

To: Commerce Township Board of Trustees

From: Commerce Township Planning Department
David Campbell, AICP – Planning Director
Paula Lankford – Senior Planner

Date: November 12, 2025

RE: November 2025 Monthly Planning Department Report
(covering October 9, 2025 through November 10, 2025)



Development updates

- **The Enclave at Stillwater** – Twin Ponds Investment Co. (Andy Milia and Gary Jonna) is proceeding ahead with The Enclave at Stillwater planned unit development (PUD), a 90-unit residential site condominium on the middle of the three decommissioned gravel pits on the north side of Sleeth Road between Bass Lake & Duck Lake Roads. At their meeting on November 3, 2025, the Planning Commission made a formal recommendation of approval to the Township Board of the project's condominium site plan (a more detailed version of the PUD's development plan) and the condominium master deed. The draft master deed was submitted for review by the Township Attorney, who is recommending approval conditional upon review & approval of the forthcoming exhibit B documents by the Township Engineer. The Enclave is scheduled for final approval of the condominium master deed & bylaws by the Township Board at their November 18 meeting. Andy Milia has a conflict at that date & time and regretfully will not be in attendance. The Planning Director and Township Attorney can likely address any questions the Township Board might have in Mr. Milia's absence.
- **The Springs at Five & Main (Continental Properties)** – The residential brownfield plan for The Springs is moving through the approval process with the Township, Oakland County, and the State of Michigan (specifically the Michigan State Housing Development Authority – MSHDA). The Township Board approved a resolution concurring with the brownfield plan during the Board's meeting on October 14. The Oakland County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (OCBRA) approved the brownfield plan on October 28. On December 3, the plan goes before the County's Economic Development & Infrastructure Committee and Finance Committee for their respective recommendations, and then to the Board of Commissioners (OCBOC) on Dec. 11. If approved by the OCBOC, the plan would proceed to MSHDA for potential approval in the first quarter of 2026. Meanwhile, The Springs' leasing manager tells the Planning Department they currently have residents living within three completed 32-unit buildings with a current combined occupancy of around 50%, with around 10 more move-in's scheduled.
- **New traffic signal at Pontiac Trail, Walnut Lake Rd, and Pinewood Ave** – The Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) held a pre-construction meeting with J. Ranck Electric on the new traffic signal programmed along Pontiac Trail at Walnut Lake / Pinewood Avenue (the new boulevard driveway into the Five & Main development, shared with Walmart and with LaFontaine Hyundai/Genesis). J. Ranck intends to set the poles for the signal in December 2025, and hang/energize the signal in January 2026. God willing and the creek

don't rise, the new signal will be operational by the end of January, as the RCOC's standard practice is to have the signal on a flashing yellow/red for a week ahead of it being fully operational. The Township was part of the pre-construction meeting, and asked the RCOC whether some signage alerting drivers of a new traffic signal ahead was warranted, particularly to alert drivers along northbound M-5 to eastbound Pontiac Trail who are usually moving at a pretty good clip. Meanwhile, the temporary driveway installed in front of Walmart while Pinewood Avenue was being constructed is scheduled to be removed & restored by Wieland Construction (Continental Properties' general contractor for The Springs) starting on November 17. It's 20 years overdue, but having a traffic signal controlling that intersection – and particularly left turns to and from Pontiac Trail – will be a welcome traffic safety improvement.

- **United Artists Theater (3033 Spring Vale)** – The Planning Department and the Township Supervisor met with representatives from the Jonna Group, the real estate broker listing the UA Theater property. The intent of the meeting was to discuss what the Township might envision on the 13-acre site, including possibilities for repurposing the existing theater building (approx. 60,000 sq ft) or demolishing the building and redeveloping the site. The representatives from the broker heard the Township's position that a proposal from a prospective buyer/developer for rental apartments would likely be very challenging process. The property is currently zoned B-2 (Community Business) as are the bulk of the properties surrounding it within the Commerce Crossing development (Costco, Home Depot, Target, Lifetime Fitness, etc.) Much of the discussion was the market potential for the property to be repurposed/redeveloped with an entertainment use. B-2 zoning would allow most retail uses including "big box" and "junior box" operators, although a drive-through use would require special land use approval. The former theater's existing parking lot is likely oversized for most uses that could repurpose the building (it was probably oversized for the theater even during its heyday), so there was discussion of perhaps creating additional outlots from the surplus parking.
- **Townes at 42 North** – Clearing and grading activity has commenced for Townes at 42 North, a 39-unit attached condominium development on a 5-acre Meijer out lot at the northeast corner of Crumb Road and Meijer Drive (just west of Haggerty, next-door to Goodwill). Clearing appears to be complete, but a large pile of earth remains that was likely the overburden from when Meijer was built in the early 90's.
- **Northeast corner of E. Commerce & Carey** – The Planning Department is recycling the following from our October 2025 report because plenty of the residents in the vicinity of Commerce & Carey have been keeping themselves abreast of prospective development of the northeast corner: The approx. 42 undeveloped acres at the northeast corner of E. Commerce & Carey Roads has been owned by a residential developer since at least 2005. Through the years, the developer has approached the Township with concepts for developing the property, but has never advanced beyond concepts. More recently, the same developer purchased the approx. 33 undeveloped acres adjacent to the east, thereby assembling approx. 75 acres. The properties are zoned R-1A, a zoning district that typically requires single-family residential lots of a minimum of 20,000 sq ft and minimum 100 feet of road frontage. While no plans have been formally submitted, the developer has discussed with the Planning Department the process for pursuing approval of a new single-family

neighborhood on the combined properties, and has engaged with a traffic engineer to analyze the traffic impacts of the development. It is probable that the developer will pursue lots smaller than 20,000 sq. ft. and narrower than 100 feet, but at the same density, in an effort to preserve natural features and open space. They will likely propose two new points of public road access, one on the north side of E. Commerce and one on the east side of Carey, with an internal connection to the adjacent neighborhood (Bridge Pointe) via an existing road stubbed at the property line (Bridge Pointe Drive). The existing intersection of Commerce & E. Carey will be evaluated for traffic impacts and potential upgrades, including evaluation of the gravel cut-through (the remains of the roadbed of the intersection's former alignment) at the intersection's northeast corner.

- **NE corner of S. Commerce and S. Commerce (in Commerce)** – The undeveloped & wooded 10 acres has been evaluated by various residential developers through the years, and it sounds like the market is such that a sale of the property to a developer could be imminent. The property is zoned R-1C, which requires single-family lots of at least 10,000 sq ft and 60 feet of width/road frontage. The property was cleared agricultural land in the 1940's that Mother Nature has reclaimed in the decades since. The Township's hope would be to work with a prospective developer to preserve some of the site's natural features, which might be challenging since any residential project on the property would have to be serviced by municipal water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer. Sanitary sewer would have to be extended "to & through" the property to its northerly and westerly extents for future extension northward and westward. This might require the developer to oversize the sewer they would install to service the development to provide sufficient capacity for future connections upstream.

Zoning Map & Zoning Ordinance Amendments

- **Article 26, General Performance Standards – Noise & Vibration** – The Township initiated an amendment of Section 26.505 of the Zoning Ordinance to revise the maximum decibel levels permitted based on time of day and on adjacent land use, and to specify the regulations that pertain to "continuous" noise. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed amendment during their meeting on November 3, and recommended the Township Board approve the amendment but with some modest changes. The Township Board will consider approving the amendment – including the PC's modest changes – during their meeting on November 18. Planning Commission Secretary Joe Loskill was admittedly torn on the proposed amendment, as he is known to continuously serenade his neighbors with The Phantom of the Opera's finale medley.
- **Vacant property on south side of Commerce Rd just west of Carey** - A prospective buyer (Kurtis & Adriana Rickelmann) of the recently-split property on the south side of Commerce Road west of Carey Road presented a concept plan to the Planning Commission during the PC's meeting on November 3 for developing a nature-based school/preschool – Great Lakes Nature School - of up to 50 students. The property is zoned R-1A, so a childcare facility would require either rezoning the property (likely to either O-Office or B1-Local Business) or amending the uses permitted in R-1A. The Planning Commission was generally favorable of the concept, but speculated that any proposal to rezone the property would likely have to be a conditional rezoning limiting the use to only a childcare facility and not any of the other

uses permitted within the new zoning designation. Mr. Rickelmann has since followed up with the Planning Department to confirm his understanding of the conditional rezoning process, indicating their intent to bring the project to fruition.

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)

The ZBA's regularly scheduled meeting on November 20, 2025 will include the following:

- A variance request for 3671 Stallion Way for approval to construct a deck that would encroach into the required rear yard setback on a corner lot
- Review and approval of the ZBA's 2026 meeting schedule
- Trustee Rick Sovel's "Rockin' Around the Rick-mas Tree Extravaganza"

Planning Commission

- The Planning Commission's regular meeting scheduled for October 6, 2025 was cancelled due to lack of actionable items.
- The Planning Commission's regular meeting of November 3, 2025 included the following:
 - A spirited Public Discussion. Drivers don't like traffic. The irony is they are one of the cars causing the very traffic they don't like.
 - A public hearing for the proposed amendment to Sec. 26.505 (Noise & Vibration), followed by a recommendation by the Planning Commission for the Township Board to approve the amendment but with some modest changes (described above)
 - Approval of the PUD condominium site plan for The Enclave at Stillwater (described above)
 - Review of a concept plan for the Great Lakes Nature School (described above)
 - Planning Commission 2026 "housekeeping" including election of officers (unchanged; Brian Parel remains Chairperson, Brian Winkler remains Vice-Chair, Joe Loskill remains Secretary, Paula Lankford remains Most Awesome), approval of 2026 PC meeting calendar (Township Board also needs to approve, likely at the Board's December meeting), and review & approval of PC Bylaws (something they do every year as a good practice to ensure the bylaws are up to date, and also because who doesn't love reading bylaws).