevations a little bit so that it doesn't have a monotonous appearance to it. But, as I mentioned, this is only meant to be a conceptual discussion tonight, so this is meant to be a concept plan.

It is notable that the bulk of the properties, with the exception of this property here, the cross hatching across these properties indicates that all of them are within what we call the Commerce Village Overlay. The Overlay is really meant to include architectural standards meant to achieve a traditional downtown village look within the Commerce Village, but also intended to create a mix of uses and have a walkability that is consistent with a traditional downtown. So, there might be an argument that presenting or adding a residential component to the Commerce Village would achieve some of that synergy between residential uses and commercial uses, and the folks who live in the downtown can patronize the businesses, and the people who work in the businesses could live nearby, as we often see in a downtown.

But at the same time, the property is immediately adjacent to a single-family neighborhood, the Mount Royal neighborhood, and so we can anticipate that there's going to be some questions and concerns about the compatibility of introducing an attached residential project in close proximity to a single-family neighborhood. So, those are things that have to be discussed if this project were to move forward, and look at different opportunities to provide a good balance between the mix of uses.

As I mentioned, the owners of the Marathon station, Farah Orow and Marah Karana, are here to speak on their own behalf. They brought their architect and their respective builder with them to answer any questions. And unless there are any questions for me, I'll let them come up and speak on their own behalf about what they envision with this concept.

Chairperson Parel – Welcome.

Ghassan Abdelnour – Good evening. Thank you for having us here tonight. Thank you for doing the study session so we can maybe see how that project goes. Thank you for the Planning Department who has been helping us with the process. We met with them. They gave us their opinions. We came up with this scheme, and we said let's start with the Planning Commission and make things happen.

What we're proposing over here is actually, the owners came and started with the gas station and came up with a beautiful project that's kind of part of the main small downtown area. It seems they're not going anywhere. They're going to stay in the area. They're going to do more projects and they started thinking, they said we have this piece of property in the back. They asked me, and it's something to do with it to create more downtown, more walkable areas and more people in the area.

They asked me about it, and we came up with a very simple project that we can put 10 units. The main thing I told them is that you have a subdivision and houses behind you.

So first, the idea came that it could be a very nice project because it's good to have a buffer. Instead of having the gas station facing residential, it's always good to have some attached condos as a buffer between commercial and residential.

The second thing we decided and we talked to the Planning Department about; we kept the parking facing the gas station, so even with circulation patterns, we don't have any cars or lighting facing the neighborhood. So actually, the building has created a buffer that stops most of the lighting from going into the residential area.

We do have the entrance, and we do have the house. The area was kind of confusing as Dave was saying, so we wanted to make it cleaner, bring all these properties together and come up with a good zoning that will help with the downtown. At the same time, use our entrance from Broadway. That would be the main entrance to the apartments. And we created another entrance for emergencies or as needed through the gas station. We're hoping it can be a two-way street.

So, the main thing is we're keeping a good buffer between the residential and the condos. There's a lot of existing, mature trees in that area and the plan is to keep them. Most of these trees get very tall, they can grow up to 60 feet. So, we're planning to keep most of these trees as a good buffer between the residential. And we thought, having the trees and the building, it's a good buffer between the gas station, the parking, the lighting, and the residential.

In general, that's kind of the idea and that's why we're here in front of you trying to make comments about it and get your opinion. There's nothing drawn, it was a fast sketch. As Dave was saying with the elevation, we can make the building look separate, we can play with the materials, we divide them with the brick, we can do siding. We're just here to get your blessing and get your opinion so you can tell us what you'd like to do and how you want us to proceed. We think it's a good idea for Commerce Township, it's good for the downtown, it's good for walkability and good for the businesses in the area. I will take any questions.

**Commission Comments:**

Chairperson Parel – Thank you. How does the elevation of the new building you're proposing compare to the existing gas station?

Ghassan Abdelnour – It's actually going to end up being the same height, because the building, with the two stories, to the top it's only 22 feet. Residential in general can go higher than this. We kept it very low, and the reason why is because it's only one unit. You don't have two units back to back. We kept it low and the grade goes down from the gas station to the building, so they will be almost the same height.

Chairperson Parel – Okay, let's go down the line. Mickey?

McCanham – Yes, fire access. Is there a problem there? Do we need to have two ways in and out?

Loskill – They do have two ways.

Ghassan Abdelnour – We did put in two ways and I think we showed it to the Fire Marshal.

Dave Campbell – We did have the Fire Marshal take a very cursory look at this, and my recollection of his comments were that as long as he can adequately make this path through here with their heaviest of equipment, then they would be okay with this.

McCanham – So they only need access to one side of the building?

Dave Campbell – Yes and no. Really, it comes down to hose length. You can't drag a hose more than 150 feet, so they would have to be smart about where they place their hydrants.

McCanham – But you wouldn't be able to pull a ladder truck behind.

Ghassan Abdelnour – It's actually pretty wide for the ladder truck.

Dave Campbell – What I'm saying is that they would not need to get the ladder truck behind there so long as they've got the proper hose length.

Weber – I think you've got a really complex project here, from an engineering standpoint; water, sewer, electrical, water runoff, retention pond, with adding quite a bit of impervious. I think it's a challenge. My biggest concern is the density. I think you came in two years ago and we talked a little bit about having four townhomes back there. I could kind of wrap my head around that because that would be similar density to what the zoning already has with the R-1D zoning. But having 10 apartments next to residential and behind the gas station, even if they're condos and even with the buffer, I would struggle with that. The primary issue for me is the density. I'm assuming you could solve a lot of things with money on the engineering side and the utility side, I get that. But, changing the density from R-1D and going to multi-family, I would struggle with that.

Chairperson Parel – Thanks, George. Dave, have we looked at combining all of those parcels and how many homes would fit?

Dave Campbell – I have not. We can. It's more than just a math problem though. You have to think about access and what would the route of a road be that would get in to serve these houses and how much space would that take up.

Chairperson Parel – I guess for me, it's a great point. I would want to know. It was proposed previously with four. Are we closer to four, closer to ten, or somewhere in the middle? If they just built it per the current standards or lot lines, what could we fit in there?

Dave Campbell – I don't want to try to take a guess tonight. Another reason it gets challenging is, with the existing lots, as we've mentioned, you've got this little triangle here that you really couldn't do anything with unless you combined it with something else. I can try to come up with a number of how many single-family homes could conceivably be developed there.

Ghassan Abdelnour – If you start doing homes, with the setback and requirements, it takes a lot more land and more asphalt to make it happen. The way we're proposing it, they're small apartments and they're stacked, so the footprint is very small. Even if you put three houses, the footprint would be bigger than what we're proposing. And, because

every house would need a driveway and a two-car garage, it becomes a nightmare to make it happen behind the gas station. That's why we decided to come up with that route. It's more compaction and parking. We do have enough parking; we have visitor parking and employee parking. There is enough landscaping in front and back of these units. And actually, we have a 24-foot driveway, plus another 10 feet to the building. It's a very big setback. The gas station itself has no doors or anything on the back of it. Most of it is to the side. So, we can have enough landscaping to make a buffer.

Weber – It's a very efficient design.

Ghassan Abdelnour – The compaction is very important. To put houses there, I don't think we can do it.

Weber – For me, it's not the houses. The Village is near and dear to all of our hearts, and if this was a mixed use where you had some retail on the bottom and some residential on the top, and it was along Commerce Road, I could wrap my head around a change in density. But, I'm not in favor of adding significant density to what is presently zoned as a residential R-1D. So, moving from residential to multi-family is a concern for me.

Chairperson Parel – How big are these units?

Ghassan Abdelnour – The 1-bedroom is around 650 square feet. The 2-bedroom are 900 square feet. There are 10 units.

Loskill – I have two comments. The first one, as far as aesthetics go, I'd really like to see something that tied in better with the gas station. You've got a very cool, contemporary design for the gas station and a nice mix of materials. I'd like to see that over what we're looking at. My second issue is that the whole object of a PUD is to provide a public benefit to do something that is not capable of being done under the current zoning.

Dave Campbell – Yes.

Loskill – A lot of folks I see coming here are just going to a PUD to try to skirt the Zoning Ordinance, and I'm wondering ... One of the major components of a PUD project is a public benefit, and I haven't seen anything expressed as a public benefit on this project.

Dave Campbell – You're correct that it has not gotten to that point yet, and that the intent of a PUD is to develop a better project than what could have otherwise been developed under the existing zoning. Part of how you achieve that is by the developer offering, and the Township accepting, public benefit. We have not gotten to that point yet of discussing what that public benefit might be with this project. Maybe it's something that would be a good part of tonight's conversation.

Loskill – You have to come to the Township with something. It's not our job to tell him what to do. I'm just bringing that up to be contemplated.

Dave Campbell – Agreed, a PUD is a discretionary decision of the Township, and the discretion is coming to the conclusion that the PUD would be a better project than what could have been achieved under the current zoning.

Bearer – I have similar feelings to George. I wasn't here when you had the townhouse drawings.

Dave Campbell – I'm sorry to interrupt. The townhouses didn't make it to the Planning Commission. It was a concept that got bounced around.

Bearer – Density and the appearance. Four townhouses seems more palatable to me than what's presented here. I don't love the appearance. I know it's not apartments, but the building appears to be apartments. I know the Fire Marshal approved the gas station and that would be the secondary point of access, but I've been there when it has been fully packed and there is no way an emergency vehicle is getting down that point of access. That would be a concern to me being the second point of access.

Chairperson Parel – Thank you.

Dave Campbell – If we're understanding the Fire Marshal correctly, based on the number of units, only one point of access is actually required. So, the second point of access is something of a bonus in terms of emergency response. Mr. Parel, you haven't had a chance to talk yet, but I do have a question. Maybe I'm asking Mr. Weber and Ms. Bearer; as it relates to density, is there openness to an attached product, with thoughts about how many units would be in that product? I heard 4 versus 10. Is there potential for a number that would be more agreeable as an attached product?

Weber – For me, I think it goes back to the earlier discussion. So, with what it's presently zoned, what is the number of dwellings that these parcels combined could support?

Dave Campbell – For the sake of tonight's conversation, let's call it 6. If they could show that they could achieve 6 single-family units, then would there be an openness to otherwise achieving 6 attached units?

Weber – For me personally, I'd be willing to have the discussion. There's more to it than just that, but if the first argument you come to me with is, it's presently zoned for this and therefore by right, we could build this many units, and we want to configure those differently into an attached product, which maybe gets you to greater buffering and greenspace for the surrounding residential aspect of it, then I'm more open to that discussion. Because then we're keeping density the same as what it's presently zoned.

Bearer – Ditto.

Chairperson Parel – Dave, I think for me it's a little bit of a balancing act because I do want to see development that improves the Village. I think it's really important for the community, but we also have to be cautious about what we would allow and density is an issue. I'm hoping this helps the conversation and it helps you guys in hearing some things tonight. I don't know if there are any other questions you may have for us.

Ghassan Abdelnour – The number of units is important. We're moving a lot of electrical and there's a lot of cost to it, just to put one, two or three units. They can't afford it. They're not planning to make money, but they have to break even to make a living. Like you said, there are a lot of engineering issues and a lot of electrical issues they have to solve.

There's the combination of properties and a lot of site work. To make the project make sense, you have to have some ability to recover that with the number of units. We can discuss the shape to make every two units look like different buildings. We can make it them look like the gas station, more modern.

Loskill – Something more in the same vernacular.

Ghassan Abdelnour – Absolutely. These are the elements that we can work with you on, 100%. In my opinion, the more or less units you do, you're going to spend almost \$100,000 to move the electrical and the project becomes kind of tough. I don't know if the owner has an opinion, but we looked at the numbers and we think 10 units is doable. That's why we have enough parking for it. We meet the parking requirements. For every unit we have two parking spaces.

Weber – And they're probably 10-feet wide too.

Ghassan Abdelnour – They are 10-feet wide, but for a bigger project, sometimes you have to maneuver. You could give them a suggestion to have some parking for big trucks and maybe have signage, and for the others you say compact.

For this, we like to be in this town. This is where they live and this is what they want to do for a project. This property is there and I feel bad if it's not done with something like this. It can't be any commercial because it's in the back. So, the only way to do it is that it has to be more residential. If you put houses, it's going to take more space, more garages, more driveways and it's not going to work. That's why we compacted it. If it's not 10, maybe 8. We can work with Dave on it, but it has to be something that makes sense. If we do 8, we might need to make them a little bit bigger, and make them look better with nicer elevations, something that will make you proud. That's why we're here. We'll make it work. Design is not a big issue. The reason why we showed it this way is because it's close to residential. It's also close to commercial and we can change the look to make it a little bit more attractive and a bit more contemporary. We can play with that design, but if we go to 4 or 5 units, it's not doable in my opinion. We just wanted to get your opinion. If we lose 2 units, maybe something is doable. We'll have more open space and create more sitting areas for the neighbors, some walkable area, maybe a gazebo, maybe tables, et cetera. We want to do all this, but first we want to get your blessing or something that makes sense to the owners. It's very hard to invest in something if you know you're losing. You want to invest in something where you're breaking even, or you're making money to stay in that area.

Weber – We want you to be prosperous.

Ghassan Abdelnour – Absolutely. They spent a lot of money for the gas station, but they're very proud of it and they're going to be there for a long time. That's why I'm here to explain it. I've been in your place. I've been in West Bloomfield for 10 years on the Planning Commission, so I know what people think and what people do. We want the Township to look better, but we need a little bit of your help. We can make everybody happy, and especially I want to make the Planning Department happy. They have been very helpful. And we want to make sure the owners are happy. We're not trying to create big buildings, just very simple, it's a condo.

Chairperson Parel – George, you mentioned it. If this was on Commerce Road, I think it would be a little different.

Weber – With retail below and residential above, it's a different scenario.

Chairperson Parel – I wrestled with that, like do we even look at this. I understand that it's part of the Village, but how does it really affect the Village and the feel of the Village, with it being behind an existing gas station with no view. I understand you'll put some people there and those people will ...

Weber – But there's a thousand people that are within walking distance. It's not changing the look and feel or the vibe of going down Commerce Road.

Ghassan Abdelnour – So the idea, if we come back and we talk to Dave, we want to have a little bit of sense that we're on the right track with this.

Weber – My stake in the ground is consistent density to whatever it is presently zoned for that, and Dave will be able to do an estimate on what that would provide. That might not get to be a financially viable project for you, and because electrical, stormwater runoff and water management I think is going to be really challenging for that, with what you're trying to propose. I think that's going to be very costly before you get into water and sewer requirements. I get it, you've got a lot of upfront costs before you ever go vertical.

Ghassan Abdelnour – So, if you don't like apartments, we can do stacked condos next to each other, like two to three-story. It depends how we make it work, but we have to work on the numbers. We're not going to have garages for them. They're going to park outside but we can do covered parking. But we have to agree on a number.

Dave Campbell – I think we're agreeing that we have to agree on the number. I don't know that any of us know what that number is yet. I think what you're hearing is that the number has to be consistent with what it's presently zoned for.

Ghassan Abdelnour – I'm not making a deal here. I'm just trying to get your opinion.

Chairperson Parel – Sure, but it's non-binding.

Ghassan Abdelnour – If we say like 8 units, and we lose 2 units, and add a little bit more landscaped area, and make it more attractive for people walking on the street, and at the same time ... No garages, we will just put the parking in the front and make it easier for the fire truck to maneuver. We'll give it a nicer look, not a monotone building, just different materials and different color bricks, and make it look modern like the gas station. It's something doable, but the numbers are very important. I see 8 as doable.

Weber – I'm just looking at that. I don't know how, with the present zoning, you would get 8 units of R-1D development in there. Again, I think we're supposing what the numbers would be. I think we need to let ...

Ghassan Abdelnour – So you don't see any rezoning?

Dave Campbell – What we're talking about is a PUD, which yes, is a form of rezoning.

Ghassan Abdelnour – That's what we're hoping for because we're trying to put all of these properties together.

Dave Campbell – Where Commerce Township has been doing their best to hold the line with residential development is, we understand that the property is zoned a certain zoning, and so we understand that the property owner has, by right, a certain number of units they can achieve. What the Township and a lot of communities get is developers who say they want a different zoning so they can get that number plus another 50%. That's where the Township has been pretty consistent in saying, this is what it's zoned for, and this is the number of units you could achieve. You can cluster those units, or maybe make the lots smaller in an effort to preserve greenspace and so forth, but the number has to be consistent with the present zoning and with what the property is master planned for. I think that's what you're hearing tonight. There has to be a correlation between the number of units that could be achieved under existing zoning versus the number of units that you're hoping to propose.

Ghassan Abdelnour – Maybe we will discuss it with you later and you'll give us the number that you think.

Dave Campbell – I'll do my best. It's a unique configuration of properties.

Ghassan Abdelnour – We want to make everybody happy, but I just need some ideas.

Dave Campbell – I guess to that point, Mr. Parel, I know we have some neighbors here. I know it's not a public hearing, but the neighbors have sat patiently. I don't know if you want to give them an opportunity to chime in for a reasonable amount of time.

Chairperson Parel – Yes. That is something I think we could do. I just want to make sure we're all shored up on questions either way. Hopefully we've answered.

Ghassan Abdelnour – We know kind of what you're looking for. We want to make everybody happy. I'm hoping for something.

Chairperson Parel – Would anyone like to come up and speak on the matter?

Dave Campbell – If it were a public hearing, we would limit it to two minutes.

Bob Husak, 4690 Camelina St., Commerce Township – That's my house with the concrete driveway. So, I have an investment and I worry about condos. These look like very nice condos, but I worry about the light noise. There is a gynecologist who just bought the property where the Bubble & Squeak was. That's not under any concept right now, is it?

Dave Campbell – We've only ever talked to him and nothing more than talking.

Bob Husak – Gotcha, okay. So, we have that that's going to be expanding here in that area. We're feeling like we're getting cramped in. Granted, I like the Marathon station the

way it looks. I still call it the Clark station, but that's because I've been there for 31 plus years. I hate to lose all the green space and the trees and everything else. When DTE moved the power lines, and those power lines are imperative for the hospital for sure, that's going to be a really big investment. They could go underground. I worry about the water runoff, and I think you guys do too. I worry about the sanitary and what's going to happen with that. And the biggest thing is, I worry about how it looks. We get a significant amount of water coming from the road already, my house does, and I've talked to Jason and Nancy with Giffels a couple times about it.

Weber – Appreciate your input.

Dave Campbell – For what it's worth, if this does proceed, one of the steps in that procedure would be a formal public hearing where everybody in the area would get a notice, and there would be a notice in the newspaper. This is just meant to be informal.

Dan Eisele, 4691 Camelina St., Commerce Township – I live across the street from Bob, directly south of the gas station. I moved here six years ago. I really like the neighborhood. One thing I will say, I do love that you did a great job on your addition. I love the 80-foot green space between the gas station and that seemed to work out really well. I do not like the abandoned house kiddie corner. It has been there the whole time. But I did notice, with that property that sold, it seemed like a real opportunity to fit that all together. You've got the riverfront, you could have maybe restaurants and a boardwalk, eating areas on the river.

Weber – Why don't you build it? We would love that.

Dan Eisele – It seems like these condos, though, the outside looks good, I'm a little concerned about 1-bedroom small condominiums. That's not a family atmosphere, it's single.

Ghassan Abdelnour – We can work on that.

Dan Eisele – Yes. There has been concern with water runoff and things like that. Could there be something done, I suppose at some point, but obviously that's not going to be great for me. It's right in my back yard. I'm going to be looking at condos. You're going to have a whole bunch of people. It's going to be very dense to me.

Jaclyn Husak – And more lights. The gas station now, it's lit up in the back and I'm not even as close as him. My whole yard is lit up. It's really bright. And you've got to protect your building, so whatever, but ...

Dan Eisele – Anyway, how it flows with the whole concept of downtown, you're right, if it was on Commerce Road, if you could do something that made it more of a hometown feel, a walkable area – I don't know how this would be walkable.

Jaclyn Husak – How does it change our property values if something like that is put in there?

Dave Campbell – That would be a better question for our Township Assessor. I don't know that I would want to take a guess at trying to answer it. If it were new single-family homes built next to existing single-family homes, there's an argument that it helps everybody's assessment because the new homes assess typically higher. How that would apply with condos versus single-family, I would want to defer to our Assessor.

Jaclyn Husak – Okay.

Chairperson Parel – I don't know if we could speculate, nor should we.

Dave Campbell – That's how I should. I shouldn't even try. I do want to say, let's remind ourselves that by right, these folks who own these properties, they have a right to utilize their properties, and these are zoned single-family. They have a right to do residential development on these properties. Under current zoning, it would be single-family zoning, but it would be imprudent for Commerce Township to try to say they're not allowed to utilize their property.

Chairperson Parel – I don't think anyone is saying that.

Dave Campbell – I don't think we are either, but it's worth saying.

Chairperson Parel – Yes, to your point, keep in mind that these properties could be developed at any time and they could be developed as they're currently zoned.

Dave Campbell – That's correct, that is my point.

Chairperson Parel – I'm not sure we could offer any more tonight, but hopefully we've answered some questions. We can obviously make ourselves available through David. It sounds like Dave is going to do some homework that will get us to the next conversation. Thank you so much.

Dave Campbell – Do you want to promote the new pizza and chicken kitchen while you're here? What time is it open to? Is it still open?

Farah Orow & Marah Karana – No, we're closed.

#### **ITEM I.4. PLANNING COMMISSION'S 2025 ANNUAL REPORT**

Dave Campbell – This could be as quick as you want it to be. By law, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, the Planning Commission is to submit an annual report to the executive body on an annual basis. In our case, the executive body is the Township Board, and so we do this every year, usually around this time of year. We summarize everything that the Planning Commission did in the year prior and what the Planning Commission intends to do in the year forthcoming. And then, if approved by the Planning Commission tonight, this gets submitted to the Township Board in their next available board packet for informational purposes. So, a bit of housekeeping, but something we do anyway.

**MOTION** by Loskill, supported by Bearer, to approve the Planning Commission's 2025 Annual Report and present it to the Commerce Township Board of Trustees during their meeting on April 14, 2026.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**J: OTHER MATTERS TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION:**

None.

**K: PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE: MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2026, AT 7:00PM.**

Dave Campbell – I have a couple of updates.

- The Bogie Lake Residential Conditional Rezoning that you saw back in February:
  - This is the 46 houses between Walled Lake Northern High School and the Westlake Campus.
  - That went to the Oakland County Coordinating Zoning Committee last week Wednesday, which is required because it's a cross-jurisdictional zoning case. On the south side of Bogie Lake Road is Commerce and on the north side is White Lake Township. So anytime you have that the County takes a look at it to make sure that one community is not putting another community in a bad spot with the disparate zoning. The Coordinating Zoning Committee was comfortable with the proposed rezoning and recommended their approval.
  - We thought it was going to go to the Township Board for their consideration at their meeting tomorrow night, however, due to some unforeseen circumstances, the Board is going to be pretty short-handed tomorrow night. They may only have four members, and in talking to the petitioner for the rezoning, they thought they would rather bring their petition forward to a full Township Board. So, the Conditional Rezoning for Bogie Lake Residential is potentially going to go to the Township Board for consideration in April.
- The Commerce & Carey Road properties.
  - This is the 75 acres at the northeast corner of Commerce and Carey Roads.
  - The developer has had one meeting and is scheduled I think Wednesday to have a second meeting at the Township Library with the nearby residents and property owners, to their credit, to hear their input and to hopefully take that input into consideration as they develop their plans, which we as the Planning Department have not seen anything formal from them yet. So, they have a meeting Wednesday evening at the Library where I think they're going to have at least a concept that they're going to show to the neighbors, and see what the neighbors think of that
  - Based at least in part on that feedback, that would probably be in front of this Planning Commission sometime in the next couple of months I would guess, with some form of a single-family residential development on those 75 acres.

Weber – What time is that meeting Dave?

Beth Miller – It's at the Library from 6:30 to 7:30pm on Wednesday.

Dave Campbell – This Wednesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. Yes, thank you.

Chairperson Parel – Okay, George, 6:30-7:30pm.

Dave Campbell –

- The other one to update you on is the Commerce Lake Market.
  - This is the party store near the northeast corner of Glengary and Benstein.
  - You've heard from the owner a couple of times. He's had different ideas through the last couple of years of what he wants to do with the store.
  - The latest idea is he wants to expand the store but also add fuel pumps, probably along the Benstein side of the property. What he has been working on for the better part of the last year is working through the State of Michigan. I think I mentioned this to you, that because these are going to be underground fuel tanks, and because most of the folks around there are on wells for their domestic water, the State of Michigan has very strict standards for how close underground fuel tanks can be to residential domestic wells. Obviously they don't want underground tanks to somehow contaminate anybody's drinking water source. So, he had to work through the State and get his permit. He has to do double or triple-walled fuel tanks with monitoring systems and alarms to hopefully ensure that there is never going to be anything resembling a fuel leak.
  - He has gotten through that, and so now he wants to come back to the Township to work through the steps to rezone the property and to get his site plan approval. The gas station owner of course wants to do all of this yesterday, but we heard from his architect. He said, I know he wants to be on for April, but we don't see how he's going to have everything together by then. So sometime in the next couple months we may be seeing, on a more formal basis, the plan for the Commerce Lake Market.

**L: ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Weber, supported by Loskill, to adjourn the meeting at 9:47pm.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

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Joe Loskill, Secretary