

**To:** Commerce Township Board of Trustees

**From:** Commerce Township Planning Department  
David Campbell, AICP – Planning Director  
Paula Lankford – Senior Planner  
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**Date:** August 6, 2025

**RE:** August 2025 Monthly Planning Department Report  
(covering June 2, 2025 through August 5, 2025)

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### Development updates

- **Kroger w/ fuel at Midtown on Haggerty** – The Planned Unit Development (PUD) for Midtown on Haggerty was originally approved in 2021 with a mix of uses to include 187 apartments on a then-undeveloped property on the west side of Haggerty Road north of 14 Mile Road. The project's three retail buildings along the site's Haggerty Road frontage were built and occupied, but the apartments on the back half of the site never were. The PUD was amended in 2025 to effectively replace the area approved for the never-built apartments with a 102,000 sq ft Kroger store with a fuel center (the existing Kroger store at 14 Mile and Haggerty would be repurposed). The amendment to Midtown's PUD was approved by the Township Board in May 2025, and the next step for the development team would be to return to the Planning Commission to seek approval of Kroger's detailed PUD site plan (building materials, signage, landscaping, lighting, preliminary engineering, etc.) The intent was for Kroger's PUD site plan to come before the Planning Commission at their meeting on August 11, but on August 6 it was decided by the Planning Department and the development team (led by Steve and Spencer Schafer) to instead target the PC's September 8 meeting. This was primarily due to the fact that the amendment to the Midtown on Haggerty PUD agreement is not yet executed & recorded because the Schafers and the Kroger team are still finalizing the reciprocal easement agreements (REA's) that will be an exhibit to the amended PUD agreement. The REA's might impact Kroger's PUD site plan, including the road/driveway layout and the location of signage, so there is logic to finalizing the REA's (thereby finalizing the PUD agreement) before the Planning Commission finalizes Kroger's PUD site plan.
- **The Enclave at Stillwater** – The Enclave at Stillwater is a proposed PUD consisting of 90 single-family homes on a 65-acre site surrounding a 14-acre manmade lake located upon the middle of three decommissioned gravel pits on the north side of Sleeth Road, between Bass Lake and Duck Lake Roads. The project is scheduled to go before the Commerce Township Planning Commission on August 11, 2025 for a public hearing and – if the Planning Commission is prepared to do so – a recommendation of approval of the PUD to the Township Board. If recommended for approval, the PUD will proceed to the Township Board for consideration possibly at the Board's meeting on September 9. If the Township Board grants approval, the project will then return to the Planning Commission for PUD site plan review and approval. The developer is pursuing the PUD option because the proposed lot sizes do not meet the minimum requirements of the R-1A zoning district. However, the proposed density is

consistent with both the R-1A zoning density and the site's Rural Residential designation on the Township's Future Land Use Map (up to 2 dwelling units per acre), as outlined in the Master Plan. The development would be served by public water and sanitary sewer lines recently extended along the north side of Sleeth Road by Andy Milia's team during the construction of The Reserve at Crystal Lake, located on the westernmost of the former gravel pit sites. Vehicular access to The Enclave would be provided via a new boulevard entrance on the north side of Sleeth Road, with an internal road connection to The Reserve. While there would be no vehicular connection to the Lake Sherwood neighborhood, a sidewalk connection via Winewood Lane is proposed. The project would connect the existing water mains along Sleeth Road and Commerce Road via a water main through the project and connecting to an existing water main stub at Winewood, thereby creating a regional system loop. Municipal engineers and fire department chiefs love regional water main loops.

- **Five & Main**

- **Underground utilities** - If the Planning Department understands the situation – and given there are different explanations depending on who's doing the explaining, that's a sizable "if" – the recently installed DTE underground service lines from Pontiac Trail leading northward into the Springs at Five & Main along either side of Pinewood Avenue (the new road into Five & Main) have to be buried deeper in order to achieve the minimum cover DTE requires relative to the final grades on either side of the road. It is still to be determined by DTE (and their subcontractor for underground work Kaltz Excavating) when that work will be done or how long it will take, but the Springs at Five & Main will likely be without power for a time. This will impact their recently-opened clubhouse/leasing office as well as their ongoing building construction, and they will likely have to make accommodations for temporary power. The good news is DTE's repositioned underground lines will now be within legal utility easements, which they were not when they went in the first time (attributable to a series of good-faith misunderstandings). DTE is expected to share their easement with underground service for Consumers Energy and AT&T.
- **Springs at Five & Main TIF capture** - The developer of Springs at Five & Main (Continental Properties) is exploring the possibility of their project qualifying under a 2023 amendment to the State's Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act whereby the developer of a residential project that includes "attainable" housing could capture a portion of the taxes collected on the incremental increase in taxable value of their previously-undeveloped property. The project is within the Commerce DDA's tax increment financing (TIF) district, resulting in a potentially unique scenario of a brownfield capture within the DDA's TIF district. Continental's brownfield consultant is communicating with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), who is administering the State's new residential brownfield program. Based on a video call with Continental's team, the Township, and MSHDA on August 5, it sounds like MSHDA could be agreeable to a TIF capture model that would not include any of the DDA's capture being redirected to the developer, thereby keeping the DDA whole. MSHDA's concern is setting a precedent whereby other communities would want the same, but they recognize that the Commerce DDA has already invested heavily in the Commerce Towne Place development (land acquisition, building Martin Parkway,

building the M-5/Pontiac Trail/Martin Parkway roundabout, building underground infrastructure, etc.). The intent of the State’s residential brownfield program is that the local government has “skin in the game” in incentivizing development of housing attainable to those who make up to 120% of Oakland County’s adjusted median income, and there is a legitimate argument to be made to the State/MSHDA that the Commerce DDA and the Township put plenty of skin in the game 20 years ago with all the investment in Commerce Towne Place.

- **Southwest corner of Pontiac Trail & Welch** – Christopher George of TF Capital, LLC is proposing to redevelop the southwest corner of Pontiac Trail and Welch Road with a multi-tenant retail building, which will include a drive-through tenant. A concept plan will be presented to the Planning Commission at their August 11 meeting for informal, non-binding feedback. A similar concept for a larger 2-story building was previously presented to the Commission in October 2024 by property owner Bradley Thomasma. Prior to submitting his plan, Mr. George met with the Planning Department and was provided with much of the same feedback that had been given to Mr. Thomasma, allowing him to tailor his concept accordingly.

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

The ZBA’s next regularly scheduled meeting is September 25, 2025. As of the date of this report no petitions have been submitted, however the deadline is not until August 28, 2025. If there is a meeting, it will be the first for Planning Commissioner Caitlin Bearer, who is assuming the recently-retired Bill McKeever’s longtime role as the Planning Commission’s representative on the ZBA. Trustee Rick Sovel has long been hoping to find a ZBA member that shares his passion for Parliament Funkadelic, and we will all find out together whether Commissioner Bearer fits the bill.

### **Planning Commission**

The Planning Commission’s regular meeting scheduled for August 11, 2025 will include the following:

- The introduction of newly-appointed PC member Mickey McCanham, who takes the spot of recently-retired Bill McKeever after Bill’s 23 years on the Planning Commission and the ZBA. Mr. McCanham intends to wear extra pairs of socks in an effort to fill Mr. McKeever’s really big shoes.
- A public hearing for The Enclave at Stillwater a proposed PUD Planned Unit Development for a 90-unit single family development on the middle of the three decommissioned gravel pits on the north side of Sleeth Road, between Bass Lake and Duck Lake Roads (as discussed above).
- ~~A PUD site plan review for a proposed new Kroger with fuel center located at 155 Midtown Avenue (explained above).~~
- Brian Winkler’s first annual crawfish boil.
- A concept plan for the southwest corner of Pontiac Trail and Welch Road for a multi-tenant retail building (as discussed above).

**New Interactive Current Development**

Commerce Township's new Associate Planner, Nicolas PreFontaine, has created an interactive Current Development Map to showcase all ongoing development projects within the township. The map, built using ArcGIS, is available on the Commerce Township website under the Planning Department section labeled "Current Developments," as well as on the homepage. The interactive map is user-friendly and includes clear navigation instructions. Users can click on individual development sites to view detailed information about each project, including site plans and renderings. The map will be regularly updated as new developments are submitted to the township. In an effort to provide sufficient bandwidth, IT Director Ben Sebrowski is prepared to upgrade the Township's 28.8 kilobaud internet connection to a 1.5 megabit fiber optic T1 line with an IP router compatible with our token ring ethernet LAN configuration.