



PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

CITY OF NOVI

Regular Meeting

November 13, 2013 7:00 PM

Council Chambers | Novi Civic Center | 45175 W. Ten Mile
(248) 347-0475

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at or about 7:00 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present: Member Anthony, Member Giacometti, Chair Pehrson, Member Zuchlewski

Absent: Member Baratta, Member Greco, Member Lynch

Also Present: Barbara McBeth, Deputy Director of Community Development; Kristen Kapelanski, Planner; Sara Roediger, Planner; Beth Kudla-Saarela, City Attorney; Dave Beschke, Landscape Architect; Adam Wayne, Staff Engineer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Member Giacometti led the meeting attendees in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Member Anthony, seconded by Member Zuchlewski:

VOICE VOTE ON THE AGENDA APPROVAL MOTION MADE BY MEMBER ANTHONY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER ZUCHLEWSKI:

Motion to approve the November 13, 2013 Planning Commission Agenda. Motion carried 4-0.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

No one in the audience wished to speak.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no Correspondence.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Committee Reports.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPUTY DIRECTOR REPORT

Deputy Director McBeth said I at the October 28th City Council meeting three items were approved that the Planning Commission had also recently considered. The Charneth Fen revised preliminary site plan and PD option special land use was approved. Also approved was the new façade for the Home Goods store. And finally, the Zoning Map Amendment for the west side of Wixom Road, south of Grand River to rezone from B-2, Community Business and I-2, General Industrial to RM-1, Low Density Low Rise Multiple Family. That was approved for the rezoning and the PRO Agreement the matter will come back to the Planning Commission for consideration of the preliminary site plan.

CONSENT AGENDA - REMOVALS AND APPROVAL

There were no items on the Consent Agenda.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. VARSIITY LINCOLN DISPLAY LOT, JSP13-67

Public Hearing at the request of Varsity Lincoln Properties, Preliminary Site Plan, Special Land Use Permit, and Stormwater Management Plan approval. The subject property is 1.57 acres in Section 17 of the City of Novi and located on Outlot 1 of the larger Novi Promenade development on the southeast corner of Wixom Road and Grand River Avenue. This property is part of the Novi Equities

Limited Partnership v. City of Novi Consent Judgment, which states that all outlots, should be reviewed according to B-3 District Standards. The applicant is proposing to construct a roughly 49,100 square foot vehicle display lot, including a vehicle display pad at the southwest corner.

Planner Roediger stated the applicant is proposing to construct a vehicle display lot on Outlot 1 of the larger Novi Promenade development on the southeast corner of Wixom Road and Grand River. To the north is the existing Varsity Lincoln Mercury Dealership. To the east and south is the Sam's Club. To the west is vacant land that was recently approved for the Berkshire Point development. The subject property is zoned I-1, Light Industrial; however, this property is part of the Novi Equities Limited Partnership versus City of Novi Consent Judgment which states that all outlots should be reviewed according to B-3 General Business District standards. The site is bordered by B-3 General Business to the north, I-1 Light Industrial to the east and south, and B-2 to the west that will soon be RM-1 Low Density, Low-Rise Multiple-Family Residential with a Planned Rezoning Overlay. The future land use map indicates community commercial uses for the subject property and all surrounding properties. There are no wetlands or woodlands on the subject property as indicated by the natural features map. The applicant is proposing a roughly 49,100 square foot vehicle display lot, including a vehicle display pad at the southwest corner. Outdoor space for the sale of automobiles requires special land use approval and the Planning Commission should consider the provisions listed in Section 2516.2.c of the Zoning Ordinance. A modified staff report was presented, as it was recently discovered that the parking lot setback along Wixom Road was measured from the existing right-of-way as opposed to the future right-of-way, which in this case is a 10 feet difference. Staff has worked with the applicant to shift the parking 10 feet to the east to meet this requirement, which will be reviewed during Final Site Plan Review. The planning review recommends approval noting the applicant has requested and the planning staff supports a waiver of the required Noise Impact Statement. The applicant has confirmed no noise generating equipment will be added to the site and that the development will conform with Section 2519.10 of the Zoning Ordinance. Planning staff also continues to recommend the installation of a 5 foot wide sidewalk along the existing access drive. The Engineering, Traffic, Landscape, and Fire Review all recommended approval with minor items to be addressed at the time of Final Site Plan submittal. The Planning Commission is asked to hold the public hearing and approve or deny the Special Land Use Permit, Preliminary Site Plan, and Stormwater Management Plan.

Tony Dellicoli, Cityscape Architects, said we're here primary to answer any questions you may have. I don't think that there are any real controversial issues here. If you've been around long enough, you've seen through the year that Varsity has always done an excellent job maintaining their facility. The grass is always green and the shrubs are always manicured. They are a very strong operator and very meticulous about how they present themselves to the street. They've gone through a series of renovations over the years and just finished turning this facility into a truss-mark design; earlier it was a glory design. It's really been keeping up with the times and pressures from Ford to maintain the latest corporate image to the public, so this request is really a growth to that overall maintenance. Ever since 1994, they've had property located north of Twelve Mile leased out so that they could have inventory space for their new car product. They've been shuttling customers across the street for many years, but it's just not an efficient or convenient way to help customers. The opportunity presented itself for the owners to purchase this property and be allowed to consolidate their entire inventory on one site. Now you can walk the customer out to view the product on display. That's really what we're here to get endorsed tonight.

Member Anthony said I saw your plan and I'm very encouraged to see a section of pervious concrete. With the pervious concrete that's been installed here, is this with the intent to help manage stormwater control?

Alan Boyer, LSG Engineers, said yes the pervious pavement is there to act as a catch basin inlet. Underneath it will be a stormwater management facility and that will be the means for the water to get

into that area before it's detained and slowly discharged into the storm sewer.

Member Anthony said with that type of pervious pavement, what type of maintenance is needed and what kind of frequency of maintenance is needed in order to keep the flow being able to move into the pervious pavement?

Mr. Boyer said because this area probably will not have a lot of traffic over it, typically what we're finding in the Michigan Concrete Association is the typical maintenance involves power washing on an annual basis that allows the voids in the concrete to continue to allow water to inlet. What is nice about some of these areas is because the ambient temperature underneath, they don't tend to need a lot of snow plowing. Granted this is only a small area, but the snow actually melts on top of it and makes it easier in the winter to maintain as well.

Member Anthony said it's great to see this and I'm sure we'll be seeing this a lot more in the future. Does Varsity Lincoln have experience with this specific type of pervious pavement and maintaining it in other facilities?

Mr. Boyer said I don't believe so. I think this is relatively new.

Member Anthony said within the plans, is there any reference to the ongoing maintenance that would be needed for it?

Mr. Boyer said I don't believe we have that in the plans although it could easily be added as part of the final site plan submittal for engineering plan approval.

Moved by Member Anthony and seconded by Member Giacometti:

ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE SPECIAL LAND USE PERMIT APPROVAL MOTION MADE BY MEMBER ANTHONY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER GIACOPETTI:

In the matter of Varsity Lincoln Display Lot, JSP13-67, motion to approve the Special Land Use permit based on the following findings:

Relative to other feasible uses of the site:

- The proposed use will not cause any detrimental impact on existing thoroughfares as indicated in the traffic review letter;
- Subject to satisfying the requirements in the Engineering Review, the proposed use will not cause any detrimental impact on the capabilities of public services and facilities because the plan adequately addresses and provides for water and sanitary sewer service and management of stormwater volumes;
- The proposed use is compatible with the natural features and characteristics of the land as no new impacts to natural features are proposed;
- The proposed use is compatible with adjacent uses of the land as indicated in the staff and consultant review letters;
- The proposed use is consistent with the goals, objectives and recommendations of the City's Master Plan for Land Use;
- The proposed use will promote the uses of land in a socially and economically desirable manner; and
- The proposed use is listed among the provisions of uses requiring special land use review as set forth in the various zoning districts of this Ordinance, and is in harmony with the purposes and conforms to the applicable site design regulations of the Zoning district in which it is located.

This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Article 15, Article 24 and

Article 25 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance. Motion carried 4-0.

Moved by Member Anthony and seconded by Member Giacometti:

ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN PERMIT APPROVAL MOTION MADE BY MEMBER ANTHONY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER GIACOPETTI:

In the matter of Varsity Lincoln Display Lot, JSP13-67, motion to approval the Preliminary Site Plan based on and subject to the following:

- **Planning Commission waiver of the required Noise Impact Statement which is hereby granted;**
- **The installation of a 5 foot wide sidewalk along the existing access drive;**
- **Parking along the western front yard fronting Wixom Road must be shifted 10 feet to the east (20 feet required, 10 feet provided);**
- **The findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters, and the conditions and items listed in those letters being addressed on Final Site Plan.**

This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Article 15, Article 24 and Article 25 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance. Motion carried 4-0.

Moved by Member Anthony and seconded by Member Giacometti:

ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN APPROVAL MOTION MADE BY MEMBER ANTHONY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER GIACOPETTI:

In the matter of Varsity Lincoln Display Lot, JSP13-67, motion to approve the Stormwater Management Plan, based on and subject to the findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters, and the conditions and items listed in those letters being addressed on Final Site Plan. This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Chapter 11 of the Code of Ordinances and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance. Motion carried 4-0.

2. HERTZ AUTO RENTAL, JSP13-74

Consideration of the request of The Hertz Corporation for Preliminary Site Plan approval and Special Land Use approval. The subject property is located in Section 23, at 24400 Novi Road, north of 10 Mile Road in the I-1, Light Industrial District. The subject property is approximately 3.8 acres and the applicant is proposing to occupy a 2,500 square foot space and 20 parking spaces for an auto rental facility.

Planner Kapelanski said the applicant is proposing to occupy a 2,500 square foot existing tenant space at 24400 Novi Road. The property is located on the east side of Novi Road, north of 10 Mile Road. The center is generally occupied by auto repair uses. The property is zoned I-1 Light Industrial with I-1 zoning immediately surrounding the site. The applicant is proposing an auto rental facility for a portion of the existing building. 20 spaces in the existing parking lot would be used for rental car parking. Per the recently approved text amendment, an auto rental facility is a special land use in the I-1 District on sites not adjacent to residential zoning and subject to several conditions. The applicant has generally met these conditions as outlined in the planning review letter and planning staff is recommending approval of the Special Land Use Permit and Preliminary Site Plan. The applicant is requesting and staff is recommending a waiver of the required Noise Impact Statement as no noise generating equipment is being added to the site. The Planning Commission should consider the factors listed in Section 2516.2.c of

the Zoning Ordinance regarding the special land use request.

Jeff Hermiz, area manager with the Hertz Corporation, said he was available to answer any questions regarding a rental facility at the proposed location.

Chair Pehrson read the correspondence from Jim Patterson of 24400 Novi Road who supports the plan. He says it's important that the auto center to be competitive in the difficult times. Hertz is a reputable firm that will enhance our center.

Moved by Member Anthony and seconded by Member Giacometti:

ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE SPECIAL LAND USE PERMIT APPROVAL MOTION MADE BY MEMBER ANTHONY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER GIACOPETTI:

In the matter of Hertz Auto Rental, JSP13-74, motion to approval the Special Land Use permit based on the following findings:

a. Relative to other feasible uses of the site:

- The proposed use will not cause any detrimental impact on existing thoroughfares given the size of the new use;
- The proposed use will not cause any detrimental impact on the capabilities of public services and facilities given the size of the new use;
- The proposed use is compatible with the natural features and characteristics of the land because the plan does not impact any natural features;
- The proposed use is compatible with adjacent uses of the land because the proposed use is located far from any residential uses;
- The proposed use is consistent with the goals, objectives and recommendations of the City's Master Plan for Land Use;
- The proposed use will promote the use of land in a socially and economically desirable manner;
- The proposed use is listed among the provision of uses requiring special land use review as set forth in the various zoning districts of this Ordinance, and is in harmony with the purposes and conforms to the applicable site design regulations of the zoning district in which it is located.

b. Waiver of the required Noise Impact Statement as the proposed use will not add any noise generating equipment to the site; and

c. The findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff review letter and the conditions and the items listed in that letter being addressed.

This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Article 19, Article 24 and Article 25 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance. *Motion carried 4-0.*

Moved by Member Anthony and seconded by Member Giacometti:

ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN PERMIT APPROVAL MOTION MADE BY MEMBER ANTHONY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER GIACOPETTI:

In the matter of Hertz Auto Rental, JSP13-74, motion to approve the Preliminary Site Plan based on and subject to the findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff review letter and the conditions and the items listed in that letter being addressed. This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Article 19, Article 24 and Article 25 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance. *Motion carried 4-0.*

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. JEFF HEYN, JSP13-62

Consideration of the request of GRB Novi LLC for Preliminary Site Plan and Stormwater Management Plan approval. The subject property is located in Section 16, at 46035 Grand River Ave, east of Beck Road in the I-1, Light Industrial District. The subject property is 7.7 acres and the applicant is proposing to demolish a portion of the existing building, update the building façade, install additional parking and provide an area of landbanked parking.

Planner Kapelanski said the applicant is proposing to demolish a portion of the existing building at a site on the south side of Grand River, east of Beck Road. The building façade would also be updated and the parking and landscaping areas would be expanded. The site is bordered by vacant land and existing residential uses. The subject property is zoned I-1, Light Industrial and is bordered by I-1 zoning to the east and west and RA zoning to the south. The Future Land Use map indicates Industrial, Research and Development and Technology uses for the subject property and properties to the east and west with residential uses planned to the south. There are existing woodland and wetland areas on the site but no impacts to these areas are anticipated as part of the proposed plan.

The applicant is proposing several changes mainly along the northern and western portions of the existing building. A small part of the existing northern portion of the building would be demolished and parking and landscaping would be put in its place. The applicant is also seeking the Planning Commission's approval of landbanked parking for the proposed parking area along the western part of the building. The other two buildings on this site are currently occupied and use or are required to have almost all of the available parking currently on the site. The new parking would allow occupancy of the remaining building. The applicant has not identified a user for the building in question and any users requiring Special Land Use Permit approval would be required to come before the Planning Commission at a future meeting. Landbanked parking is allowed provided the applicant can demonstrate the number of parking spaces required by the ordinance is in excess of the spaces required for their specific use. The applicant has provided materials supporting the landbanked parking request and staff recommends approval of the landbanked parking.

Planner Kapelanski continued noting the planning review recommends approval of the plan stating a Planning Commission finding regarding the front yard parking is required along with the finding regarding the landbanked parking. A ZBA variance is also required for the deficient front yard parking setback. The façade review recommends approval noting a waiver is required and recommended for the underage of natural clay brick and the overages of thin brick, plain CMU and ribbed metal. The engineering, traffic, landscape, wetlands, woodlands and fire reviews all recommend approval of the plan with items to be addressed on the final site plan submittal.

John Stewart, architect of the project, said we are removing part of the north side of the building and east side of the building. We're trying to make the building leasable. In the present state right now, it is an eyesore to the community so we're re-facing the building and trying to find a tenant.

Member Giacometti said it's nice to see this area developed. As far as the landbanking area, can you tell me some more about that? How many spaces are there? Is this for future use? Is this overlap use from future tenants?

Planner Kapelanski said what is proposed on this plan is on the western portion of the building, the applicant is proposing to landbank all of those spaces. They haven't identified a user for this building yet. Once a user is identified, we'll take a look at the landbank parking that they're proposing again and make sure that wouldn't have to be installed at that time in order to accommodate whatever tenant is proposed. The ordinance does allow an applicant to landbank a portion of the parking. That means they don't have to install it right now, but they do have to be able to show that it can be accommodated on

the site and meet all the ordinance requirements that we would require of any parking area. If it looks like there is not enough parking on the site or as new users come in, we reevaluate this site and the building official at any time can require that parking to be installed. So it really preserves some green space on the site and saves the applicant a little bit of cost to put the parking aside and have the space set aside but have it so that they don't have to install it right away. We've done this on a number of sites. Interior Environments was one that the Planning Commission had recently approved about six months ago.

Member Giacometti said so in other words, once a tenant is found, then the appropriate amount of parking, if additional is needed, is determined at that time and the requirement is put on the property owner.

Planner Kapelanski said that would be the case here. Usually, when somebody is landbanking parking, they come in with a specific tenant identified, but in this case we're putting evaluation of those future tenants parking needs off until we know who the tenants are going to be.

Member Giacometti said for an older site that's being redeveloped that sounds like a good strategy.

Moved by Member Anthony and seconded by Member Giacometti:

ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN APPROVAL MOTION MADE BY MEMBER ANTHONY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER GIACOPETTI:

In the matter of Jeff Heyn Multi-Tenant, JSP13-62, motion to approve the Preliminary Site Plan based on and subject to the following:

- a. Planning Commission finding that the proposed front yard parking is compatible with the surrounding development;
- b. With regard to the proposed landbanked parking, Planning Commission finding that:
 - The applicant has demonstrated through substantial evidence that the specified occupant and building use will require less parking than what is required by the Zoning Ordinance;
 - Parking will not occur on any street or driveway;
 - Parking will not occur on any area not approved and developed for parking;
 - Parking will not occur on that area where parking construction has been landbanked until such time as that area is constructed for such parking;
 - The requested parking landbanking will not create traffic or circulation problems on or off site; and
 - The requested parking lankbanking will be consistent with the public health, safety and welfare of the City and the purposes of the Zoning Ordinance;
- c. Applicant receiving a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals for the deficient front yard parking setback (40 feet required, 26 feet provided);
- d. Section 9 façade waiver for the underage of natural clay brick and the overages of thin brick, plain concrete masonry units (CMU) and ribbed metal on the basis that the proposed alteration:
 - Represents an improvement in the existing façade that will increase compatibility of the existing façade with adjacent buildings, and
 - Is generally in keeping with the intent and purpose of Section 2520.
- e. The findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters and the conditions and the items listed in those letters being addressed on the Final Site Plan.

This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Article 19, Article 24 and Article 25 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance. *Motion carried 4-0.*

Moved by Member Anthony and seconded by Member Giacometti:

ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN APPROVAL MOTION MADE BY MEMBER ANTHONY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER GIACOPETTI:

In the matter of Jeff Heyn Multi-Tenant, JSP13-62, motion to approve the Stormwater Management Plan, subject to the findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters and the conditions and the items listed in those letters being addressed on the Final Site Plan. This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Chapter 11 of the Code of Ordinances and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance. *Motion carried 4-0.*

2. SOCIALITE BISTRO, JSP13-55

Consideration of the request of Etchen Gumma Limited for a recommendation to Council for Preliminary Site Plan and Section 9 Façade Waiver. The subject property is located in Section 15 at 44175 12 Mile Road in the RC, Regional Center District. The applicant is proposing to add awnings to a tenant space.

Planner Kristen Kapelanski said the applicant is proposing to alter and occupy a vacant space at the existing 12 Mile Crossing at Fountain Walk. The space is interior to the site and outdoor seating is proposed along with the addition of fabric awnings. The property is zoned RC, Regional Center and is surrounded by RC zoning. The proposed façade modifications include the addition of black fabric awnings on the south façade of the existing building. The outdoor seating in this case can be approved administratively and the Planning Commission has only been asked to consider the proposed fabric awnings. A Section 9 waiver is required and recommended for the overage of fabric awnings as the proposal is consistent with other establishments in the center and with the intent of the façade ordinance.

Jeff Etouma, one of the owners of Socilite said he'd be happy to answer any questions you guys have.

Member Anthony asked if the staff looked at the materials of the awning and if they comfortable with the ability of it to withstand the weather.

Planner Kapelanski said our façade consultant has looked at the material sample the applicant has submitted. It's a black fabric material, pretty consistent with what we see for fabric awnings in the City. So we're comfortable with that. Obviously if there's any type of disrepair or maintenance issue, we would address that at that time as well.

Member Zuchlewski asked if there was any lettering proposed on the awnings.

Planner Kapelanski said usually that would be handled through the sign permit. I'm not sure what sign permits have been submitted for this building, but the Planning Commission wouldn't typically review the signage. The applicant can may be able to speak to what signage has been proposed.

Mr. Etouma said he hadn't given that any thought.

Member Zuchlewski said in reference to the awning, I would think it would be submitted with flame spreads to the fire department.

Planner Kapelanski said yes, those sorts of issues are reviewed as part of the Building Division review for the building permit.

Member Giacometti said in the project summary, there's a reference to year around outdoor dining.

Would that imply that there will be plastic walls as of November 30th?

Planner Kapelanski said we haven't been told of any kind of plastic coverings. I spoke with the architect and he didn't indicate any additional accommodations for the winter months. Outdoor dining is permitted until November 30th, then the tenants are supposed to take all of their tables and chairs and store them away until March. In this case, the applicant is proposing the year around outdoor dining, that is something that will have to be addressed by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Member Giacometti asked if the applicant was considering plastic walls.

Mr. Etouma said we are considering walls but I don't believe they're plastic. If you guys have been out to Black Rock, we're basically mimicking what they're doing. We are proposing a year around outdoor dining area with an awning with glass that automatically retracts into the awning.

Member Giacometti said that would need to go through City staff for approval.

Planner Kapelanski said if its glass, we'd want it identified on the plans, but it's not subject to the façade materials percentages in the chart. If it's the plastic material that we have seen on some other buildings, we would want to review that as well.

Mr. Etouma said it's basically the same thing that Black Rock did.

Member Giacometti asked if Black Rock received City approval for their improvements.

Planner Kapelanski said we did review Black Rock. That was six months or so ago, so I can't remember exactly what material they were proposing but it would probably be appropriate for the architect to contact us if there's any materials that they're proposing that are not shown on this plan. If it's a material that is in compliance with the ordinance, we could approve that administratively. I might also add that in this case, this is a recommendation to the City Council, because this is in the RC, Regional Center District.

Moved by Member Anthony and seconded by Member Giacometti:

ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN APPROVAL MOTION MADE BY MEMBER ANTHONY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER GIACOPETTI:

In the matter of Socialite Bistro, JSP13-55, motion to recommend approval of the Preliminary Site Plan and Section 9 façade waiver to allow an overage of fabric awnings on the basis that the proposed alteration:

- 1. Represents an improvement in the existing façade that is compatible with the existing façade and with adjacent buildings; and**
- 2. Is generally in keeping with the intent and purpose of Section 2520. *Motion carried 4-0.***

3. KROGER OFFICE EXPANSION, JSP13-65

Consideration of the request of The Kroger Company of Michigan for Preliminary Site Plan and Stormwater Management Plan approval. The subject property is located in Section 24, at 40393 Grand River Avenue, west of Seeley Road in the I-1, Light Industrial District. The subject property is 1.63 acres and the applicant is proposing to add a 2,019 square foot addition on the north side of the existing building.

Planner Kapelanski said the applicant is proposing to add 2,019 square feet to the existing Kroger office on the south side of Grand River, west of Seeley Road. The site is bordered by various industrial and office

uses with residential uses to the south. The subject property is zoned I-1, Light Industrial and is bordered by I-1 zoning to the east and west and residential zoning to the south. The Future Land Use map indicates Industrial, Research and Development and Technology uses for the subject property and properties to the west with Community Commercial uses planned to the east and residential uses to the south. There are no existing natural features on the site. The applicant is proposing a building addition on the north side of the existing building to provide new office space. No changes or additions to the existing parking area are proposed or required. The planning, engineering, landscaping, façade and fire reviews all recommend approval of the plan with items to be addressed on the final site plan submittal.

Matt Andris, of Jeffery Scott Architects, said they are asking for approval for the 2,019 square foot addition to the office building. He would be happy to answer any questions.

Member Anthony said this one is near my house. It looks good to me and it looks like it complies with everything.

Moved by Member Anthony and seconded by Member Giacometti:

ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN APPROVAL MOTION MADE BY MEMBER ANTHONY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER GIACOPETTI:

In the matter of Kroger Office Expansion, JSP13-65, motion to approve the Preliminary Site Plan based on and subject to the findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters and the conditions and the items listed in those letters being addressed on the next plan submittal. This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Article 19, Article 24 and Article 25 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance. Motion carried 4-0.

Member Zuchlewski said asked if the gazebo on the property that was considered by the Planning Commission was ever installed.

Mr. Andris said unfortunately that has not been built yet.

Moved by Member Anthony and seconded by Member Giacometti:

ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN APPROVAL MOTION MADE BY MEMBER ANTHONY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER GIACOPETTI:

In the matter of Kroger Office Expansion, JSP13-65, motion to approve the Stormwater Management Plan, subject to the findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters and the conditions and the items listed in those letters being addressed on the next plan submittal. This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Chapter 11 of the Code of Ordinances and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance. Motion carried 4-0.

4. THE TOWN CENTER STUDY

Presentation by Don Wortman, Consultant to the City for the Town Center Study.

Don Wortman said he is the Vice President of Carlisle-Wortman Associates and we're working with City staff in conjunction with Hamilton-Anderson and also Graphic Visions on the Town Center Study. What I wanted to do this evening is just provide you with a quick update in terms of our status, the progress we've made on our study and then answer any questions which you might have afterwards. First of all, I was here in August and at that time we provided you an overview of our progress to date. We also outlined the purpose of this study and it's really to prepare recommendations for the update of the

Master Plan dealing with the Town Center area, also looking at the zoning regulations and making recommendations on that, design guidelines and dealing with way finding. What we want to do is build on the rejuvenation of the Town Center and some of the progress that has already been made on that. We also want to look at vacant and transitional lands within this area and explore options for future land use. Also, we're anticipating future road extensions, specifically Crescent Boulevard and also the improvements to Flint Street. So all of these together will be part of our plan and what we'll be looking at here. The process involves five main items: public input, Master Plan update recommendations, zoning adjustments, and also the design guidelines, specifically some of the streetscape elements along Grand River and Novi Road, and lastly some way finding, directional signage that will provide visitors navigation through the Town Center. Those are the components of the plan.

Mr. Wortman continued. In August, we reported to you the results of some of our early stakeholder interview meetings. We've had a number of meetings with major property owners within the Town Center and individual meetings with City staff. We uncovered some interesting comments and themes. Some of the ones we discovered were that the strongest land use market is for residential and office uses. This was also based upon discussions with commercial realtors within the area, but residential and office was generally strong. There's also perception that retail is overbuilt, so that ties in with the market of residential and office and more of a weakness in the retail. There were preferences that we heard for residential uses along Main Street in particular. There are also comments we received that requirements for first floor retail might be unrealistic, that this might be an impediment for future development. Lastly, some of the design standards that the city has right now are good but continue to allow some flexibility on this.

This was part of our public input process. We also continued work in other aspects of public input. Specifically, we worked with City staff in having a public open house on September 11th. At the time, property owners were invited. We had a number of display stations. We asked participants to actually post comments on various areas of the maps. We answered questions and listened to comments. So I think it was a successful opportunity for the property owners to provide additional comments. In addition to that, we also had another stakeholder meeting, specifically along the Flint Street area with one of the property owners who owns approximately eight acres and we also gathered comments from him regarding their plans for that specific area. So with all of this, the stakeholder meeting, the public open house and an online survey, we have put in a comprehensive and exhaustive effort in terms of soliciting public input.

Mr. Wortman also said some of the themes that we received at the workshop would be to allow loft style residential along Main Street that could be catered to young professionals. We also heard comments about offering more family friendly higher end dining. There were concerns regarding traffic speeds on Grand River and Novi Roads; the extension of Crescent Boulevard will certainly help. We also gathered that regarding vehicular and pedestrian connections between the various commercial areas and providing better signage, especially the gateway areas along Novi Road and Grand River would improve the site. So those are some of the comments that we're continuing to receive. What we're mainly looking at are the corridors of Grand River and Novi Roads. You have a very attractive streetscape right now, but what I think we were trying to explore is what improvements could be done and how can these design guidelines in your zoning regulations further improve the character along Grand River and Novi Road.

One thing we looked at was the lights. In approximately a quarter mile section, we saw at least six different lighting styles ranges from modern to Victorian style to gothic, etc. but the recommendation that we would like to make is make the lighting style more consistent. They may not all have to match exactly, but at least include a design standard that would unify and add a more consistent design theme. Another item that we looked at was the screening walls that were in place. Those are very effective in providing screening for the parking lot areas, but two styles that are commonly used along

Grand River and Novi Road, were the solid brick wall and a combination of brick columns with decorative metal fencing. Our preference would be to enhance the transparency a bit more and incorporate the brick column and decorative metal fencing. The other style is a bit more oppressive. They are less maintenance and generally cost less while also providing a more attractive feature for that particular area and an effective screen. Another item that we were looking at was the benches. Some of the benches that are currently in place are not really in the best locations. They're not practical and they are seldom used. Also, the styles were different. Our recommendations would be to move these benches to places where they will be comfortably used and use them in conjunction with restaurants or other areas where there's going to be more pedestrian activity.

Likewise, the plazas are important features; they are the same as the benches in that sometime they are not actively being used. They're not inviting and they're exposed to heavy traffic in some areas. Again, the recommendation would be to place those plazas in locations where they would relate to pedestrian activity, such as a restaurant. The example is by Pot Belly, that plaza is very attractive and actively used. That type of a plaza makes sense. But I think that these types of design guidelines will help improve the pedestrian character and the whole quality of the corridor, both along Grand River and Novi Road.

Mr. Wortman went on to say that the last item that I wanted to talk about was paving. The City staff asked us to look at this. The current brick pavers that are in place in some areas are in poor repair; broken and uneven. We know that the City DPS has had concerns regarding maintenance. Also, when they do utility work it becomes problematic. Our recommendations for those areas would be to use these pavers judiciously. Concrete often works just as well, as long as it's properly used and is less expensive and easier to repair. The brick pavers work well as an accent feature, but to use it for larger portions of the area is just impractical.

So these are the type of recommendations we'll be focusing on and working with City staff on. We'll also be looking at the signage and the specific way finding, which I think is a very important key. Specifically, Graphic Visions of Northville, is working with our office on that. We've already come up with some concept designs, with City staffs works to have further refinements before we bring this back to the Planning Commission. So the next steps will be to complete the Master Plan recommendations, working with City staff, develop the recommendations for Zoning Ordinance adjustment, create these new design guidelines and then also complete our way finding analysis. So I'd be happy to answer any questions on our preliminary work.

Member Zuchlewski said in your next steps, I didn't see a time frame. Is there a time frame on this? And the secondly, pulling all these recommendations together, how is that going to happen? Is that going to be by committee submittals and then feedback from Council? And the last thing that I have is that there was a lot of talk about architecture and style, is there any thought in this study to where we can we get the biggest bang for our buck? Because I think a lot of this calls for the pretty stuff but it really doesn't take into account the money being spent and how much we're going to get back from it.

Mr. Wortman said a lot of this would be implemented during your site plan review and would be generated by the developers themselves. So when a site plan comes before you on Grand River and Novi, it could be activated based on the individual property owners. I'm sure there will be some investment by the City, like for example on the brick pavers. I know that the City is looking at new light fixtures through the DTE program. So it will be a combination of implementation, both by developer and City in terms of how that is actually put into place. In terms of the timing for us to finish this study, originally we were thinking in January we'd like to pull this together but we're a little bit behind schedule. We're still very much shooting for that deadline of January.

Chair Pehrson said it was interesting that you brought up the topic of the first floor retail that was huge five years ago. What do you see as the biggest impediment to that from the studies that you've seen so

far?

Mr. Wortman said discussions with the property owners and representatives of the bank have indicated that it was difficult to find an investment in that type, whereas on first floor residential there was a stronger market. We do planning work for 60 communities in southeastern Michigan and we're all preaching mixed use. Unfortunately, the market is tough for that. It's easy to do it where there is a certain core density like downtown Chicago, New York, Washington DC, and San Francisco. Mixed use projects are very successful. In cities such as Novi, it becomes a little bit difficult because you don't have the pedestrian foot traffic like you would in those other areas.

Chair Pehrson said so that brings me to my second point because what I found contradictory was the idea of lofts. But where would you see lofts fitting in in the downtown area given that we don't have foot traffic to really attract people.

Mr. Wortman said well what we mean by lofts is that it could even be first floor residential lofts. We're planners for the City of Plymouth and one of the first build outs of the Daisy Project was the loft style apartments. There was a very strong demand for that. I think that this is consistent with that scheme. Don't necessary require the first floor non-residential. If it happens, allow it to happen. But if a developer wants to do first floor residential, then allow that. I think it's more of realism towards market-based land use. I think that's really the key. I think a lot of the developers know best and they will tell you what works. So we're hearing that from the developers.

Chair Pehrson said I think that's part of the image or concept of Novi having a downtown. So you look at Plymouth and it has its downtown area. So I think that's just a general, broader statement about when Novi develops its downtown area. I can see us emulating that 100 fold.

Member Giacometti said relative to the feedback you got from the outreach sessions, how popular or unpopular was the concept of traffic calming in the downtown area, specifically on Grand River and Novi Roads.

Mr. Wortman said on one hand everybody wants a downtown until you tell them that we'll need to slow down Grand River to about 25MPH like downtown Plymouth, but on the other hand I don't know that you'll ever have that downtown feel as long as you have cars whizzing by at 50MPH. It works if traffic is diverted and these other roads are extended. It would also give a lot of visibility to the retail space that's currently under utilized in the existing Main Street. I was really curious to know if there was a sounding board in terms of whether or not that was popular. I don't recall specific comments on traffic calming from the stakeholder meeting or the open house that we had, but we have had this discussion with staff about possible pedestrian refuges on Grand River. We fully recognize that it's a county road along with Novi Road. But if there are elements of traffic calming, we would like to explore that. Whether or not it could be done given the traffic volumes and the jurisdictional issues, I don't have answers on that one yet but I think it's something that could be explored.

Member Giacometti said do you think that a roundabout is possible at those types of speeds.

Mr. Wortman said I think it would work. From a traffic volume standpoint, I think it's workable but you'll have a right-of-way issue. I think that could be a serious deterrent on that.

Member Anthony said I want to thank you for being here and thank the staff for the wisdom of doing this study in this area. This is really an area that evolved from the 70's all the way over to the last 40 years. Planning, mixed use and urban villages, the whole concept has changed several times during that period so we do need to have this kind of study so thank you for doing this. I have a few questions. My first question is, as they move to more residential incorporated into this area, do you think that there

could be enough residential volume to support more mixed use to support the retail that would move there or would want to expand there?

Mr. Wortman said I think it would certainly help. Number one, we have talked to a number of developers who said that residential is the stronger element right now in the market. Residential and office are stronger than retail. So, if we can attract more residential, lets say for example on Main Street, which would certainly enhance the existing retail that's already there, it will also enhance that downtown vitality. It will enhance the sidewalk and pedestrian traffic. I think that attracting and encouraging that residential growth along Main Street would be very important.

Member Anthony said have you considered residential up near Eleven Mile.

Mr. Wortman said there has been some thought on that, but not in detail. I think that Main Street would be a better area.

Member Anthony said well as someone whose practiced walking that area and looking for gathering spots, one of the difficulties I've experienced with the plaza near Biggby's and Potbelly's is that the stores themselves, the opening and entrances really are not conducive to move you through the plaza. It's not an easy thing to do, to grab a cup of coffee and go to the plaza. Is there a way to fix that?

Mr. Wortman said that becomes tough because of the current building alignments. We found it to be a very attractive plaza. The observation that we made was that you don't notice the quality nearly as much if you're in the car. A lot of it is hidden from Grand River and Novi Road. So the plaza itself, is a hidden gem.

Member Anthony said another observation I had in walking that area is that in we tried to get a farmer's market going. That's a gathering area, where it's large enough to hold a farmer's market or have a function where a band comes in, something similar to what downtown Farmington has done in one of there original 1970's style retail areas. Is that even possible with the traffic we have on Grand River or would it be beneficial to us?

Mr. Wortman said I think it would be very beneficial if you could attract a farmer's market to that area. Another idea is a green market, something with vitality out in front as an outdoor display. I think that could be a very nice feature, again I think that would enhance that pedestrian character. Given the traffic volume, it is tough to try to create that pedestrian environment, but we've had this discussion with staff to not give up on it. I still think that is the way to go. Encourage the residential and elements like farmer's markets, if you can get vitality along those sidewalks and streets, I think the city would be well served.

5. APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 9, 2013 PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Moved by Member Giacopetti and seconded by Member Zuchlewski:

VOICE VOTE ON PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES APPROVAL MOTION MADE BY MEMBER GIACOPETTI AND SECONDED BY MEMBER ZUCHLEWSKI:

Motion to approve the October 9, 2013 Planning Commission Minutes. *Motion carried 4-0.*

CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS FOR COMMISSION ACTION

There were no Consent Agenda Removals.

MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

There were no Matters for Discussion.

SUPPLEMENTAL ISSUES

There were no Supplemental Issues to discuss.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

No one in the audience wished to speak.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Member Anthony and seconded by Member Zuchlewski:

VOICE VOTE ON MOTION TO ADJOURN MADE BY MEMBER ANTHONY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER ZUCHLEWSKI:

Motion to adjourn the November 13, 2013 Planning Commission meeting. *Motion carried 4-0.*

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Transcribed by Valentina Nuculaj

November, 2013

Date Approved:

Signature on File

Richelle Leskun, Planning Assistant