



# PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

CITY OF NOVI

Regular Meeting

**December 11, 2019 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 7:00 PM.

## ROLL CALL

Present: Member Anthony, Member Avdoulos, Member Ferrell, Member Gronachan, Member Maday, Chair Pehrson

Absent: Member Lynch

Also Present: Barb McBeth, City Planner; Beth Saarela, City Attorney; Sri Komaragiri, Planner; Rick Meader, Landscape Architect; Victor Boron, Staff Engineer

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Member Gronachan and seconded by Member Maday.

**VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 11, 2019 PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA MADE BY MEMBER GRONACHAN AND SECONDED BY MEMBER MADAY.**

***Motion to approve the December 11, 2019 Planning Commission Agenda. Motion carried 6-0.***

## AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Nobody in the audience wished to speak.

## CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no committee reports.

## CITY PLANNER REPORT

There was no City Planner report.

## CONSENT AGENDA - REMOVALS AND APPROVALS

### 1. **BALLANTYNE JSP13-43**

Approval of the request of Singh Development for a third one-year extension of the Final Site Plan approval. The subject property is located north of Eight Mile Road and west of Garfield Road, in the RA, Residential Acreage Zoning District. The subject property is approximately 50.85 acres and the applicant is proposing to build a 41-unit Residential Unit Development (RUD) residential site condominium.

Motion made by Member Anthony and seconded by Member Maday.

### **ROLL CALL VOTE TO APPROVE THE THIRD ONE-YEAR EXTENSION OF THE FINAL SITE PLAN APPROVAL MADE BY MEMBER ANTHONY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER MADAY.**

**Motion to approve the one-year extension of the Final Site Plan approval. Motion Carried 6-0.**

## PUBLIC HEARINGS

### 1. **SAKURA NOVI JZ19-31 WITH REZONING 18.732**

Public hearing at the request of Robert B. Aikens & Associates, LLC and Robertson Brothers Homes for Planning Commission's recommendation to City Council for a Zoning Map amendment from Office Service (OS-1), Office Service Commercial (OSC) and Light Industrial (I-1) to Town Center-1 (TC-1) with a Planned Rezoning Overlay. The subject property is approximately 15.59 acres and is located north of Grand River Avenue, south of Eleven Mile Road and east of Town Center Drive (Section 23). The applicant is proposing to develop the property as an Asian-themed mixed-use development.

Planner Bell said the applicant is requesting a Zoning Map amendment utilizing the City's Planned Rezoning Overlay Option for approximately 15.5 acres of property located north of Grand River Avenue, south of 11 Mile Road, and east of Town Center Drive. The parcels are currently zoned OSC (Office Service Commercial), OS-1 (Office Service) and I-1 (Light Industrial). Two of the parcels are currently owned by the City and two are owned by Ecco Tool. Ecco Tool would continue to operate on a smaller site as a non-conforming use, but they would be rezoned along with the surrounding properties under this proposal. The Master Plan calls out the largest parcel, the Anglin property, as a redevelopment site and incorporates many of the Town Center study recommendations for this area including serving as a gateway into the Town Center area, incorporating a wide variety of uses, having a pedestrian-oriented form to activate the area, and utilizing the pond as a site amenity. The Master Plan specifies the area should be zoned Town Center.

The applicant has proposed rezoning to TC-1, Town Center-1, which is not explicitly in conformance with the Master Plan recommendations. However, this district may be a reasonable alternative for the properties, as it is very similar to the TC District. The TC-1 district gives some greater flexibility in building height and setbacks, and still allows the Master Plan objectives for this area to be achieved.

The site contains both regulated woodland and wetland features, which have been taken into account. The proposed "Sakura Novi" would be an Asian-themed mixed use development. The applicant seeks to be able to highlight the cultural diversity of Novi and add a vibrant destination in the Town Center area. The project is presented as 2

phases. Phase 1 consists of a specialty grocery store/food hall, and two additional Restaurant/Retail buildings along the Grand River frontage. There would be 68-townhome units on the eastern portion of the site accessed via 11 Mile Road. The existing pond on the west side of the site would serve as a focal point and public gathering space to be enhanced with Japanese-style gardens and a walkway around the perimeter.

In the submittal reviewed by staff, the applicant proposed a range of uses for the Phase 2 component of the project. In a baseline scenario, 70-townhome units could be constructed. In the alternative maximum density scenario, four buildings containing such uses as hotel, office, multi-family residential, senior living, personal service, retail and/or restaurant space were proposed. Buildings would range from 2-6 stories.

There was also a third phase to be located on a 3.5 acre parcel that is not contiguous with the rest of the development, but about 575 feet to the east along 11 Mile Road. The Phase 3 parcels were determined to not be authorized to be part of this process at this time, and were not included in the public hearing notice for tonight. Therefore it should not be included in any motions.

Planner Bell continued to say in the applicant's response letter provided last week for your packet, they included a revision of the Phase 2 portion of the project and indicate they plan to move forward with this configuration, which consists of 50-townhome units (Phase 2) and two restaurant buildings, one of 3,000 square feet and one of 4,500 square feet (Phase 2B). Please note that we have not reviewed this revised plan to determine compliance with the Ordinance at this time. The applicant notes in their response letter that they are continuing to work on their public benefits, investigating the impact of the residential uses on sanitary sewers and other utilities, exploring alternatives to vinyl siding, and considering whether separate parcels will be created. Wetland mitigation strategies are still being explored as well.

The PRO process allows for deviations from the Ordinance to be incorporated into the PRO Agreement that gets developed. However the list of deviations requested by the applicant was quite lengthy and they have worked on reducing those. With the newly proposed revisions to the layout and mix of uses in Phase 2, as well as the potential introduction of new parcel boundaries to be created, the list of deviations is likely to change when we review it in the context of the Ordinance standards. The applicant indicates they are continuing to work on their list of public benefits, which should be reviewed and evaluated prior to the Planning Commission making a decision about whether the proposal meets the requirements of the PRO ordinance.

The applicant has made a lot of progress over the last 8 months and the plans have evolved with revisions made based on staff and consultant reviews, and with the input from the Master Plan and Zoning Committee. Staff is largely supportive of Phase 1 of the proposal, with a few details yet to be worked out. We think that moving forward with the new layout will help reduce the ambiguity of Phase 2 and more clearly define the deviations with additional details to be provided by the applicant.

Tonight, the Planning Commission is asked to hold the public hearing and to discuss the proposal. The motion in the packet is to postpone making a recommendation to the City Council in order to allow the applicant time to submit their revised plans and the necessary information requested for staff and consultant review. Tonight's meeting is a good opportunity for the public to provide their comments and the Planning Commission members to ask questions and discuss the project. That way the applicant can take that

feedback into consideration as they move forward.

Staff as well as our traffic and woodland/wetland consultants are available to answer any questions you may have. The applicant, Scott Aikens and his team are here to tell you more about their proposal and to respond to your questions as well.

Chair Pehrson asked if the applicant wished to address the Planning Commission.

Scott Aikens from Robert B. Aikens and Associates presented a slide show with a variety of visuals to show the audience the main vision for the Sakura Novi Project.

Scott Aikens said these four pictures represent the four uses that were working to put together for Sakura Novi. The four main uses include the Market, the restaurant collection, residential units, and the pond. The first picture is of the market. One World Market is creating the 25,000 square foot prototype food hall/grocer. The second picture resembles the restaurant collection. The goal is to have a variety of authentic Asian restaurants ranging from high-end Japanese sushi to various other kinds of restaurants. We want people to come back and try every single one of these restaurants. The third picture is the residential project that is being led by Robertson Brothers Homes. The fourth picture is of the pond. The pond has always been a critical feature of this project. It's mentioned in the City's 2016 Master Plan Update to build around it.

Back in August of 2016, the City, Oakland County, and the Japanese General Council met and came up with a Japan-town concept for Main Street. They came upon One World Market and wanted to create this concept of a 25,000 square foot grocer. Some folks from Oakland County thought there could be a development project here. One World Market and the County brought in several developers to talk with and they chose us. This was a presentation we gave to that group, the General Council, The City, Oakland County, and One World Market in September about the super store. At that point, it was a little bit before the City purchased this parcel, but they sort of referred us to work in that location.

Scott Aikens continued to say this is the second alternative we showed to folks because we've felt that the first alternative might be hard in terms of economics because of that pond, it takes up so much space on the site. We added in a mixed-use component, and it also involved discussion of building a new fire station. As of June 2017, we went before City Council. City Council was going to vote on a Purchase Agreement. We focused on just the Anglin parcel and the fire station site because that was sort of a driver of how this would have succeeded. That was voted down by City Council. We had to go back to the drawing board and we came back in September with a plan and it was conceptually approved. The fire station idea is gone and we added back the residential. City Council asked for the residential. So this leads us to this plan and I feel we have rung out any ambiguity. We're really confident on this plan. There have been a lot of changes so far.

One World Market really wanted frontage on Grand River Avenue so that building was brought up to Grand River Avenue. Then we went to the pond and there is a lot of loose soil in the pond, it contains very difficult soils so you can't actually build on the corner of the parcel, that goes down 100 feet, there's also loose soil going down under building B so the footprint didn't work. What we had to do is pull the buildings back. We had to keep the restaurant collection alive and keep the market having its sight lines and parking. That's when we got into the discussion with City Council about the commercial rehabilitation district to sort of finance this because were buying the land from the City at

a substantial price and this would have added on extraordinary costs and we needed to work our way through that. That's a bit of an overview of the history of it and now I'm going to turn it over to John Domino to talk about what they're up to.

John Domino, representing One World Market, said we have been in Novi for over 40 years, since 1977 with a Japanese Market sushi-bar type concept. We've expanded the store a number of times throughout that time period. Our store caters to Japanese-American foods on the grocery side, about 75-80% of our sales, and then on the other side of the store with the sushi-bar/take-out we do another 21-25% of our business and really that customer base is the City of Novi and the surrounding community. As Scott mentioned, we were approached by the City of Novi in 2016 with the idea of having an opportunity to be a part of an Asian-village vision that the City and Oakland County was developing. We got excited about the possibility and so we brought in Scott Aikens and have been really thrilled about the work they have done and are excited about moving forward.

There's key pieces to the vision that are important to us: having sufficient parking, having sufficient site lines from Grand River Avenue, and we want to make sure the landscaping doesn't block the visibility of our store from Grand River Avenue. Back in April, we engaged studio H2G of Birmingham, Michigan. They have done a ton of supermarkets and food halls throughout the U.S. and Europe and they are our format design consultants. They're helping us envision the store and put it together. Our target was to be essentially the Japanese version of "Eataly." That ethnic food destination that not only will serve the people of Novi and the expat executives that are here, but serve as a destination for miles and miles around for people who are looking for something unique and different.

We're looking at selling Asian spirits and our goal is to bring in spirits that are hard to find anywhere else. People who are looking for that will drive 2-3 hours to get here because we have the best Asian whiskeys in the upper Midwest. We won't go through all the pieces of this plan, but you can see the right side is predominantly laid out like a market, the middle section is mostly grab-and-go products, there's a Wow section of alcoholic beverages, and we hope to have a Wow seafood department. True World Group is a leader in sushi grade seafood in the U.S. and around the world and we feel that we have the resources within our company to offer the best fresh seafood in all of Michigan or at least in the Detroit area. Our hope is to have a seafood department that not just sells sashimi grade seafood but also is the place you would want to come buy that piece of swordfish or salmon for dinner. We also anticipate having a mezzanine with a view of the pond. We would use that mezzanine so we can have a bar and seating so it becomes a destination, especially with nice weather to be able to sit out on a balcony and in not so nice weather to have something with a big glass window so you can look out on the pond and still stay warm.

We also talk about community benefits; we expect to have a community room that groups can take advantage of for meetings and also a cooking school. We put together some pictures that we have been using as inspirations when we talk about the super store. There's a picture of our recently opened, White Wolf Bakery, a Japanese patisserie in Clawson, Michigan. It's a unique Japanese style French bakery and coffee bar. It's been very well received in the two months that it has been open.

John Domino showed more pictures of the inspiration behind the new anticipated market. Pictures included food hall seating and seafood markets at the Eataly in Boston, sushi bars

and fresh seafood in New York City, alcoholic beverage department in Seoul, and a food cart/ sampling station from a Whole Foods in New York City.

John Domino continued to say this plan is probably at the 90-95% range. The next step is to develop the look and feel with décor and colors. Just yesterday we were interviewing architects with the idea that if we want to be under construction next year we need to start working on our building plans pretty soon.

Phil Kim, Sakura Novi partner and advisor, said I would like to focus on the restaurant/retail collection. I believe it's an important part of the project. Because of the importance of the market, we had to take a strong consideration of how the market would interact with the restaurant and the retailers on the property. On top of the market, we also took into consideration four key areas so we can search for the right type of idea we are looking for.

One is the City of Novi, as you know, has a long history of the Japanese community coming to the City because of the automotive business. Also, the location was very important and we felt it's in an ideal location right now. The second item that we have to consider is the Asian community in this City. It has had a tremendous growth since the 1970's and some of that growth is because of the expat community. The third item is the influence of the Asian community: how it affects schools, libraries, and a lot of other things in the local community, as well as the economic impact of that population in the City of Novi. The fourth item we have to consider is the Asian businesses. As you can see, the City has developed many businesses with Asian influences like automotive businesses. The Japanese automotive businesses or related businesses were the pioneers in the City, but now are followed by Chinese and Korean businesses as well and there will probably be more businesses following them as the technology improves. The fifth item we had to consider is the general population. We could not just focus on the expat community and the Asian community. We also had to think about the general community, not only in Novi, but also outside Novi. This is a 4.5 million population metro area and we cannot ignore that. Looking at the general community, one thing that we learned was that the community has drastically changed in the past two decades. The general community no longer sees Asian food and Asian things as something exotic, it's becoming mainstream. Sushi is a great example of that because you can find sushi almost everywhere. So we had to take that into consideration looking at the bigger market.

All that led into some critical strategic decisions we had to make. One of the critical things we had to focus on was authenticity. Authenticity seems it should be something easy to do, but it's not. Actually it's very hard because were filled with non-authentic concepts. Nothing against them, but concepts like P.F. Changs and others are the Americanized versions of those Asian foods. That would not be a good fit for this type of project, so we have to find restaurants and food service companies that are beyond that level that we are accustomed to. Scott and my teams had direction to go outside of this area to find those things. We also had to consider homegrown concepts and international concepts. Homegrown concepts are concepts that are developed here in Michigan that people love and we should not forget about them, but to bring authenticity we have to go internationally and bring concepts that are very original and bring them to Michigan. What we found was that the coastal cities in America already have them, but Michigan does not and the Midwest in general does not. The other thing that we have to do when we combine this collection is also to focus on the cuisines that are related to the community here. It's not only Japanese, we have many different people that make up the community and we have to find those cuisines and be

authentic at the same time.

Phil Kim continued to say we also have to consider outside the restaurant as well, such as the retail section: beauty products and health related products. Those are all things that make the experience unique. We were able to find those concepts and were very happy that we are going to be bringing them to this town. Creating a cultural bridge with the local community is a very important thing for us because that became one of the core items of our strategy. To do this right, we did a lot of research in the last couple of years in terms of studying developments of similar nature across the country. Luckily, we are able to find these. The one that is the closest related to what we are trying to do was found in Texas. This Texas property was well designed, well studied and they're performing beautifully and we want to bring those concepts here to Michigan.

Based on ICSC, International Council of Shopping Centers, they believe that the Asian influences on shopping centers are the future and they make a huge impact on a city. I believe that the City as well as the market and us are choosing this particular property to develop is in alignment with what the national retailers are thinking of. So we do believe that once this materializes, the impact for the City will be beyond just what the local residents experience. I think it will be a first of its kind to make an impact regionally. I believe, internationally, this development can be counted as Novi being much closer to the global presence than just being a local choice of concepts.

We also spent a lot of time studying past mistakes by previous developers. We learned a lot from those mistakes done in the last fifteen years by other developers and how not to make those mistakes. It has to do with who we choose as tenants in the development.

Finally, the programming of the whole development is just as critical and we are putting an extensive amount of resources to plan those things correctly such as seasonal events and holiday events and special occasions. As one example, the cherry blossom season in April. That will be a very important thing that we are going to do. So we do believe that if we make the right choices and we develop the right concepts, all combined we will have a tremendous amount of community benefits in terms of education and cultural diversity.

Tim Loughrin, Robertson Brothers Homes, said we're very honored to be a part of this proposed development. We think it has the right components with the right place at the right time. Just for reference, Robertson Brothers is a top five home builder in Southeastern Michigan in permits pulled. We are actually second overall in Oakland County. We get there a different way than the other guys. We really focus on the walkable type of communities. So this particular project really resonates with us because this is exactly what we like to do and what we seek to do. We think that we're the right fit for this project. We like the fact that it's a mixed-use development. It's really well integrated between the residential and the retail. This is one of the reasons why you do see the deviations, although we've made a huge attempt to whittle that down. This truly is an integrated development in our minds. You have the residences which have that personal and private setting, but it is also really integrated into the rest of the site and they feed off of each other and we think that is important.

A little about the residential portion, we are proposing three separate phases of residential. It would be for rent, mostly single car garages, but we do have some two-car garage townhomes as well. Each unit has its own private garage in addition to parking for guests and some of that would be shared with the retail. The single homes are around 1,200 square feet and the two-car homes are about 1,500 square feet inside. Phase 1 is 68

units, as seen on the site plan, Phase 2 is roughly 70 units, and Phase 3 which is not contiguous, we believe is part of the development as we see the overall development separated by a beautiful wetland area.

Tim Loughrin continued to say we do believe all three components are important. Not just necessarily because of proximity or inclusion in Sakura Novi but just overall in the Novi Town Center. I think we need people in this area and that's what we're proposing to do. We want to create a mixed use district if you will, which would be part of the residential. As you can see, we do have a detention pond not just for the residential but for most of the development. That is currently a low grade wetland area, which we have had a lot of discussions with staff on how to mitigate that. We have actually submitted to EGLE so they are reviewing that now. We're really finalizing proposals on that which I think will lead to a benefit for not just Sakura Novi but also the City of Novi so that will be coming up in a future iteration.

This is a unique design. We didn't want to go overboard with the Asian theme. We wanted to have nice simple clean lines. There was a lot of conversation back and forth with the façade design consultant. We've upgraded our elevations quite a bit. We are not proposing vinyl anymore. That would be one deviation to take off the board at this point. Generally speaking, these are rental units so we are being cost conscience in many respects. In the floor plan itself, there are no stacked units and no one is living on top of each other. The entry is on the left, you basically enter from the driveway and the guest entrance is actually on the other side, that's also where your covered porch is and your foyer. We do have a flex room downstairs which could be a TV/sitting room something like that. Your second floor basically is where your livable area is: the living room, the dining room and your kitchen. There are a lot of windows in there so it actually brightens it up a lot. Each unit has its own private balcony and then the two bedrooms upstairs. The two-car version has three bedrooms and there are a limited number of those here, but again for the rental we believe the one unit, is the appropriate product for that. So again, were very excited for the potential development.

Sue Grissim, Grissim Metz Andriese Associates, said I'm the landscape architect and I'm going to talk about the whole design of this project. We show many sakura trees in the design. The sakura trees are the most popular type of flowering cherry tree used throughout Asian design. It represents so much throughout their culture. We're fortunate enough to have the climate here that we can have the trees and that's why we wanted to carry that forward because they're seasonal. What sakura really represents is the nature of life. So it not only represents the living, but it also talks about the transient nature of the blossoms. It's used throughout Asian music and art, so it's a huge symbol that were using to portray throughout the development in addition to the water. We're lucky to have that pond feature because that too is used heavily throughout the design. We're lucky with our seasons that water can be liquid, it can go into a gas, a steam or a mist, or we can have ice in the winter. That's why those elements are used heavily in the design.

Sue Grissim showed some images. The image shown on the top left is showing what we're trying to create around that pond feature. This is going to be the heart of the development. We're showing that we can have heavily landscaped areas where you can immerse yourself in nature, you can walk around the pond, and there will be seating opportunities. This will be a place where you can gather and have events. There's nighttime lighting with very low level mood lighting, it will be a whole other experience. Then you have the seasons so the plantings were using around the pond are going to have those seasonal qualities. The bottom left photo is showing the art of focusing and



framing the use. We'll show you in the site plans that were trying to create views to highlight and make it a picture moment.

We're trying to use those aspects coming into the residential development looking from Grand River again to highlight and entice people to gather and go through the development. The bottom right picture is showing the design philosophy and how it all comes together. Sure, we're looking at traditional Asian design, but were trying to make it more modern. We're taking those elements as you can see in the backdrop with different textures, colors, and materials, but now bringing it back in a more modern sculptural way.

Looking at the simplicity of the material, we don't have to go overboard. It's really clean and the best part about it is that it's timeless, which is key. We are looking at opportunities to view the pond from Grand River and have a focal point from the residential component and then have a focal point from places throughout the development. The next images shown are just inspiration ideas. On the right hand side of the slide are more modern versions and that's where we trying to go. They're sculptural and dynamic, but they're taking the more traditional design and bringing them into today, but keeping the quality of the design features.

Sue Grissim continued to say at build-out, the plan is to have an emphasis on the pond. There can be a boardwalk in the water and we can put sculptures or different elements in the water so we get that reflective quality. You can see there are heavy bands of color around the pond. We're proposing to have heavy bands of color of different types of plantings. It's the ripple effect, so we thought about Zen gardens or placing a pebble in water and seeing the ripples, it's the same thing. We're taking that through with the paving and connecting the commercial and retail to the residential. As you head east and come into the residential, we've got a promenade of the cherry trees leading out to their pond and to the wetlands so it's tying everything together. Also, looking at our buildings, what we've done is try to tie together the elements such as what you need for your greenbelt. You need to screen the parking so you need masonry piers and fencing and the landscaping but now were doing it in an authentic really kind of manicured and distinctive way where you can see that the signage, the fencing, and the landscape are all intertwined and work together. It's a piece of art, it's simple and it's not going to get dated. It's easy to take care of but it sets a tone that is very distinct and is telling a story. What's nice about this is that these forms are clean and they will be for a long time and hopefully as people are driving by its going to encourage people to come in and explore because this isn't something you see every day and the quality is very apparent.

Scott Aikens said, I appreciate your patience. We wanted our presentation to be concise. We started working on this project in September of 2016. Mr. Aikens showed a slide of a Zoning Ordinance update. It was interesting that this Ordinance seemed to come online in December of 2016 which is the same month that the City of Novi purchased the Anglin parcel. So I just wanted to highlight this Ordinance. Number 18.276 amended section 3.27 of the TC and TC-1 Town Center District required conditions and it amended them to read as follows: the TC-1 District is specially designed to encourage development for an urban main-street with mixed land uses and shared parking, flexible regulations regarding street spaced design, landscape design, provision of parking facilities, architectural and façade design, residential dwelling units, and setbacks standards are intended. So I really appreciated this thought as we set about on this and try to come up with some ways to achieve this shared vision with the City, Oakland County, and the Japanese General Council. We hope you appreciate the work we've put into this. We have a large group of professionals that have contributed. So I just

wanted to conclude by opening up a dialogue and we looked into the motions and this was the postponed recommendation. Mr. Aikens showed a slide showing the recommendation. It seemed to me that there were a variety of questions on this so we're turning it over to you to create a dialogue. Thank you very much.

Chair Pehrson said thank you, this is a public hearing, if anyone would like to address the Planning Commission at this time, please step forward and be heard for three minutes.

Mike Duchesneau, 1191 South Lake Drive, said I've spoken at both the Planning Commission and City Council in support of the Asian Village. I've been following this particular development as best as I can. I am pleasantly surprised to see that they focused on Phase 2 as far as which direction they are going. I like what I'm seeing in general with Phase 1, but not the Phase 2/Phase 3 portions. It's kind of nebulous, but now seems like it has been stream lined down to one choice, which is preferable. In general, I support the concept. I think that the buildings and community rooms are well done. I think they do have an Asian flair to them, which is definitely what we want to see. The townhouses, however, even though the elevations are improved from what was previously presented, it still needs some work, in my opinion, as far as the elevations to really make this an Asian-themed development. I'm not as concerned about the interiors but somehow the doors, the treatments over the doors, and some of the windows should be more consistent with an Asian-theme, in my opinion.

The benefits to the city seem kind of slight as far as a PRO. I would think that the PRO would contain more public benefits. I do think this is a good location for the project and I think this project belongs in Novi. I think that the developer should consider partnering up with the Novi Library, as far as, doing something to supplement our Asian collection of children's books or DVD's or whatever agreement they can come up with. I would like to see something, if possible, as far as partnering with the City to support the rest of the Asian community. The tea house was mentioned as being a part of Phase 2, but I think the tea house belongs in Phase 1. This is, to me, one of the significant attributes of an Asian environment. I just expected to see this having more of an Asian flair.

Ed Swad, 22705 Denby Court, said in addition to living in the City, I also own some property north of this project. I am on the north side of 11 Mile Road, from 11 Mile Road to I-96 on the west side of Lee BeGole Drive. My concern is strictly about the residential. Because the residential is so close to 11 Mile Road it might restrict the use of the property that I own and until I can understand what those potential restrictions are I am just not comfortable with the residential portion.

Chair Pehrson said seeing no one else wishes to speak, we'll close the audience participation on this particular matter and turn it over to the Planning Commission for consideration.

Member Anthony said so to staff, at one point I think, in November, we were looking at somewhere around 23 deviations for this project, where are we at right now?

Planner Bell said we are not exactly sure because what was submitted last week didn't contain enough details for us to do a full evaluation of the changes without knowing whether there will be new property lines to consider as well. Several of the deviations were tied to the high intensity option in Phase 2 and if that goes away it could be that several of those are removed however, new ones could be introduced. We just aren't really sure.

Member Anthony said so were being asked to approve rezoning and even after that we will still see more detailed plans, correct?

Planner Bell said that's right, you'll see it when it comes back for preliminary site plan.

Member Anthony said when I look at this, as a City, we've really been kind of working towards this on this property. A tremendous amount of work by a lot of people has been in the background. I think we are there where we can rezone. When I was looking at our text on the approval side where it has a section including the applicant's response to all deviations on December 4, 2019 so in that we aren't necessarily approving those deviations, or are we?

Planner Bell said the deviations would go into your recommendation to City Council. Staff would recommend postponement until we can figure out the full list of what the deviations are and what the conditions are. Generally, when you pass along a recommendation for concept plan approval with a PRO it contains that full list of deviations, conditions, and what public benefits are included and without a clear understanding from this recent revision we weren't able to provide that.

Member Anthony said so staff really isn't at a point yet with being able to give recommendation on each of these. You, as a staff, still need more time with this.

Planner Bell said and additional information from the applicant. We have the phasing plan that was included in your packet, but anything additional that would come in a site plan that we review including dimension plans and utilities, all of that detail was not provided. This is a recent revision.

Member Anthony said and I think we're all really excited and enthusiastic about this development and were willing to really be open on this but we need your guidance and professionalism as we look at how to accept these deviations because this may have more than the normal site when you look at it. You guys really need additional time to get there.

Planner Bell said yes.

Member Avdoulos said looking at this project for the first time, I think in some of the comments and text that I was reading, it is a very ambitious project for this corner and I'm really appreciative of all the work and effort that has been done thus far. I think you have an important development that is in a very high profile corner it's going to look to enhance the area of the Grand River Corridor that we've been looking to do for a long time. Then, hopefully, a development like this will help spur further development and to help enhance what's already there. I think the items that you've presented, as to what you're looking to put in, is great and I know there's a lot of thought that has gone into it. When you were showing the market and the restaurant attached to it I understood what we were trying to get at. This development, in my opinion, exudes an atmosphere of peacefulness and elegance and I think trying to maintain an authenticity to the culture without overdoing it is nicely done. I work with Grissim Metz Andriese Associates a lot, so we have one of the top landscape firms around that's working on this project and with Rick working closely with them I just know were going to get a great product. The landscape is as much to this project as the buildings are. A lot of times in projects where it gets into dollars, we attack the trees so please keep the trees. I think I was under the

same vein as you, Member Anthony, that there's a lot of information here and I really appreciate the applicant going through all the questions and concerns that the staff put together and addressed each one of them in red so it was easy to follow along. I support this project, I think it's going to be a phenomenal project for the city, but again I think we need to look at what the staff has recommended to postpone it so we can get all the information there and make sure we present something to the City Council that were all comfortable with and with that I would like to make a motion.

Motion made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Gronachan.

**In the matter of Sakura Novi, JZ19-31, with Zoning Map Amendment 18.732, motion to postpone making a recommendation to the City Council to rezone the subject property from Office Service (OS-1), Office Service Commercial (OSC) and Light Industrial (I-1) to Town Center-1 (TC-1) with a Planned Rezoning Overlay Concept Plan. This motion is made for the following reasons:**

- 1. To allow the applicant time to provide a revised submittal which reflects the changes shown on the phasing plan as received via email on December 4, 2019;**
- 2. To allow the applicant time to determine details such as proposed parcel lines, wetland mitigation, woodland discrepancies;**
- 3. To allow staff to review the revisions to the plans to identify any additional deviations and conditions that would be needed in the PRO Agreement, and evaluate any new information provided;**
- 4. To allow the applicant to work with staff to reduce the number of deviations requested;**
- 5. To allow additional time for the applicant to submit additional evidence/information in support of the public benefits to be achieved through this development and to justify the proposed ordinance deviations and the intent of the section 7.13.2.D.ii that the proposed PRO rezoning would be in the public interest and the benefits to public of the proposed PRO rezoning would clearly outweigh the detriments.**
- 6. The applicant shall have the opportunity to clarify through a modified submittal if any PRO conditions are being offered under the PRO provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.**

Member Maday said I just wanted to tell you how much I appreciate the presentation. It really helped us understand a little bit better, especially me, because it's the first time I am seeing this project as well. You don't have to convince us or any of the residents about the project, we are all excited and really excited about the authenticity of it all. We've wanted this in Novi for a long time, so I really appreciate it. I'm looking forward to seeing the development process.

Chair Pehrson said so when you came in front of the Master Plan and Zoning Committee we laid out the game plan we anticipated to see relative to the comments that I think we've seen in a short time period. You've done a great work in trying to address that Committee's recommendation and thought process as well as some of the citizens that have spoken at that particular meeting, but I think that we will still come back with the same list that Member Avdoulos just read off, the deviations, the public benefits, and really the refinement of Phase 2 as I mentioned at that meeting. I don't think there's anyone in this world that has anything negative to say about this, we just want to reserve the final judgement to get those points clarified, get those deviations down to a workable few, and then see a beautiful cherry blossom tree bloom sometime in the future.

**ROLL CALL VOTE TO POSTPONE THE RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL TO REZONE THE PROPERTY WITH A PLANNED REZONING OVERLAY CONCEPT PLAN FOR JZ19-31 SAKURA NOVI.**

In the matter of Sakura Novi, JZ19-31, with Zoning Map Amendment 18.732, motion to postpone making a recommendation to the City Council to rezone the subject property from Office Service (OS-1), Office Service Commercial (OSC) and Light Industrial (I-1) to Town Center-1 (TC-1) with a Planned Rezoning Overlay Concept Plan. This motion is made for the following reasons:

1. To allow the applicant time to provide a revised submittal which reflects the changes shown on the phasing plan as received via email on December 4, 2019;
2. To allow the applicant time to determine details such as proposed parcel lines, wetland mitigation, woodland discrepancies;
3. To allow staff to review the revisions to the plans to identify any additional deviations and conditions that would be needed in the PRO Agreement, and evaluate any new information provided;
4. To allow the applicant to work with staff to reduce the number of deviations requested;
5. To allow additional time for the applicant to submit additional evidence/information in support of the public benefits to be achieved through this development and to justify the proposed ordinance deviations and the intent of the section 7.13.2.D.ii that the proposed PRO rezoning would be in the public interest and the benefits to public of the proposed PRO rezoning would clearly outweigh the detriments.
6. The applicant shall have the opportunity to clarify through a modified submittal if any PRO conditions are being offered under the PRO provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.

*Motion carried 6-0.*

**MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**

1. **APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 13, 2019 PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES.**

Motion made by Member Anthony and seconded by Member Gronachan.

**ROLL CALL VOTE TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 13, 2019 PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES MADE BY MEMBER ANTHONY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER.**

*Motion to approve the November 13, 2019 Planning Commission Minutes. Motion carried 6-0.*

**SUPPLEMENTAL ISSUES**

1. **PLANNING COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2019**

City Planner McBeth said in front of you and included in your packet is the 2019 Annual Report for the Planning Commission, listing many of the projects that the Planning Commission reviewed over the last year. There were five Ordinance Amendments, six Zoning Map Amendments, there was the Capital Improvement Program, which is a very important aspect of the Planning Commission's activities, there was one training session, there was one unlisted use, and then the Site Plan section goes on and on. There were many site plans that the Planning Commission considered sometimes not for the first time,

but the second time. We are counting 36 Site Plans if we include Sakura Novi which was considered this evening. You may keep the paper copy for your records, we will also have a copy on the City's web page.

Chair Pehrson said it just goes to show how busy you guys are, and all you do for us. You answer a lot of questions for us and we truly appreciate that. We look forward to an even better 2020.

### **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

No one in the audience wished to speak.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Anthony.

### **VOICE VOTE ON THE MOTION TO ADJOURN MADE BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER ANTHONY.**

***Motion to adjourn the December 11, 2019 Planning Commission meeting. Motion carried 6-0.***

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.