

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

Monday, December 4, 2023
2009 Township Drive
Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

A. CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Parel called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

ROLL CALL:

Present:	Brian Parel, Chairperson Brian Winkler, Vice Chairperson Joe Loskill, Secretary Bill McKeever Sam Karim Brady Phillips
Absent:	George Weber (excused)
Also Present:	Dave Campbell, Township Planning Director Julia Upfal, Planner, Giffels Webster Rose Kim, Staff Planner, Giffels Webster (arrived 7:10pm)

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Loskill, supported by Phillips, to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Agenda of December 4, 2023.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Winkler, supported by Loskill, to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of November 6, 2023, as written.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

D. UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES

Bill McKeever – Zoning Board of Appeals

- No agenda since last meeting.

Brian Winkler – Downtown Development Authority

- The November 14th DDA meeting was the shortest on record. It lasted no more than 10 minutes. There are two highlights.
- The Outrun Hunger 5K race took place on November 11th. They raised \$32,000 for Open Door and Hospitality House. At this point, they have raised nearly \$250,000 for those causes.
- The other item is that Bob Sackleh has been chosen to fill the vacancy on the DDA Board. Bob is a member of the Board of Review and brings an extensive financial background to the DDA Board.

George Weber – Township Board of Trustees

Chairperson Parel – In George's absence, Dave, do you have any updates from the Trustees?

Dave Campbell – The only thing that comes to mind in terms of capital improvements is that they entered into an agreement with the RCOC to install an RRFB, which is a rectangular rapid flashing beacon, across South Commerce Road, in front of the

entrance to Dodge Park. The intent is that folks from the west side of South Commerce can safely cross over to the east side to access the park and the library. There are a lot of neighborhoods on the west side. They have been asking for a way to safely cross South Commerce Road. To make that happen, you put in the flashing beacon with the pavement markings, and you have to have landings on either side of the road so it's accessible for wheelchair access.

The RCOC is not a huge fan of mid-block crossings. They want us all to cross at signalized intersections. So, it has been quite a few hoops to jump through to get them to agree to a flashing beacon. We finally got to that point, and we had to enter into a maintenance agreement with the RCOC. If anybody runs it over, or it needs a new light bulb, the RCOC will fix it and send the bill to Commerce Township. I expect that the signal itself will be installed in the spring.

The Trustees are still working through the Township budget. There is another meeting next week, Tuesday the 12th, where hopefully they will be finalizing the Township's budget for the coming fiscal year.

Chairperson Parel – Excellent. Do you envision that flashing light to be something similar to the one at Long's Cider Mill, across from the apple orchard?

Dave Campbell – I believe the one in front of Long's Farm is actually a HAWK signal. That one, when someone pushes the button, it actually stops traffic with a red light. The beacon I'm describing is a yellow light. That means that the nonmotorized user pushes it and gets a flashing yellow. Traffic is meant to slow down when they see the flashing yellow, and once the pedestrian enters the intersection, they get the right-of-way.

McKeever – Is that similar to Decker?

Dave Campbell – Similar to where the Michigan Airline Trail crosses Decker, where it crosses Welch ...

Chairperson Parel – Something about that Long's signal; to me, it's very hard to see. When you're driving through and the light is going off, you realize it at the last second and it's a little scary.

Dave Campbell – I know there's some history with that signal that predates me. My understanding is that the Long's Cider Mill had to pay for that. The RCOC doesn't just volunteer to put those up. There has to be an analysis and it's on the petitioner to pay for the analysis, and to pay for and maintain the signal. My understanding is that Long's wanted their signal there so that their customers could safely cross from the orchard side to the cider mill side. As far as the design, I wonder if part of it is that it's only active maybe a couple months out of the year, and even then, probably only on the weekends.

Jay James – Building Department

Chairperson Parel – In Jay's absence, Dave, anything to report?

Dave Campbell – I think Jay would say that a lot of his builders are trying to get projects sealed up before the snow flies.

Chairperson Parel – Any updates on Oxbow?

Dave Campbell – I have not been that way. I've been told by the RCOC that it would be done by the end of November, which has obviously come and gone. I would look around to see if anyone has gone that way to see if the road is open.

Chairperson Parel – Google maps took me around it this evening.

Dave Campbell – I will make a note to get in touch with the RCOC and check the status.

E. PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Chairperson Parel opened to Public Discussion of Matters Not on the Agenda.

Teresa Renaud – I live in Novi, but I am an ex-Commerce Township resident, and I work for Senator Runestad. We have not been to one of your Planning sessions; it's that time of year though, and master plans are being done so it's important for us to see how the public and the community is receiving the master plan, and get an idea of what you have planned for the future. I just wanted to show a presence tonight on behalf of the Senator and let you know that we're here to support you in any way that we can.

Chairperson Parel – Thank you. We appreciate you coming out.

Chairperson Parel closed Public Discussion of Matters Not on the Agenda.

F. TABLED ITEMS

None.

G. OLD BUSINESS

None.

H. SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS

PSU23-03 – LAKESIDE MARINE – SPECIAL LAND USE – PUBLIC HEARING

Lakeside Marine of Commerce MI is requesting approval for two Special Land Uses in the TLM (Technology & Light Manufacturing) zoning district at 3041 Haggerty Road for vehicle (watercraft) repair and accessory outdoor storage.

PIN# 17-24-200-017

This item has been canceled. (new public hearing date is pending)

ITEM H.1. 2023 MASTER PLAN UPDATE – PUBLIC HEARING

The Commerce Township Planning Commission is holding a public hearing to receive public comments on the final draft of the proposed 2023 Commerce Township Master Plan Update.

Dave Campbell – I know Julia has a presentation she wants to go through, and I see Rose is joining us too. She probably got stuck in all this darn Commerce Township traffic. I'll give some brief remarks.

The Planning Commission has been working on this process for the better part of two years. We kicked off a review of our Master Plan in 2021, which was last completed in 2015. We spent about 6 months going through that very thorough review with Giffels

Webster. The outcome of that review was that the 2015 Master Plan was in need of updating. We had the option to leave it unchanged, but the Planning Commission determined that significant updates needed to be made. So, then we had to start the process of getting the Township Board to approve going through the Master Plan update because there is a cost involved with that. And then, we spent 16 to 18 months going through the Master Plan update.

Usually, you want it to take about a year. We spent a little more time than that, but that was done purposefully. I think the Township went above and beyond in a lot of ways in seeking public input and public outreach for the Master Plan process. We went to homeowner's association meetings, we went to some of the senior living facilities, we went to all three of the Walled Lake high schools to get input from the younger crowd. With all that public input and the open houses we had right here during our Planning Commission meetings, and all of the workshops that the Planning Commission had leading into our regular 7:00pm meetings, all culminates with what could potentially happen this evening, which is that the updated Master Plan gets approved and adopted by the Planning Commission. That would be your option if you feel it's ready.

The last couple months, the Master Plan went out for its State required 63-day review from all of our adjacent communities, and from the RCOC, the Oakland County Planning Division, the Water Resources Commission. Over those 63 days, we compiled all of those comments and Giffels made some updates, revisions and enhancements based on those comments. We will go through some of those updates tonight.

The Master Plan did go to Oakland County's Coordinating Zoning Committee; a panel tasked with looking at the master plans from all of the 63 communities within Oakland County and confirming that one community's master plan is not in serious conflict with another community's master plan. That meeting was back in November, and they recommended approval of the master plan, as did the staff of the Oakland County Planning Division.

All of that is good news. We got letters back from a lot of our adjacent communities saying it looks great to them. That brings us to this evening; the State's Planning Enabling Act requires that we have a public hearing before the Planning Commission considers adopting the updated Master Plan. We will see what public comments are received and then the Planning Commission can make a decision on how you want to act tonight, if you want to act at all. It's possible that you might hear public comments that make you say, we have more work to do.

Julia Upfal – Thank you so much. I will go through these slides quickly because they go through a lot of what Dave just covered. Thank you for all of your efforts over the last year. This has been a great project and I think it has culminated in a really awesome plan. The fact that we only have a few public comments tonight speaks to the fact that we're largely in alignment with what the community wanted to see in this plan and the vision that you had established.

To start, we will go back a few chapters to, "What is a Master Plan?" I know we've had the discussion a few times, but I think it's important to remind everyone here why we're doing this. A master plan is a requirement of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. It has to be updated every 5 years. It's your policy document; your long-term vision. It's not the ordinance. It's not law. It's what we consider to be a blueprint for the future. It discusses all different types of issues; economic development, housing, transportation, sustainability, and it looks at how that is going to go in the long term with the strategy for meeting the community goals.

How does a Master Plan relate to zoning? The Zoning Ordinance and map are what actually regulate development for the master plan, and the master plan does not change the ordinance. What it does is it advises the Planning Commission as they make changes and as they make new decisions related to the ordinance.

One thing I would note that we don't have on the slide here is, but we have emphasized throughout the course of our discussions, is that the master plan and the Zoning Ordinance cannot hinder or stop somebody from developing on their land. However, with the master plan, we can think of ways to ensure that the streets, the sidewalks, the parks and the other public features align with what is being constructed in the community. We can also think long term about how property is being developed.

The master plan process started in Fall 2021 when we did the review and the Planning Commission determined that they wanted to proceed with the master plan update.

There was a kickoff event in Spring 2022 and we had some preliminary discussions about guiding themes and what the Planning Commission really wanted to see out of this plan. Those led up to the first open house, and then we started talking more specifically about area plans.

We had our second open house in June 2023. That was more a review of the final ideas and the concepts of the plan. That was presenting the plan to the community, as opposed to the first open house where we were getting input. A final draft was distributed in September, and we made it to the public hearing today. This is a summary of all the public input we did. We had several small group workshops, we had the open houses with 45 attendees at the first, and 20 at the second one, and we also went to several area high schools to give a presentation about planning and ask for feedback on what high schoolers want to see in the community long term. I think that was a really enlightening experience for all of us, knowing that they are the future generation of Commerce Township.

Generally, these are key things from the public input. We found natural features, parks and open spaces really surfaced as a high level priority throughout the community from many of our discussions, and that is what's really beloved to community members here in Commerce Township. We found that traffic congestion was cited as a concern, as well as the lack of a formal downtown. Those were the key concerns that we heard throughout the course of the planning process. We also heard people who really wanted to see expansions in the nonmotorized network, and pedestrian safety as a higher priority. We talked about several emerging trends. I think most notably was the growing senior population.

The Planning Commission started off by establishing their guiding themes. These served as guardrails throughout the planning process, ensuring that the Planning Commission didn't stray away from those values that they found to be really important. The themes related to growth management, community character, traffic mitigation, development of large sites, economic development, having a complete nonmotorized transportation network, community health, sustainability and resiliency. We used those guiding themes to inform the goals and objectives and the vision of the plan.

We have the vision statement, which was:

Commerce Township will enhance the residential experience and improve the economic vitality for all Commerce Township residents and business owners. In the future, Commerce Township will continue to be a great place to live as growth is accommodated to provide economic opportunities, yet managed to protect the community's cherished natural and historic features.

Julia Upfal – Those were the establishing principles and the vision statement that were foundational throughout this effort. I will turn it over to Rose.

Rose Kim – The vision statement and the guiding principles led to development of the goals and objectives. The goals define the vision. We will go through each of the goals with you, however, the action items and objectives can be found in greater length in the plan. You can see these goals were really informed by the guiding themes of the plan. The residential development goal is *to achieve well-planned, safe, balanced and pleasant high-quality residential neighborhoods that meet the needs of all residents within the Township, today and in the future*. As an example, an objective for that residential development goal is to ensure new housing is located such that more compact development builds upon, or influences areas of higher walkability. An action item or strategy that would be involved in helping to achieve that objective would be to review the Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinance to ensure that a variety of housing types are allowed within walking distance of shopping, dining, entertainment, recreation and employment options which offer goods and services for younger as well as older residents. To reiterate, based on the public input, that nonmotorized transportation network ended up being a very big theme throughout the plan. This is one of those ways that we hit the theme and achieve the goals of the plan in the long term. Another goal was economic development. That is, *promoting well-located, high-quality and diverse development in strategic areas of the community while mitigating impacts of development on neighboring residential uses; create and nurture identifiable downtown type commercial activity centers*.

Another goal is transportation, which has been one of the key themes of the plan; *with community and regional partners, provide motorized and non-motorized access and connections to permitted uses, while managing the conditions, safety, capacity, and the flow of traffic on the surrounding transportation network*.

Stewardship. Create a more sustainable and resilient future for Commerce Township by identifying, protecting, preserving, and enhancing the unique and desirable natural features of the Township. Another example of an objective for that goal was, *to encourage and enhance resident access to natural features*. An action strategy to get to that objective would be, *to coordinate pathway construction with existing and planned regional trail systems*.

Community and Public Facilities. To create a sustainable community that provides a wide variety of recreational, civic, public safety, and related services for residents and visitors alike.

Infrastructure. Provide, maintain and improve the Township's existing infrastructure, including water, sewer, and other utilities needed for residents and businesses.

Another key component of the plan which I think Dave spoke about initially was developing area plans. At the beginning of the process, the Planning Commission identified a set of parcels that had a high likelihood for development, and they wanted to get out ahead of those potential developments, and what the benefits and challenges could be, so these area plans were developed.

In the north end, one of the centerpieces is Commerce Village. The opportunity sites range from minimally developed, golf courses or undeveloped. The goal with these sites was to focus on connectivity. Taking these sites that are primarily residential in nature and being able to tap into strengthening surrounding businesses and neighborhoods. In the commercial center, with the Township's long developing plans for Five & Main, there are a couple of key sites that have some opportunities, like Williams International,

the Beaumont property and the Rock Road properties, and being able to concentrate development in that area to support economic development, while also encouraging the redevelopment to be able to focus on nonmotorized transportation, and also be able to benefit from less autocentric and more pedestrian oriented characteristics.

Each of these parts of the process had the Planning Commission consider incorporating this into the Future Land Use plan. This led to some changes in the Future Land Use Map, as well as some categories and the descriptions related to future land use. One of the things we did was to take two of the maps, which were initially separated in the 2015 plan, and consolidate them so that they were all in one map, consolidating single-family categories into one neighborhood residential category to reflect that there weren't many nuances and differences in the categories that existed previously.

Other small changes were made to individual parcels. Those were largely to reflect current development, or likelihood of development, or to be consistent with zoning. We also consolidated the office/service category into the neighborhood commercial category as office uses don't need to be separated. We also did some refining of language for other areas, and added a corporate campus in Commerce Village categories to reflect our goals for the area plans. These led to similar changes that we're proposing for the zoning plan, which shows how the Township's planned long range land use will be implemented through the use of zoning regulations in the future and affect how development is regulated.

The next step in the plan will be implementation and prioritizing the action items in the plan. Finally, the key changes which Dave alluded to beforehand, from the last time that the Commission saw the draft; the review period was largely very positive. There was a lot of support for the plan and in finding ways to cooperate in order to achieve the plan. There were some small recommendations, with the key ones being:

- The addition of information on utility and infrastructure partners, which expanded the overview section of the infrastructure goal.
- There's also inclusion of the Michigan Natural Features Inventory of High-Quality Areas and map. We felt that helped support the fact that the areas the Township values are similarly valued by the County and State, so it drove that point home.
- Also included is additional information on hazards and flooding to recognize more acutely that flooding is a more severe concern in some areas of the Township, and acknowledge that mitigation of those risks will be important in the future.
- Finally, refining of action items to include Oakland County programs which may be relevant to the Township. Those are just generally incorporated in the action items.

I believe that concludes our recap of the process.

Chairperson Parel – Thank you. We appreciate all of the hard work that Giffels has put into this over the past two years.

Dave Campbell – Yes. It was 6 months just to go through the review and then determine that we wanted to update it, and then dive into what we spent the next 18 months doing, which is rewriting our master plan.

Chairperson Parel – Thank you. Dave, are you okay with me opening the public hearing?

Dave Campbell – It's certainly fine by me. I think the key component of any master plan is the Future Land Use Map. That is what folks tend to want to look at to see what is planned for their neighborhood and the areas where they live and work. While you're doing that, I will flip ahead to the Future Land Use Map so we have it on the screen in case any questions or comments come out of that.

Phillips – I do have some comments. I don't know if it's appropriate now or later. I think we have a real challenge. I think the plan as laid out is great and I like the content, but for 6 goals, we have 157 different action items. I know it was stated that the next steps are prioritization. I think that is absolutely critical for us as a Commission to really understand which items we want to prioritize and what we can get done, because if you have too many action items and no prioritization, then you won't get anything done. The one other comment I have is, the topic we talk about most is traffic congestion. When I look through the action items, I don't see anything substantial that addresses that. Not that I have a solution, but it just seems like that is a top priority for everybody in our community, and this plan does not address it. Nonmotorized transportation and public transportation aren't going to address that. We could probably have an entire meeting on that one topic.

Dave Campbell – We could probably have a year's worth of meetings on that topic.

Phillips – Yes. So, I don't know where we need to go with that, but if you poll the community, that is probably the #1 issue.

Dave Campbell – Absolutely.

Phillips – Okay, those are my comments.

Chairperson Parel opened the public hearing.

Andy Sarkisian, 3398 Tiquewood, Commerce Township – I live in the Lake Sherwood area. About two years ago, Larry came to our general membership meeting, our annual meeting, and told us about the kickoff of the updated plan. He was reaching out to the different communities. We represent 630 households. As a homeowner's association, we solicited members throughout the 630 households. We got together a subcommittee of about 13 members and we sat down and went through the process; strengths, weaknesses and things that we'd like to see or not see in the plan. We provided that input. We also participated a little over a year ago in the open houses here, and one of the other open mics you had jointly with the Trustees.

We see what's here. We have some questions in there. There are some things that surprised us a little bit, like the orange dots there near us. Quite frankly, I've been a resident here of nearly 32 years. I loved moving into Lake Sherwood because I thought I had a couple of assurances. One being Proud Lake to the south, and the other being Highland State Park to north, that would limit development and help keep this semi-rural neighborhood that we love so much.

We know there have been other properties and development, more traffic lights and all that. We recognize that stuff but we like the semi-rural neighborhood that we live in. It was a little surprising that we found in this Master Plan the addition of some small retail at the corner of Duck Lake and Commerce Road, as well as Carey and Duck Lake

Roads. As we mentioned previously in an open mic, we know where retail is – we choose not to live near it. We know how to get to it.

We also noticed here that there's a change, and I think it was mentioned, on the classification. Particularly for our neighborhood, and I see it's for the other lake neighborhoods, from R-1 Residential to Cottage Residential. We don't know what that means, but we are 99% primary residences. There's a few people that rent homes, long-term renters, and there's a couple people who use it seasonally. Primarily, we are primary residences and we're hoping this term Cottage Residential doesn't mean a change in that. So, we'd like some clarification if you don't mind. Gary, is there anything else?

Gary – No, I think you've got it.

Andy Sarkisian – By the way, I don't want to sound all negative. We'd like to see in here the kind of walkability or bike trails that would help connect. We saw references along Sleeth and along Commerce Road. Quite frankly, we do have some wonderful gems in the neighborhood. I would love to be able to take my grandchildren and ride bikes to Scarlet's Playground. The kids love it. But, we're okay with using a car as well. I will second Brady's comments with the congestion, and if you're talking about adding more to the population and more development, that's only going to get worse if we don't address it. Adding more traffic lights just adds more time on getting to where you want to go.

We talked with Larry and he commented last time; roundabouts work. Yay for one going in eventually at Duck Lake and Sleeth. That traffic light makes you lose a lot of faith in the Road Commission. So, keep at it guys. Thank you.

Phillips – Andy, when you said you're concerned about the designation of cottage, are you concerned about rental activity or VRBO?

Andy Sarkisian – Yes, we are. As a lake community, and I've had this discussion with Senator Runestad, there are hazards for people who are not familiar with the lake; being there for a short period of time, using the lake. Quite frankly, we are proud of our safety reputation and track record at Lake Sherwood. We don't want to ruin that track record, and short-term residents pose a significant threat. Also, if you have an issue with a neighbor, you know how to follow-up with them because you have to live together. With short-term residents here and gone, those issues don't get resolved and they just become scars.

Phillips – I share that concern and I'm also a resident on Lake Sherwood.

Andy Sarkisian – Yes, we know. So, we're happy you're here to represent us as well. So what does Cottage Residential mean relative to R-1.

Dave Campbell – I'll take a stab at it and Julia will also. She'll correct me if I'm wrong. It's really not meant to have any indication of renter versus owner. It's really more an establishment of the envisioned density. You'll see that Cottage Residential category surrounding most of the lakes. That's more indicative of the historic development pattern along the lakes. The lakes developed with smaller lots, cottage size lots; the older lakes, Commerce Lake in particular, that used to be people's up north cottages,

75 to 100 years ago. They are smaller lots and a little bit heavier density because it's surrounding the lakefront. In other words, to have a more rural estate residential land use category around the lakes probably doesn't make sense because it doesn't make sense to have 1-acre lots surrounding the lake. That's just not the development pattern that exists and it's probably not the development pattern that is going to change over time. In no way is it meant to be an indication of it being our VRBO category or anything along those lines. It's really just more a question of lot size and units per acre.

Andy Sarkisian – So, I mentioned why we moved to Lake Sherwood and why we like it. We looked at lake property. My wife and I, raising our daughters, we had a choice. Do we want to be somewhere like Northville or Birmingham and have a boat on the river, or have a place up north? But we said, let's be on an Oakland County lake. It's close to work and I'll do the drive. The unique thing about Lake Sherwood was, as opposed to many of the other lake communities, particularly here in Commerce, is that it was developed with 100-foot lots. So, it didn't feel like we were in a cottage. It is a primary residence. When we see the Cottage thing, we kind of worry; does this mean we're going to get treated differently. We do expect some services like a primary residence, and so we work at that as part of the association to provide the highest quality of life for our members.

Dave Campbell – I understand. I don't anticipate that you would be treated differently. Maybe help me understand what that could possibly mean and we can speak to that, but as far as the categorization within the Future Land Use Map, no, you're not going to be treated any differently.

Julia Upfal – The intent of the Cottage Lakefront Residential zoning, and it says so in the plan, is to make it so that you're treated the same, not treated differently. It's actually to make it so that it recognizes that lots have been traditionally smaller and encourages some flexibility to allow for the development of those lots to continue. It encourages maintaining year-round, primary residences. It specifically says that when it's talking about the vision for Cottage Residential.

Andy Sarkisian – In that regard, I'm not sure it applies with Lake Sherwood because we are bigger lots, and our deed restrictions spell out larger setbacks than the Township's. We are trying to make sure there's elbow room, more associated with larger lots. So, something you may want to consider before you do the final.

Chairperson Parel – Thank you.

Julia Upfal – I think that brings me to the second comment that I did want to address about the Future Land Use Map and the changes that were made. At Commerce and Carey, the neighborhood residential; that was actually there previously on the Future Land Use Map and it was included on this. It wasn't a change.

Dave Campbell – That's correct. It's not intended to be high-intensity commercial. It's not intended to be a drive-through or a gas station. If it were developed, that particular corner is envisioned to be low-intensity commercial; a bakery, a flower shop, something of that nature, and something that is meant to service just the folks in the immediate area and not to be more of a regional commercial entity.

Andy Sarkisian – We don't need another liquor store.

Dave Campbell – That's not the intent.

Julia Upfal – Around Lake Sherwood, that had previously been single-family and it was just to distinguish and recognize the historic nature of the lots.

Dave Campbell – Maybe I'll take one more run at answering Mr. Sarkisian's question. I'm trying to think of how this Master Plan could be a worst case scenario for you. The only thing I can come up with is if someone were to buy all the properties throughout Lake Sherwood, assemble all of them, and then try to get them rezoned to some sort of higher density zoning category. I just don't know if that's a real plausible scenario.

Julia Upfal – Especially if they are deed restricted.

Dave Campbell – Exactly.

Andy Sarkisian – Yes, it would not happen with our deed restrictions. We're not allowed to split lots.

McKeever – And that takes precedence over the ordinance.

Dave Campbell – Yes, your deed restrictions can supersede our ordinances. They can't be less restrictive, but they can certainly be more restrictive and yours certainly are. And while I have the microphone, I might mention before she tries to sneak out. So, Ms. Renaud from Senator Runestad's office; as we talk about traffic and all of the challenges that Commerce Township faces with traffic, and Teresa can speak to them as much as anyone because she lives in this area, if we need funding to build better roads, the Senator's office would be a good place to pound on the door. I just had to throw that in there since she chose to show up here tonight.

Julia Upfal – That also reminds me of one more comment I wanted to address regarding some of the actions related to congestion. I know that we may not have addressed it as head on as we would have liked to, given the lack of jurisdiction over the roads here in the Township, but I do think it is, not only through the nonmotorized network, but also our consideration of land uses. That's really what is driving traffic, where people are going to and from. So, if we can make these compact destinations where you have multiple uses where people don't have to get in their car as often, and when you can make it so that people who are living here are working here and you don't have as many people cutting through the Township to get to their next destination. Those are things that are going to relieve traffic here. I agree that there aren't a lot of road fixes so to speak, but the plan is really intended to try to address those traffic issues by looking at land uses overall.

Chairperson Parel – As best as a master plan can, right?

Dave Campbell – For roads that we do not have jurisdiction over.

Teresa Renaud – Is there a road plan that goes with the land use plan?

Dave Campbell – There is a nonmotorized transportation plan. We do have a dream for a new Martin Parkway that I'm happy to share with the Senator's office. We had an engineer do an estimate of it and it would be about a \$30 million project. That was about 5 years ago, so figure it's probably twice as much now. It would swing Martin Road through the former Commerce Drive-in site and line it up with Union Lake Road, with a nice big new roundabout at Union Lake and Martin and Richardson, which is where the real bottleneck is with all the traffic coming north from M-5 and through Commerce in the evening. Again, it's a number that Commerce Township simply doesn't have the resources to front.

We would also contend that the traffic snarls that we see in Commerce Township are a regional problem. M-5, for better or for worse, is a dead-end expressway that dead-ends in our town. All that traffic from folks coming, not just to Commerce Township, but heading on to White Lake, West Bloomfield, Waterford and so-forth, via the 96 corridor, they're coming up M-5, and then they hit a network of County roads that were never designed to take on that volume of traffic. We have explored all sorts of options to try to alleviate that bottleneck, but like anything else, it comes down to funding.

Julia Upfal – One more thought on prioritization, because we aren't going to be here and that is a really important component of getting this plan to work. One thing we recommend always is to look at things on a matrix of low effort to high effort, and low priority to high priority. You can make a square there and the items that fall into that low effort/high priority category, those are going to be the first items you can get done. The ones that are high priority/high effort are next. The ones below that you should consider as you go. It's a good strategy.

Chairperson Parel – So following up on some of Brady's comments, next steps, and in particular, which next steps do we take as far as the items and when do we start prioritizing? Do we have a plan for that?

Dave Campbell – We do not. I was looking to clear this hurdle this evening.

Chairperson Parel – I understand.

Dave Campbell – I guess we would want to adopt the Master Plan before we start to prioritize the recommendations within it. It's also a question of budgeting and we are in the budget season with our Township Board, because a lot of those action strategies are things where we would probably need help from Giffels, and I would have to work with my Township Board on budgeting for those efforts. It's certainly something that we can look toward in the early part of 2024 to get started with. I think before we know what we are going to get started with, we would want to formally adopt this plan and all of the recommendations within it.

Chairperson Parel – I think that makes perfect sense.

Chairperson Parel closed the public hearing as there were no additional questions or comments.

Chairperson Parel – Thank you to everyone who came out this evening. We appreciate it. We also appreciate the extensive work that Giffels has put into this, and from a personal level, I was really impressed with the amount of participation from our community. I was a little pessimistic to start when Giffels came in and talked about all the opportunities for the public to be engaged, and you guys knocked it out of the park. We had a lot of interaction with the community, a lot of open houses, and things you did with the schools. It was really wonderful. I thank everyone for coming out and participating.

Dave Campbell – If I can piggyback on that, yes, the public participation was a great resource for this project, and our friends at Giffels did a fantastic job. Hopefully we will continue working on this as we move ahead. I do want to commend all of you. There were a lot of meetings, a lot of early meetings before the regular meeting, open houses and public engagement, and you're all private citizens who already take time out of your schedules for our regular meetings, and when we get into a master plan, we're asking you to dedicate a whole lot more time. So, I really do appreciate all the work that all of you put into this.

Chairperson Parel – Right back at you, Dave. Thank you for all of your help too. I would look for a motion.

Dave Campbell – Staff provided recommended motion language if you'd like to take advantage of it. Effectively, what you'd be doing is moving to approve the resolution that has been drafted, which is included in your packet. You can read that resolution into the record if you so choose, or you can approve a motion adopting that resolution.

MOTION by Phillips, seconded by Loskill; move to approve the Resolution of Adoption of the 2023 Commerce Township Master Plan, and to direct the Planning Commission Secretary to submit a copy of the Master Plan to the Commerce Township Board of Trustees.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Phillips, Loskill, McKeever, Parel, Winkler, Karim

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Weber

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Dave Campbell – The final formal step is for the Planning Commission Secretary to submit this to the Township Board. The staff will do so on Mr. Loskill's behalf, probably at the Township Board's meeting a week from tomorrow, December 12th.

I. NEW BUSINESS

None.

J: OTHER MATTERS TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION:

None.

K: PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- **NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE: MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2024 AT 7:00pm, pending Township Board approval on December 12, 2023 of the Planning Commission's proposed 2024 meeting calendar.**
- Looking ahead to our January 8th meeting, hopefully we will hold the Lakeside Marine public hearing that we thought we would have tonight.
- Another item that may be before you on January 8th is along Clarenton Drive. We have seen a few projects along there in the last year or so. One was for an outdoor storage yard for boat and camper storage, and to do so in a zoning district where it's actually allowed. There's another enclosed self-storage facility that wants to locate along Clarenton. This one would be an actual building, but also include an outdoor storage component. So, a building with indoor climate controlled storage units, but then also a yard behind it for boats, RVs, et cetera.

L: ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Loskill, supported by Phillips, to adjourn the meeting at 8:00pm.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Joe Loskill, Secretary