



IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE
City of Novi Planning Commission
May 12, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.
Zoom Online Meeting Platform
(248) 347-0475
Discussion Notes

As authorized under the open meetings act, MCL 15.261, ET SEQ., this meeting was held remotely.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 PM.

City Planner McBeth said do we have a Chair for this Committee?

Mark Pehrson said I nominate John Avdoulos. John Avdoulos agreed.

Motion to elect John Avdoulos as chairperson. Motion passed 3-0.

2. Roll Call - Pursuant to the State of Michigan Open Meetings Act, all members shall identify their physical location by stating the county, city, and state from which he or she is attending the meeting remotely.

Present: John Avdoulos- *City of Novi, Oakland County, MI*;
David Dismondy- *City of Novi, Oakland County, MI*;
Mark Pehrson- *City of Novi, Oakland County, MI*

Absent: None

Staff Present: Barbara McBeth, Lindsay Bell, Beth Saarela, Madeleine Daniels

3. Approval of Agenda

Member Pehrson made a motion to approve the agenda. Member Dismondy seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

4. Audience Participation and Correspondence

Mike Duchesneau said I appreciate the support from the city to give residents feedback on these options. I would like to see a proposal approved tonight for Pavilion Shore Village, preferably Option B. The city has done a lot of work on these proposals. I do support taller buildings along the freeway for the City West District. However, I'm not too sure about creating a city where everything is for rent. The city at this point has allowed a lot of rentals and I would like to see more ownership.

Rachel Sines said I wanted to comment on the density proposal for Pavilion Shore Village. If that increases, the density will be opened up to apartment buildings. This area strongly fought the Robertson project and that will happen again if that is approved, I don't think 7.3 is necessary in this location.

Dorothy Duchesneau said in 2019, I made comments on the Pavilion Shore Village District, so you can understand why I'm in favor of Option B. They're part of an existing sub and hopefully will benefit park goers and residents.

Karla Halvangis said I echo Rachel. I don't want the neighborhood to change drastically and don't want everything so packed in.

Chair Avdoulos asked for the correspondence that was received.

Planning Assistant Daniels said there was one letter from James Weiner, 2094 Austin Drive, who opposes any increase in the current residential density. He states the area is one of the last places in Novi that has a feeling of a lake resort with no excessive residential or commercial density. Tall buildings should not be allowed.

5. Discussion Items

A. Pavilion Shore Village Zoning District

Review and provide comments on the draft text of the new Zoning District as recommended by the Master Plan for recommendation to the Planning Commission.

Planner Bell said in the most recent Master Plan update, this area was designated as Pavilion Shore Village. Staff presented a draft Text Amendment that would create this district back in the fall of 2019 to the Planning Commission and at the time the Planning Commission recommended it to the Implementation Committee. The site is approximately 6.02 acres. The areas shown in blue were approved back in 2018 for twenty single family homes. Those were taken out of this area for development. The remaining residential properties are zoned R-4, One-Family Residential, shown in yellow. Currently, the commercial properties are zoned B-3, General Business, which is a more intensive commercial district than you would expect to see in this area.

In the first option we presented to Planning Commission we recommended sub-districts of commercial and residential. The community did not want more commercial extending down Thirteen Mile Road and thought it should be retained as residential. Following input from the neighbors, we did take another look at these properties currently zoned R-4 that can be developed as legal lots. For the most part they may require additional variances, but that is quite common for development. For B-3, which would be rezoned to PSV, we would narrow down or call out some specific commercial uses that would include the existing uses that are there. There's a convenience store, a vet clinic, the bar &

grill at the corner, and then there's a vacant building at the intersection that I think used to be a service station. We would recommend a Text Amendment that would allow smaller scale commercial uses that would support the nearby park, create more walkable standards, and allow more development for these small parcels.

Member Dismondy said can you clarify the difference between the options?

Planner Bell said Option A would include standards to commercial and separate standards for residential and allow an increase in density, which is consistent with what is being developed with the Lakeview properties. Lakeview is still subject to their PRO Agreement, but the remaining properties basically would have that additional density of 7.3. It really would only result in one additional unit if a development consolidated all the parcels. They may be able to build five homes on the current four parcels.

Member Dismondy said some of those areas stay pretty wet and I even think behind that area is wetland too.

Planner Bell said there is a wetland I believe by Thirteen Mile Road.

Member Dismondy said it seems challenging to build, so really the difference in the options are that we're increasing density for some parcels.

Planner Bell said Option B removes all the residential properties and only pertains to the B-3 properties.

Member Dismondy said this looks big, but the lots are small. I bet the restaurant says they don't have enough parking and those other parcels are oddly shaped so in the future are we limiting commercial?

Planner Bell said limiting it to uses that are more in line with what the residents would like to see here with the community feel or visitors to the park. Specialty food, coffee shops, bike repair are all examples. Rather than in the B-3 District you can build hotels and fueling stations so that would not be appropriate here.

Member Dismondy said even if a development was proposed, it would still go before the City of Novi, correct? What we're discussing is not that impactful. The lots are not developable and we're just trying to make them that way. I think residents are concerned because even without any other draws, even without a park, it's crowded here in the summer and so really Option A would allow some more creative use of those now undevelopable lots and just being able to limit the scope of the commercial uses. I don't think you would be able to develop because there's not enough space. I think parking could go there so people can go to the park and not park in front of anyone's home.

Member Pehrson said I think Option B and lower density makes a lot of sense. I think limiting it to smaller shops or local businesses would be beneficial. Making it walkable is the way I would like to see this go.

Chair Avdoulos said I lean towards Option B and the reason we're looking at this is to clean up the zoning for this area, correct?

Planner Bell said right, and we are adjusting the setbacks and lot size requirements as well so hopefully that wouldn't present an issue for developers.

Chair Avdoulos said I like keeping the R-4 rather than spreading something across several lots. Based on what could be done on the lot, I think it's difficult so I would recommend Option B.

Planner Bell said Member Dismondy talked about paring lots, would that be something you would like to see in the list of permitted uses?

Member Dismondy said I think it would be a good idea.

Chair Avdoulos said is that something decided upon by the city unless its an individual property owner that would like to build?

Planner Bell said we could have it as a permitted use or special land use. We're writing a new district, at this point we can adjust the recommended language before the Public Hearing and move forward from there.

Member Dismondy said with the permitted uses, would commercial allow residential units above the commercial tenants?

Planner Bell said I did include live/work units so that would be permitted.

Member Dismondy said if you allow for multi-family above a commercial building it makes it a better investment for them.

City Planner McBeth said is your suggestion to add back in multi-family units?

Member Pehrson said what are the height restrictions between the two?

Planner Bell said as it's written now, there would be a height limit of thirty feet, which is enough for a two-story building.

Member Pehrson said I'm ok with that, we trying to give the developer something to work with without overwhelming that area.

City Planner McBeth said I think we have some good direction on this. Someone in the audience was asking about the timeframe for development. We don't know of any development proposed for this B-3 area as of right now.

B. City West Zoning District

Review and provide comments on the suggested new Zoning District as recommended by the Master Plan for recommendation to the Planning Commission.

Planner Bell said this is another area identified in the Master Plan update in 2016 for a new zoning district and it is called City West. It is south of I-96, on the north and south side of Grand River Avenue and the east side of Beck Road. The north side goes all the way to Taft and the south side is about half that distance. It includes the area of Suburban Showplace and is traditionally more of an industrial area. The vision was an urban neighborhood characterized by higher density especially on the north side. We talked about ten-story buildings, flexible regulations regarding streetscape and landscape, multi-family residences, and façade. The northern side does include an overlay district, which covers Suburban Showplace and instead of putting another overlay we recommend that that be excluded from the new zoning. It is mostly zoned OST currently. A majority of the southern portion is I-1, Light Industrial, with some small pieces of B-3, General Business, RA, Residential Acreage, and OS-1, Office Service. Going back to the Master Plan, in the area to the south we started trying to craft an area that would relate to both sides and they're really different because the north side borders I-96 and is appropriate for higher density and the south side needs to be more of a transition. We divided it into sub-districts, City West North and City West South. We thought the southern side could be two to five stories tall buildings and be transitional, about 300 feet within the existing residential. The Master Plan also talked about a form-based code, which is different than a lot of our districts in the Zoning Ordinance, so the resulting Text Amendment may look different than what were typically used to.

Some more specific questions for the Committee are: the boundaries, we're not sure why the northern area along Taft Road was included in the area and also the eastern-southern portion, should that be adjusted? How appropriate are the sub-districts? Do you have any other ideas for the district? Some other images from the Master Plan reference other communities and ideas that could be incorporated, but they are certainly more dense than other areas of Novi.

City Planner McBeth said I have a couple of thoughts. Should the property on the east side of Taft Road be included? I think we would mostly consider that underdeveloped so, what is the vision the city has for that parcel because it abuts the highway and could have higher height standards, or we can leave it isolated on its own.

Member Pehrson said I think the overlay makes sense but the large chunk of City West North with Suburban Showplace utilizes a large section of that area, is there a large desire of the owners of Suburban to take over that property to make something bigger for the Suburban Collection?

City Planner McBeth said we've had a number of discussions about a road connection on Beck Road and for it to turn down to Grand River Avenue and

that would facilitate traffic routes and open up some development options. We also have heard that maybe the road would go further east to the Showplace. There could be a number of things proposed there.

Member Pehrson said every time we've looked at this it seems like we've always wanted this area to be higher in density and get people moving and encourage younger people to live in a built up mini-city area so I think the City West South makes sense for Central Park Estates and having that more residential and the north being more elaborate larger buildings. I don't know the area east of Taft Road makes any sense to include in the district. It just seems out of place. My thought was that we make this similar to what we have started to articulate as far as making it another center piece for the city. I'm concerned that if we keep Suburban as its own island as things move forward, I wonder what harm that does to Suburban itself, but I guess that would be up to them to buy more land. I'd like to see this move toward the direction you're articulating.

Member Dismondy said my one comment is that if thinking more retail is going to work it needs to be flexible enough to not require that component.

Chair Avdoulos said do we know in the future if that road would be abandoned where Taft Road just ends? I agree with having taller buildings there and I would like to see as much interconnectivity as possible. Eliminating excess traffic would be necessary. I've seen really nice developments like this in Ohio, Iowa, and Denver so there's some interest, but have to get the right developers to put it together. It would help to put an additional hotel in the area. I think it would tie in nicely, but we would have to forecast and deal with traffic.

City Planner McBeth said I think these are all good points and we appreciate it. One of the first things we can do is do a traffic study there to see how to alleviate the traffic.

Chair Avdoulos said I have a question about how density would be defined. I like the dwelling units per acre and sometimes the height helps. For example, if you say ten-stories and maximum 150-feet to give a guideline and that gives you an understanding of how big these are. I do agree with the north and south. As you're getting all these points from us, are you also looking at information from the pandemic and how people are changing?

City Planner McBeth said I think at the time this idea was developed it was the intent to have mixed use development so people wouldn't have to take their car to go places, but maybe we can build off some of those concepts.

Member Dismondy said right now it's very difficult to get a loan other than for multi-family developments and industrial buildings, but I'm sure it's temporary.

Chair Avdoulos said yes, and we need to see how people are reacting and supporting local business and how to do that safely, but I was shocked to see

how many people were supporting these businesses like in Northville. So, I think if we look at that and allow this in that area it will be successful.

City Planner McBeth said we'll take those ideas and maybe reconvene with this committee before it goes to the Planning Commission for consideration.

Chair Avdoulos said I like those examples so people can see what we're talking about.

Planner Bell said John, you mentioned seeing some of those examples, can you send us those so we can also look at them?

Chair Avdoulos said yes, in Des Moines there was a newer hotel and they had some bikes and helmets for people to rent and that area was so interconnected you didn't have to get on a main road.

6. Adjourn

Member Pehrson made a motion to adjourn. Member Dismondy seconded.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:28 PM.