

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

Monday, May 1, 2023
2009 Township Drive
Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

A. CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Parel called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

ROLL CALL: Present:

Brian Parel, Chairperson
Brian Winkler, Vice Chairperson
Bill McKeever
George Weber
Joe Loskill

Absent: Brady Phillips (excused)
Sam Karim (excused)

Also Present:

Dave Campbell, Township Planning Director
Paula Lankford, Planner
Larry Gray, Township Supervisor
Mark Gall, Township Fire Marshal
Randy Thomas, Insite Commercial
Jill Bahm, Partner, Giffels Webster
Julia Upfal, Planner, Giffels Webster
Rose Kim, Staff Planner, Giffels Webster

B. APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

MOTION by Loskill, supported by Weber, to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Agenda of May 1, 2023, as presented. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

C. PRESENTATIONS

Dave Campbell – We have two presentations, both relative to properties that we’re specifically looking at as part of the update to our Master Plan, which is what this workshop is about. One is the Bay Pointe Golf Club property, and the other is collectively the Commerce Village settlement area. We have property owners or prospective property owners representing both of those properties. We’re hoping to hear about a 10-minute presentation from each to update us on what their visions are for their respective properties and to help the Planning Commission understand where they’re going. Because we have a lot of other things that we want to discuss, we will do our best to keep it to 10 or 15 minutes each.

My understanding is that a lot of folks here are mostly interested in Bay Pointe. This isn’t necessarily a public hearing. We will get to that point at a later date, but for tonight, it’s meant to be a very high-altitude overview of what the Chaldean Catholic Church has in mind for the Bay Pointe property. Mr. Jonna, you could step up to the podium, introduce yourself and help us summarize that vision as you understand it right now.

ITEM C1. Chaldean Catholic Church, represented by Arkan Jonna – Vision for Bay Pointe Golf Club property

Arkan Jonna – Thank you. I’m Arkan Jonna of Jonna Development, working on behalf of the Chaldean Church. I’d like to tell you how appreciative we are at our office for Paula and Dave communicating with us about everything that goes on in Commerce.

We have been looking for a site in the Commerce Township area for better than 10 years. We had a site on Sleeth Road that I didn’t feel was situated centrally enough so

that we could get access for the Chaldean community from both sides of Union Lake, east and west. We ended up selling it.

Bay Pointe came along with the idea of converting the community hall into a church and operating an 18-hole golf course. Budgeting went on, doing what we thought we could do with the clubhouse. The only thing we were leaving intact were the walls and roof, so the idea of investing dollars into the clubhouse was just bare walls, so why not build a brand-new church?

We're now budgeting to build a brand-new church and leaving the clubhouse as a country club, taking enough land from the course to build a new church and redoing the golf course into a 9-hole executive course. We're thinking about having Shenandoah in West Bloomfield come in to redo the clubhouse and have them operate the clubhouse as a banquet hall facility / private restaurant, and the 9-hole executive course.

We have not closed on this property as of yet. We're looking to do that probably within the next 45 days. Nothing is going to happen for the next 12 months. We're buying it and leasing it back to Bay Pointe operations, simply because they had a lot of Chaldean parties reserved at the clubhouse and how can you tell people they can't have a wedding? We have probably another 3 to 4 weeks in investigation and cost summaries in order to come up with a plan that we think we can execute. Any questions?

Chairperson Parel – We appreciate everybody coming out. This is great participation for these early, special meetings.

From my perspective, I think it's really important to note that we do have the team from Giffels Webster here who are helping us with our Master Plan. We're currently updating it. The last one was 2015, and these are two critical pieces on the agenda tonight. I think it's really important that the community is involved in discussing our plans for the Master Plan and getting an idea of our interactions with some of these property owners and potential future operators.

Regarding Bay Pointe, there has been a lot of hard work by this team, Giffels' team and Dave's team over the last year. This property in particular has been pretty difficult and there has been a lot of talk and a lot of thought put into it. We recognize, not only as Commissioners, but also as members of the community, that the main complaint we hear is traffic; the development that leads to traffic and impacts traffic, and this corner is a big one.

In our discussions, we have to talk about the Master Plan, and we have to try to help the community in putting together a plan and working with developers to make sure whatever we put here doesn't drain the community any further, and really doesn't impact the traffic problem that we already have at this intersection.

I'm glad we're having this conversation and I will pass it on to the other Commissioners. From my perspective, I like this approach because the alternative is putting somewhere in the range of 200-300 homes, with a very high impact on traffic in this area.

Weber – We have looked at proposals on this property, and most recently, I think it was 210 homes. It didn't thrill us because of the density and traffic issues. I personally think this is the best use of this property that I can think of. It is zoned residential, for the people in the audience, and the family that owns the property has been looking to sell it for quite a long time. They want to retire and enjoy the fruits of their investment over the years. It's their right to be able to sell that property, and if it's zoned residential, it's our job to try to come up with a solution within a residential environment. Now it happens that a church can work on a residential piece of property, so the church and whatever

development would come after that is what our concerns are. Having a church and keeping 9 holes of golf available ... Is it going to be public or private golf?

Arkan Jonna – We're not even that far yet.

Weber – Okay, but it's not going to be 200 homes. Dave, is it R-1C?

Dave Campbell – It's R-1A, but the last plan we saw was north of 200, and that was a density that is permitted on this property given its size.

Weber – I welcome this plan as the best use that I've seen for the property.

Dave Campbell – I'm guessing that at least some of the folks in the audience tonight are lakefront residents who might have questions of what does the church have in mind, both near and long-term, that could potentially impact lake and boat traffic?

Arkan Jonna – I'm not ready to address that, but I can tell you, if we can't do another country club there, we would look to develop this property with a non-typical subdivision. We have about 100 acres usable, and within that, some of it is wet. My thought is that I would look at the idea of developing in clusters. My priority is the church and once I build that, then I've got all this land that I have to do something with. I would probably look at what's left of the 100 acres and try to leave 50 of it green and develop in compacted clusters so that we can keep as much of the green as possible. The lakefront, I just don't know yet. It would be a shame to take down a perfectly good banquet hall. The kitchen is very good. There is a ton of value in what is existing. I'm driving that bus to go that way, having this as a community hall. There are social and religious factors to both of these, and it would be a feather in our cap if we could get to that point of keeping it that way.

Worst case scenario, if that club goes down, you have lakefront lots, but that's the last thing we want to do. We want to keep it as a Chaldean community. I can tell you that we have close to 15,000 Chaldeans that live in the Township and that many more in West Bloomfield. We have a church on Maple in West Bloomfield that is over capacity, so it alleviates the situation. I've always thought that this location was too close to West Bloomfield, and I thought of going further north. I can't tell you how many times I've done soil borings on Union Lake and Wise at the golf course. But to have a community where I can bring both aspects, the social and the religious, together is something that my wife says our great grandkids will know what we did here.

Dave Campbell – Is it fair to say that in the near term, the priority is getting the church built?

Arkan Jonna – Absolutely, the church is running the show.

Chairperson Parel – Do we have a location?

Arkan Jonna – Not yet. The land has challenges, ups and downs, it's wet. We've done borings and all of the work on it. In the next 2 to 4 weeks, we will be able to decipher. We're going to keep an executive course, and in order to be able to do that, we have to make sure that everything fits.

Chairperson Parel – Dave, we're coming up on about 15 minutes. Does anybody else have any questions?

Weber – Maybe just what are your next steps? Obviously continuing the study and closing on the property. If you had to give us a 6 or 9-month timeline of your work, knowing nothing will start for a year.

Arkan Jonna – If we decide this is the way that we're going to go, we will be in within probably the next 90 days with a plan.

Dave Campbell reviewed the aerial on the overhead and indicated the delineation of the municipal boundaries between Commerce Township and West Bloomfield. He explained that the clubhouse itself is actually in West Bloomfield Township. So, whatever route the church chooses to go, they would need approvals from both Townships.

Vice Chairperson Winkler – The more you talk about what your plans are, the more I like it. One thing that has been talked about, and it's not in any way cast in stone, but there have been discussions about putting a roundabout at Richardson and Union Lake Roads. I just wanted to make you aware of that as there may be some advantages to setting aside a little bit of property if that takes place. Dave, I don't know if you've discussed that?

Dave Campbell – I was going to ask if they wanted to build a roundabout for us. We could name it after you.

Arkan Jonna – I developed the center across the street, where the McDonald's is. I actually sold McDonald's the land there. When I sold the land, I knew we were going to need the right-of-way one day, so I own the right-of-way on that side of the road as well. I know and understand very well the traffic situation in Commerce Township.

Unidentified Resident – I live on Lower Straits Lake and I'm just wondering about the piece of road that goes over the lakes. What can we do about that? Is there anything that anybody has looked at for that traffic?

Dave Campbell – That is a much bigger question and I think we want to talk about this another time. This is only two lanes wide, and this is the chokepoint as people move north from M-5 all the way up Martin. To widen this would involve a lot of environmental assessment, studies and mitigation. As it stands right now, the RCOC, who owns and maintains that road, does not have any plans to do any kind of widening. That is something we all have to work through.

Chairperson Parel – But the Township recognizes.

Dave Campbell – We're very aware of it.

Unidentified Resident – I want to make sure I'm correct on the terminology. Initially you want the church and the 9-hole golf course, but then down the road you're talking about putting in cluster homes?

Arkan Jonna – No, that's the worst-case scenario. What we're looking to do right now is the church and a new clubhouse, with someone to run the clubhouse and the executive course. There would not be any residential.

Unidentified Resident – But down the road, what is the plan for residential?

Arkan Jonna – I can't tell you. I don't know what tomorrow will bring. But, if there's a golf course, there's no housing.

Dave Campbell – Obviously this is a big topic for all of us and there will be more to come. We want to be fair to our other presenter and to our Planning Commission for what they're hoping to accomplish at this meeting. Everyone is welcome to stick around, and we have our regular meeting at 7:00 as well if you want to make a night of it. Does the Planning Commission have any more questions for Mr. Jonna?

Chairperson Parel – We're good. I appreciate you coming out.

Arkan Jonna – Thank you.

ITEM C2. Sylvia and John Rabban, with architect Marsha Horning – Vision for Rabban properties within Commerce Village

Dave Campbell – Marsha Horning, Architect for the Rabbans, provided some color elevations of what they're envisioning for Annie's Party Store site, and for the Commerce Wine & Liquor Shop, both within the Commerce Village area.

Marsha Horning – I'm with Jeffery Scott Architects, and I represent the Rabban family. We are talking about three different parcels. We have Annie's Party Shop at 535 Commerce, and then across the street and a little bit down, at 420 is Commerce Wine & Liquor, and then also the vacant parcel next to that. The Rabban family owns all of those. We have been talking about Annie's renovation for ages. I think my first drawing on it was in 2017.

They're packed and they're over capacity. Their first goal is to move the Papa Romano's from Annie's to the new building, which is on the vacant parcel. I look at it as one big development because we've got several things happening. There would be an addition to Annie's on both the west and north sides of the building, and Annie's would expand. That would just be Annie's in there, no tenants, with expanded offerings such as a deli and more market things. John and Sylvia are here if you have questions for them.

This is a very conceptual rendering for the building. We're looking at mixed materials. We're trying to bring some stone, maybe some limestone look in there, brick, just give it a little bit of interest. We can all agree it needs a facelift. That's the overall view on Annie's.

Then, the parcel across the street, Commerce Wine & Liquor. That building would remain, we would just give it a facelift. No addition to that one. Then, the adjacent vacant lot, we kept the building close to Commerce Wine & Liquor, moved it toward the road, which I know is part of the Master Plan thinking, and then keep the parking for it to the side and to the rear, with an entrance off Commerce Road. In that new building, the Papa Romano's would most likely take the far east tenant space, and then possibly a pharmacy would take the smaller piece, then hopefully another food component in the

middle. It's a broad overview of everything that they're looking to develop and give a facelift to right now.

Chairperson Parel – Thank you. We appreciate you guys. We know you well. I'll just give a brief explanation of how this fits into our Master Plan project that we're working on with the Giffels Webster team. We have recognized several key locations in the community that need focus, and this is a big one which we call the Village. At one point, I think we made the decision that our downtown would exist on Martin Parkway in the new development, that is hopefully soon to come, called Five & Main. That leaves us with our Village.

The Village is near and dear to me. I go there almost every day. I'm at Annie's, I'm at the bagel shop and the Creamy Freeze with my kids. I think we have a really unique opportunity and a unique area that needs something. I think the Rabban family has multiple properties there and we really have an opportunity to work together and do something great for the community. I'm completely onboard. I think this is really cool. In our last meeting with Giffels Webster, we focused on this area. Our Township Trustees have indicated that this is important to them as well and asked what we are going to do with this area. I think we came together and recognized that we really need to support this Village with things like nonmotorized walkways and maybe some infrastructure, but we really need to support the businesses and the growth in this little part of our town.

Dave, it might be helpful if we could pull up the aerial and show these three parcels. I know these are all conceptual, but I like the idea of fixing up these properties. I think it could work nicely if the pizza place could move across the street and we could do some of these nice materials to start bringing things together. We have some good components there, along with good owners and unique businesses.

Dave Campbell – I hope we can agree then that what the Marathon station has recently completed is definitely a great piece of that overall picture as well. I think that turned out very nice. Marsha, from an architectural standpoint, can you speak to the way these are laying out and how you feel these would be consistent with what the Planning Commission's vision is for the Village area, kind of creating that walkable little downtown.

Marsha Horning – Sure. On Annie's, I'm trying to work with that existing building to push it toward the road for that downtown feel. There was double parking in the front, so we're taking that down to just single parking against the building. We are in fact pushing the building toward the road, which I know is part of what everybody wants to see. The expansion is toward Commerce Road and toward Ponderosa as well. In the back, I have a utility line that runs along the property line, so my hands are tied there as far as making this an achievable, economic project. That's where we looked to push things forward.

As far as the other site, the new building is where I really get the opportunity to push that building forward. If we get a user where we can have an outdoor patio along the sidewalk to bring some of that downtown life in, I think that's the vision for the family of what they'd like to see there.

Chairperson Parel – It's interesting you mention that. You think about a walkable Village, and I know Milford comes up and some other examples, but I'm just thinking of

the businesses there that exist right now. I don't know, other than the Creamy Freeze, where else you can go and sit with your family and have a meal or a drink. I think that would be really cool.

Marsha Horning – Yes, and I think we have the opportunity with the new building, and to play with how much we have in the front to give that life there. Dave and I have talked about sidewalks for a long time, what we need and what we want to do along there. We talked about the Township's vision for on-street parking there. That factors in too of what will happen as I think this could lend itself really nicely, with on-street parking and that nice downtown feel.

Weber – With that, I'm looking at your design, and I think what you've put forward is very attractive. At a recent Master Plan meeting we had this discussion. For some people in the audience, one of our priorities is to figure out how to get nonmotorized trail ways, sidewalks, et cetera, to the Village. From the north near Northern, and from the west at or past the hospital, we'd have a trailway system that allows people to get here, so it is walkable as well as drivable. The vision of having the parking in the front with a sidewalk, with streetlights, small trees. I thought we had talked about having parking streetside.

Dave Campbell – On-street.

Weber – On-street parking, possibly diagonal. At one point in time, we had discussion, I think with the Rabban's of moving that down to be in front of Mill Race Park as well, where there is haphazard parking there now, and formalizing that. That overflow parking at Mill Race would then require less need for parking.

Marsha Horning – We've talked about it and it's really just settling on how we want to present that, and how you'd like to see that when we come in formally. I can do that and show some ideas of on-street parking that incorporates all of those things. The unique opportunity here is that it is right next to that park. I think if we can show that and give you an idea of that could look like. I don't think anything is set in stone for that area for on-street.

Paula Lankford – No.

Marsha Horning – I can show that when we come in, and that portion would be yet to be determined, whether it would be parallel or diagonals. Do you want me to propose the Mill Race parking when we come in formally?

Dave Campbell – It certainly couldn't hurt for you to come up with some feasible ideas. One of the things we need to look into is that our Parks Director said there are challenges here because of the very high-water table. That could impact on-street parking, so we would want our engineer to look at it, in addition to coming up with a configuration.

Marsha Horning – It's interesting how Commerce Wine parking is right now. It's almost on-street parking. I think you have the opportunity to continue that and maybe push it forward to get a buffer there.

Dave Campbell – Jill, this is one of the things we've been talking about as we have been going through our Master Plan visioning, creating things like on-street parking with defined curb and gutter, street trees, streetlights and trash cans, and all the things we like to see in a traditional downtown. We think that will be one of the outcomes of our Master Plan.

Jill Bahm – Correct. I have to look a little more closely, but I feel like there's plenty of room there to do on-street parking.

Marsha Horning – The right-of-way is pretty deep.

Jill Bahm – Yes.

Weber – I love the Annie's look and I think that ties in beautifully with what the Marathon station's look and feel. On the other side, I would just say that it looks very modern. Between Joe and Brian, our resident architects, anything creative I don't stay involved with, but it doesn't come across as quaint downtown, with everything being described as on-street parking, streetlights, trash cans, et cetera.

Marsha Horning – Okay, that's fair.

Weber – Again, it's a beautiful design, but if we're trying to get that different feel out of it ...

Marsha Horning – I got it. Are there defined materials yet? Are you to that stage in the Master Plan yet?

Jill Bahm – No.

Marsha Horning – That's one thing I wanted to get from you too is what materials do you want to see?

Weber – We like stone, brick, wood, wood feel, wood tone. No EIFS.

Chairperson Parel – Glass.

Marsha Horning – Okay.

Dave Campbell – I don't know if anyone knows what this means but we've also talked about the word nautical, given the fact that we're right on the edge of Commerce Lake.

Marsha Horning – Right. I think I would want to stray away from going straight up Cape Cod. I don't know if that's the vision for the Rabban family. I know they want these buildings to make a statement and for it to be welcoming. I'm getting that you like the feel of Annie's in general. That was why we wanted to present some ideas of where we're at right now, and it is very conceptual.

Chairperson Parel – I think those were good comments. I noticed there's a lot more brick and block on Annie's. Maybe that's what's ...

Weber – Yes, and the stone columns going all the way out, something that is quaint, warm and classy. They're beautiful drawings but come off to me as being a very modern look.

Vice Chairperson Winkler – Dave can you put NearMap with Annie's on the screen again? I think one of the things you'll want to keep in mind on the Annie's site is to make sure you extend the sidewalk to tie into the walkability.

Marsha Horning – Yes, there's nothing along there. It's interesting on the Annie's property how deep that right-of-way actually is. It varies all along that road, on that side in particular.

Chairperson Parel – I think you've received some good feedback.

Marsha Horning – Yes, thank you.

Vice Chairperson Winkler – Thank you for your time. Much appreciated.

Sylvia Rabban – We're looking at what the community wants and needs.

Marsha Horning – I will say, regarding the architecture, I know the Rabban's like a little bit more modern feel, but I think there is a happy medium we can come to.

John Rabban – I like a mix of both.

Discussion continued regarding dining and meal options in the Village, and the colonial or Victorian feel of buildings in the area.

D. MASTER LAND USE PLAN REVIEW

Work session of the 2015 Master Land Use Plan update

Jill Bahm – Today, Rose, Julia and I wanted to share with you what we've heard from you over the past couple of months in our discussions. We put that in our packet. We have a few slides to prompt discussion. I think our first order of business, if this is all we get through tonight, is just to make sure we're on the right track. I've made more notes and I know that Julia and Rose have too, based on some of the things that we heard tonight, so we can talk about those also.

What we had hoped to also get through, which I know we won't, is a discussion on potential changes to the Future Land Use Map. We wanted to get those two things so that we could get an open house together to share our thinking with the community before we get to the point of having a public hearing for the Master Plan. It's our second check-in to see how we've been doing. Let's just get through what we have so far for our area plan right now.

Julia Upfal – As I go through these slides, we've summarized the information in your packet, but obviously we elaborated much more in that area plan summary. If you saw

anything that felt inconsistent or that you want to talk about, please let me know as we go along. Our goals are to go through the area plans and talk about future land use. We want to make sure that area plans are aligned with the Planning Commission's intent. As discussed before, we're talking about the north end and the commercial center.

In summary, the commercial center seeks to:

- Encourage redevelopment on opportunity sites
- Foster enhancements to nonmotorized transportation networks
- Encourage safe and accessible routes from the Five & Main development
- Encourage development styles that take advantage of the Township's natural beauty, preserving natural features
- Avoid uses that require excessive parking area, drive-throughs, front facing lots or other auto centric characteristics

The three opportunity sites are Williams International, Beaumont and Rock Road. I'll go through each of those.

The summary of Williams International:

- We're looking at an R&D campus or headquarters with landscaped frontage and high-quality building design.
- There's potential for some ancillary compatible commercial uses.
- Planning to maintain the woodlands, detention and everything related to the Long Park nature preserve.
- This site is bounded by the M-5 trail. These are some of the development concepts that go along with that.

Then we have the Beaumont property:

- This is along the Airline Trail, right at the intersection of the two trails.
- This property is a little more complicated. There is an area which has its groundwater impacted, and part that is soil impacted, and were not recommended for development in the Brownfield plan.
- Therefore, this is the primary development area on the site.
- We're looking at some sort of campus style destination development.
- We know that we need something that's going to be large and impactful in order to be able to capture enough increment to clean up the Brownfield on the site.
- These are examples of recreational focused uses, as well as the campus feel.

The Rock Road properties:

- We've been talking about additional nonmotorized connections along M-5 and Pontiac Trail to help move pedestrians across that roundabout.
- In addition, there's potential for some internal connection to connect the site to the Airline Trail to the south.
- There is a substantial wetland area there, which actually creates opportunity for some nice views for a plaza or a trailhead along the Airline Trail.
- And then, there's potential for some commercial development here to complement Five & Main, that's a little bit more pedestrian-oriented, and with parking along the rear.
- These are images to go along with the vision for that site.

Weber – Are those images realistic? If we talk about supporting Five & Main, I didn't get the idea that it would be retail or rentals. Right now, it's zoned industrial, and I don't know that we've talked about rezoning that.

Jill Bahm – I was making note of that too, to ask what you would think about some other kind of light manufacturing, more like an artisan manufacturing, or something specific related to activity in the Township. If we are thinking about bikes and we're on the trail, it could be a bike shop, a bike repair shop, or a company that makes bikes, or something else along those lines that connected to the recreation industry, or other light industrial that might include some kind of either retail, studio or class component.

Loskill – You could have a small food component, food trucks or something, bike rentals.

Jill Bahm – Yes, right. I think that image might be better if you thought of it as the windows on the main floor, maybe it's 2-story, and maybe there's some kind of office upstairs, but really, it's a small, narrow piece of property. Having something that people could see; you want it to be interesting if we're going to take people down that way to get access to the trails, it should be something where people feel safe and comfortable, and there's something interesting to look at. That's why I was thinking of some sort of manufacturing component where you could see things happening, or some sort of studio, furniture maker, glass blower, coffee or food production, those kinds of things. Does that seem like it would make sense?

Weber – I don't know. I'm trying to envision it. Right now, it's horrible, but getting that completely redeveloped as what you're talking about, which is boutique businesses ...

Jill Bahm – Essentially.

Weber – I'm struggling with why somebody would make the investment they would need to make where you have really limited visibility. It would be forced traffic if it's going to have something like that. I'm struggling with the business case of why somebody would do that, versus if they were somewhere in the supply chain for Five & Main, et cetera. I'm just talking off the cuff, but boutique is the first thing that came to mind and for what it would cost to buy that land and build that, I don't know what that investment would be for a business like that that has limited traffic opportunities.

Jill Bahm – I think one of the reasons why this parcel was identified was because it is in such rough shape. I think the lowest end would be just to get it cleaned up. The higher end would be something a little more transformational. Maybe there's a spectrum that we put into the plan, recognizing what it is and what it could be, and then we know that's not going to happen overnight so at least get things cleaned up and inside buildings if that's possible.

Loskill – Just get the site prepped so somebody can come in and develop it.

Weber – But keep it zoned industrial.

Jill Bahm – Yes. That's the question we wanted to ask you about for the land use map too. There is industrial on all sides of that, and it's different from the TLM category. You recognize there's two different kinds, and TLM is different than industrial.

Weber – With industrial comes the challenge of allowing outdoor storage. What's there now is allowed.

Jill Bahm – Should that still be allowed in that location, given everything else that we've talked about with Five & Main?

Weber – I don't think we want it, but I don't know how we keep it industrial, but don't allow industrial things to go on there.

Julia Upfal – I think what we're offering here is more of the very long-term vision where Five & Main has developed and suddenly there's more walkability and things slow down at M-5 and Pontiac Trail, and you have those really high traffic counts. Even though this site isn't totally visible, you do have a large number of people driving through those streets every day, and then slowing down to spend time at Five & Main, and now they can easily cross the street when there's something there to cross to. This is not the current state of Rock Road, and maybe it doesn't even reflect 5 to 10 years from now, but if you could clean up the site, what would come on it next?

Chairperson Parel – I just think it's easier to visualize the other two properties, while recognizing that this is the one that needs to clean up the most.

Weber – The other two properties though have great accessibility and great visibility. This is really tucked down.

Loskill – Yes, I don't think you're going to get a destination use out of it as far as a retail store. Nobody is going to put a retail store there, unless it has something to do with the uses that are already there. If you could tie it to the trailhead or to M-5, that's where I think that opportunity presents the best use for that piece of property. If you had a couple food trucks, or if you create an oasis in the middle of the trail where people can stop, get their bikes fixed, have a meal and take a break, things that are support uses rather than a destination use.

Weber – Would you rather see that there, or at Beaumont which is also on the trail?

Loskill – I think there are more opportunities on the Beaumont property for something transformational. With this being a very narrow, very long site, it's not conducive to a single use other than what it's currently doing. I think it could serve as a support role, supporting the other amenities in the area. That is a use that makes sense.

Weber – I agree with that. I don't want to get too far down the rabbit hole, but it has to be some kind of high-level business case because the property is going to be expensive.

Dave Campbell – Does the business case make more sense once Five & Main exists?

Weber – Absolutely, but as we talk about support for Five & Main, I almost see supply chain stuff, whether it's food service and food trucks, I think that's an interesting thing because that can be a home base for a food truck business. That could still serve what you're doing on the trail, having a food truck in this little oasis and a pathway to Five & Main. I'm not sure how we're going to easily cross to get to Five & Main, but someday we'll figure that part out. But, those kinds of things, whether it's food service, or a cleaning business that does all the napkins and tablecloths for the restaurants, those are the kinds of things pop up in my head when I think of support businesses for Five & Main, with the business case in an industrial environment. I'm struggling with the vision of what it might look like, and I do agree it is going to take a long time. I also agree that maybe it will be much clearer once Five & Main is up and running and thriving, and those kinds of support businesses will become more apparent.

Chairperson Parel – Dave, not to switch gears, but what is the status of the Williams International property?

Dave Campbell – The last discussion I had with them, which has been awhile now, yes, they were still actively operating out of a couple of the buildings. In the meantime, they've also demoed 3-4 of the buildings. We can pull up the aerial and show you the before and after.

Chairperson Parel – Is that currently offered for redevelopment?

Dave Campbell – I don't believe they're actively listing the property for sale, but they have come in with prospective buyers a couple time over the last 5 years. I think in both cases, the buyers were looking to do apartments on the property.

Julia Upfal – I have a question for you. This lot here that's in the area we selected as part of the opportunity site, but that isn't part of Williams International ...

Dave Campbell – That's correct, that's a separate owner.

Julia Upfal – Does that have any future prospects of being changed or is that going to stay the same?

Paula Lankford – It's fairly new.

Dave Campbell – It is and to the best of my knowledge, it's a fully occupied, healthy office building.

Julia Upfal – Okay. So, one other opportunity we wanted to highlight is the potential to connect the two sites, Williams International and Beaumont. We could even look at something as crazy as an enclosed pedestrian bridge, but also an expansion of the M-5 trail.

Discussion of pedestrian bridges took place.

Julia Upfal – Some other key points about transportation:

- Public input – Their primary concern was congestion
- We want to encourage shorter trips and support nonmotorized alternatives
- Develop safe and convenient nonmotorized connections – incorporate wayfinding signage and trail amenities
- Pontiac Trail/M-5 roundabout is key
 - Dangerous, difficult to cross
 - Pedestrian-oriented enhancements could increase connectivity

Jill Bahm – What has the conversation been about that area in terms of improving pedestrian safety or all safety? I know it's a dangerous roundabout.

Dave Campbell – We just had that conversation today with some folks from SEMCOG. The M-5 Metro Trail currently dead ends at the Michigan Airline Trail, and it dead ends there because before it was the Airline Trail, it was the railroad tracks. Now that we have the Airline Trail, what makes sense in my mind is to continue it along the east side of M-5 to get it all the way up to Pontiac Trail. Then, when the Five & Main development comes to fruition, there will be a traffic signal at Pontiac Trail and Walnut Lake Road, because that will also be the main point of access to the Five & Main development. That will be a signalized intersection with pedestrian signals. To me, that is the safest and best place to cross Pontiac Trail. I don't think we're ever going to get to a point where there is any kind of safe way to get nonmotorized traffic across that roundabout.

Jill Bahm – What about on the west side?

Dave Campbell – Again, I think safely getting nonmotorized traffic across that roundabout, right at that roundabout, just given the speeds and volumes through there ...

Jill Bahm – No, to your point of having it shift a little bit further east to Walnut Lake Road, is there is shift the other direction?

Dave Campbell – Seemingly, that shift would be all the way down to Welch Road at that point.

Jill Bahm – How likely is that? That's another conversation.

Weber – I don't think it's the same priority as on the east side. North of Five & Main, you have the trail network there which is an opportunity to meander up from there because there is the tunnel that goes underneath Martin Parkway to go west.

Dave Campbell – We hope there is a destination on the east side with Five & Main. I don't know that there is as much of a destination on the west side of Martin.

Jill Bahm – Well, only to help people that are living over there.

Dave Campbell – They have to back track some, but they could go through the tunnel under Martin Parkway.

Weber – People that are living where?

Paula Lankford – Like behind Happy's Pizza.

Dave Campbell – Barrington and Kingston Manor?

Paula Lankford – No, she's going further west down Pontiac Trail.

Weber – Again, the only way is the bridge, go north a little bit and go through the tunnel and then come back down. It's not that far.

Dave Campbell – My guess is that it's more than a quarter mile, but not drastically so.

Jill Bahm – What about the smaller roundabout at Library Road?

Dave Campbell – Yes, it is still Library Drive, although that's going to change since there's no library there anymore. There are designated crossings there with yield signs, so in theory vehicular traffic is supposed to yield to pedestrians. People need to get better at doing it.

Jill Bahm – That's something that we want to focus on.

Weber – The roundabout at Martin speedway?

Jill Bahm – I know, it is. You're right. But people will cross there anyway eventually. If there is something to cross to, they will cross wherever it's closer and easier for them to do so. It's something to keep in mind. We don't have to solve that today. They won't walk north to go under the bridge.

Julia Upfal – In terms of land use, the commercial center is a mix of B-2, B-3, Industrial and TLM. There are some small areas with higher density single-family residential and multi-family zoning, and Five & Main is going to be the anchor. There has been a kind of natural evolution in this area from industrial to more commercial uses.

Jill Bahm – Is there anything else that you read in the material that we sent that seemed completely off-base?

Dave Campbell – I'll mention, as this Planning Commission knows, there is a prospective developer who has the Beaumont property under contract and has at least a conceptual plan of what he wants to do. I would say it is a significant deviation from what we're talking about here. He does want to get that concept plan back in front of you, either the full Planning Commission or a work group of the members. I'll recruit three of you to have a sit-down with him.

Julia Upfal – Yes, because right now, the Future Land Use Map is industrial. We want to make sure that our discussions are aligned with the future vision of the site.

Dave Campbell – That is why we need some honest feedback with that prospective developer of whether or not his plan is viable.

Vice Chairperson Winkler – One question I have about the Beaumont property; your site plan showed wetlands. Are those regulated?

Dave Campbell – Yes.

Vice Chairperson Winkler – I don't think any of the site plans we've seen have left that alone.

Dave Campbell – Yes, they have. I don't know that they've left it alone to the extent that we saw on that graphic, but yes, they're avoiding impacting the regulated wetlands.

Julia Upfal – I tried to draw what Insite had in the marketing package for the site plans if possible.

Weber – Where we talk about higher density and multi-family, I think we should be different than the surrounding communities and fight that need or that want, except for those that we've already approved, and those that are now getting built, such as those at Five & Main and those at Haggerty and 14 Mile.

Julia Upfal – Yes, I think this is a summary of what's there right now.

Weber – Yes, I just wanted to catch that for Deb in the minutes – no more high-density.

Deb Watson – Got it.

Julia Upfal – The area plan for the north end seeks to:

- Focus commercial development in prominent locations that are well-connected and well-integrated with surroundings to better serve local neighborhoods.
- Foster enhancements to nonmotorized transportation networks and provide safe and efficient connections between public facilities and key landmarks.
- Encourage development styles that take advantage of the Township's natural beauty and preserve key natural features.
- Consider a range of residential types and density levels, where appropriate, to serve older residents, younger professionals, and families.

There are a lot more opportunities at the north end. I'm not going to go through all of them. At Commerce & Carey –

- There is a portion that's neighborhood commercial. We extended that so it's actually a viable amount of space for development.
- There's a small wetland area on the site, and the rest of it is for mixed density single-family of various housing types with a target of families, young professionals, hospital workers or empty nesters.
- These were some of the mixed density housing visuals that we found, as well as that little neighborhood commercial.

Jill Bahm – And that might be something more like George was trying to articulate with respect to the Village area. We'll try to find some other images that support that.

When you see where we have said mixed density single-family, and we'll say it more here, and you saw it in your packet, this is not to suggest that we're talking about more apartments or high-density living. It's more of clustering or potentially allowing for something that looks like a single-family home, but maybe has 2-4 units in it. Not a

dramatic increase, and maybe not necessarily all of it, but things that would be blended together, giving a little bit more flexibility.

Julia Upfal – I tried to show that clustering with this image so you can see that there are a lot of natural surroundings preserved in that development.

Jill Bahm – I want to make sure that as we prepare the document and plan, and we present this at an open house, we are really mindful of the importance of this place in the community, and not wanting to freak people out that this is happening tomorrow, or that we are pushing this to happen or pushing Long's out. They have said they are interested some day in potentially doing this, and I think that is something that we want to put a pin in.

Julia Upfal – This is the property adjacent to Commerce Elementary.

- They have a track and field that goes into the side of it.
- A large portion of the site is wooded so it should mostly be preserved, however along those frontages there are some opportunities for neighborhood commercial to help the hospital campus, things that are walkable, neighborhood oriented, single story, and not drive-throughs.

The next site is Bay Pointe Golf Club. I don't think I captured this quite right. I was trying to align more with what Mr. Jonna wanted. I thought that was housing and the 9-hole golf course. I don't think that visual quite aligns with what they're thinking. We could change this.

Jill Bahm – I don't know. I think it's worth being mindful that they didn't rule it out. It's a possibility and who knows what will happen. These are two different types of development. One is more golf course development related, and the bottom one is more of a cottage court, with an idea of maybe it is for older family members that are part of the church that have a cluster around a common area that might be in that community.

Weber – Dave, is there any rezoning that has to go on with what they've envisioned?

Dave Campbell – Not from what they've described so far. Places of worship are allowed.

Weber – But he mentioned a restaurant.

Paula Lankford – Inside the clubhouse.

Weber – I took it as a public restaurant, not just a venue for events.

Dave Campbell – I guess if he said that, maybe I missed it. I thought the intent in the near-term was to keep it as a clubhouse for a golf course.

Paula Lankford – He did say restaurant.

Dave Campbell – I guess I always assumed it was meant to be accessory to a golf course, not necessarily a standalone restaurant.

Julia Upfal – And that would be in the West Bloomfield portion of the site, but that's another concern.

Jill Bahm – But if it was open to the public as a restaurant, then that does have some implications for other impacts.

Loskill – That's something that would probably fit better at the southwest corner of the main site, near the roundabout, tucked back into the development.

Julia Upfal – This site is easy, the property adjacent to Victory Park:

- This is the one that we wanted to maintain as open space for conservation.
- It has very little visibility, little frontage, a lot of key natural features.
- So, partnering with the schools to ensure that this space remains as conservation, and maybe working on some sort of easement with them would be a good way to move forward with that vision.

The Union Lake Golf Club:

- We also talked about mixed density single-family here.
- We talked about neighborhood commercial here, where it is currently zoned for that on the Future Land Use Map
- These were some examples of that neighborhood level commercial, again, single-story with interesting, unique façades that are engaging with people walking by, and a welcoming seating area to have that pedestrian-oriented neighborhood feel.

Weber – That's the property that Arkan discussed that was unbuildable, and he had tried.

Jill Bahm – Right, but he was talking for a larger scale development like a church, which may not be the same for this.

Julia Upfal – There are definitely wetlands related to the area around the creek. If you look at an aerial, all the water seems to pour into this area. Obviously, it's important for anyone who develops that site to do a proper delineation.

Dave Campbell – It's effectively the overflow for Union Lake, the lake itself.

Julia Upfal – For the Drive-In site:

- Again, that neighborhood level commercial, and perhaps a little bit more intensive, some mixed use or some multi-family housing.
- These were some of the images that we came up with.

For the Village:

- These areas are all single-family, but they have had a natural transition where some of the formerly single-family houses are used for some commercial uses.
- We should continue to support that transition.
- Look to enhance and complete the sidewalk network where possible.
- I think we can add the on-street parking to this as well.
- We want to preserve and maintain the key natural features throughout the corridor.

- There are some opportunities for new commercial uses.
- The Bubble & Squeak site adds another commercial opportunity.
- There is potential to work with the owner of the strip center for enhanced landscaping or some things to clean up that corner.

Jill Bahm – Brian, when you were talking about where there was a place to sit down and have a meal, and your question was, “Is that in the Village?” It would be nice if we could make a recommendation to tie that in better with the Village. We talked about cleaning up the parking lot in front of the park too. Maybe that is what helps reinforce that connection.

Julia Upfal – These were some of the design concepts. I think these are a little bit more of that traditional, quaint look. We were trying to veer away from more modern design. The 3-story might not be right for Commerce Village, but we were looking for buildings that had interesting façades, a lot of glass, and also maintain that traditional look and feel, and are pedestrian-oriented.

Weber – Dave, the Rabbans had originally talked about a 2-story where you’d have a retail environment on the first floor, and office or ...

Dave Campbell – I know they want to do some form of retail at the northeast corner. At one point they were trying to rezone it to get a gas station convenience store there. That still might be their intent. In my recent conversations with them, it has always been focused on the two properties we saw tonight, and the corner of Commerce and Carroll Lake Road is off in the future for them.

Weber – But no discussions on 2-story?

Dave Campbell – Not that I remember.

Chairperson Parel – I just want to bring up the time.

Julia Upfal – Just the transportation summary:

- Congestion along Union Lake and Cooley Lake Roads are a concern for Township and neighboring communities (“Four Towns”)
- Proposed non-motorized connections between North End assets and to residents will help address congestion and safety; we really want to focus on that connection between Walled Lake Northern and the Library
- Four Towns area – partner with White Lake, Waterford, West Bloomfield to improve non-motorized transportation and support ongoing business revitalization

That concludes this portion of the presentation.

Jill Bahm – I think it was good. We talked about a couple areas that were important, especially the Village area. It was great to hear from property owners who are actively looking to do things, especially when they are things that are pretty much in line with things we’ve talked about. Was there anything else in the north end that we need to address?

There were no additional comments.

Jill Bahm – Okay, we're moving in the right direction. I was hoping we could do the open house in June, and we still might be able to if we do it later. For your June meeting, at our study session, we can go through the Future Land Use Map and talk about the different areas of the map that could potentially be changed. That would be both the map as well as the text that goes with it. That way we will have all of this information to present at an open house.

Dave Campbell – So, another 5:30 workshop before our regular meeting on June 5th, and then trying to do an open house later in the month of June. Maybe we will stick to a Monday schedule.

Chairperson Parel – Should we take that offline?

Dave Campbell – It wasn't my intent to nail it down now but keep your Mondays in June clear.

Paula Lankford – Keep an eye on your emails.

Next Regular Meeting Date: May 1, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

E. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Loskill, supported by Weber, to adjourn the meeting at 6:54pm.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Joe Loskill, Secretary