

FARMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS  
City Council Chambers 23600 Liberty Street  
Farmington, Michigan  
Monday, March 10, 2014

Chairperson Bowman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Farmington City Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Babcock, Bowman, Buyers, Crutcher, Gronbach, Majoros  
Absent: Chiara  
A quorum of the Commission was present.

**OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Director Christiansen, Building Inspector Koncsol.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

MOTION by Gronbach, seconded by Buyers, to approve the agenda as submitted.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

**APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA**

**a. Minutes of Regular Meeting – February 10, 2014**

MOTION by Buyers, seconded by Majoros, to approve the Consent Agenda.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

**SCHEDULING OF PUBLIC HEARING – PUD PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT  
PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT:  
GRAND RIVER/HALSTEAD PLAZA DEVELOPMENT**

Bowman introduced this item indicating it was presented at a prior Planning Commission meeting and moved to City Council and is now being brought back before the Planning Commission to schedule a public hearing. She turned the agenda item over to Director Christiansen.

Christiansen commented on wifi being installed in City Hall and that the Planning Commission meetings were now being digitally recorded.

He acknowledged two audience members, Hannah Peters, an intern and graduate student from Wayne State University, and Sierra Archibald from OCC.

He then stated the next step for this would be the scheduling of a public hearing and review of preliminary plan and draft development agreement which the Planning Commission will review and move forward to City Council. It would then come back to the Planning Commission for final site approval.

MOTION by Majoros, seconded by Crutcher , to schedule the Public Hearing to be held at the April 14, 2014 Planning Commission Meeting.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

**GRAND RIVER AVENUE AND FARMINGTON ROAD INTERSECTION ANALYSIS  
PRESENTATION – HANNAH PETERS, ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT INTERN**

Christiansen introduced Hannah Peters, a second year student in the Urban Planning Graduate Program at Wayne State University and Economic and Development Intern for the City.

She provided a handout of her Design Element Study: Streets & Circulation for the Grand River Avenue and Farmington Road – Downtown Farmington.

Areas of the study included:

Location and layout: Key points being its geographic location and adjoining cities, main intersection of Downtown Farmington, current number of lanes running east and west of Farmington and north and south of Grand River, prohibited left turn from southbound Farmington to eastbound Grand River, on street parking in that location, and it being extremely pedestrian friendly with brick crosswalks and widened sidewalks on Grand River.

The Evolution of the Intersection: History of the intersection, it being home to Farmington's first Central Business District, being sold to the Oakland County Road Commission in 1928 to be paved, and a 25 mile per hour speed limit to promote walkability.

Physical Conditions: Recent paving with no potholes conducive for car travel, brick paver crosswalks promoting pedestrian friendliness, clearly marked street signs, widened sidewalks with landscaping, indented parking.

The Intersection as a Community Linkage: Three corners of commercial activity and one corner of green space, north-south linkage to Farmington Hills and to Nine and Ten Mile Roads, east-west linkage to Orchard Lake and Drake, destination spot for attractions, adjacent to city services, built around pedestrian traffic in CBD.

Current & future improvement projects: Streetscape Phases I and 2, increased sidewalk widths, brick pavers, indented parking, possible addition of trolleybus for connection to

neighboring stops, and possible addition of new parking along Grand River and behind Grove Street.

Critiques and recommendations:

Light timers / adjustment of same, promote/identify vacant stores, stricter guidelines of current tenants, widen pedestrian crossing with additional pavers, planted medians, routine asphalt maintenance, left turn allowed onto Farmington and Grand River with green arrows, addition of bike lanes.

Analysis:

Ongoing project, serves as unique and well-functioning hub, draw new and better merchants, focus on foot traffic, historic charm is very valuable.

The floor was opened for comments and questions from the Commissioners.

Babcock explained how the term “walkability” excluded people in wheelchairs. She stated the sidewalk was not leveled when pavers were put in which made it hard for her to travel that route.

Buyers suggested that perhaps staff could speak to that issue.

Christiansen stated the correct term is accessibility – all nonmotorized modes of transportation.

Further discussion was held concerning the modifications to sidewalks and “walkability versus accessibility”.

Bowman thanked Babcock for bringing the matter up

Majoros inquired about the distance from parking to downtown destinations and cited the success of downtown Birmingham with their stacked parking decks and incentivized parking.

Buyers inquired about the trolley bus and discussion was held concerning how it could be a useful facility throughout the community by moving people from distant parking.

Director Christiansen provided a concentric ring analysis handout showing parking distances from locations such as Ikea, Costco and Twelve Oaks Mall in comparison with Downtown Farmington and further discussion was held.

Gronbach stated he was aware through DDA that there was talk of parking structures.

Bowman thanked Ms. Peters for her presentation.

## **CITY OF FARMINGTON 2014 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

Director Christiansen summarized the proposed development projects for 2014.

1. Downtown Projects
  - a. Orchards RFP (second phase).
  - b. Riley Park restoration – cut park for ice rink – needs to be restored – bring grass back – pavers – hardscape.
  - c. Area plan development – task force created to look at downtown - come up with vision and plan – repurpose and upgrading park.
  - d. Grove Street facade – finish work to do.
  - e. Farmington Road – SHPO issue – grant given a year extension to do design work.
  - f. Grand River traffic analysis – OHM engaged to do traffic survey – cost to bring road up to the level where city would accept and take it over – Grand River Corridor Improvement Authority also looking at it
  - g. Kimco redevelopment - talk of new tenants, tearing down buildings or entire center.
  - h. David Judge parking
2. Corridor Improvement Authority –
  - a. Finalize development and TIF plan – schedule meetings with County
  - b. Marketing proposal
  - c. Zoning text amendments for C1–C2-C3 districts - engaging consultant regarding overlay district to allow for more flexibility
3. Redevelopment projects
  - a. Halsted-Grand River Plaza
  - b. Flanders School site
  - c. Old courthouse property
  - d. Mooney – Grand River
  - e. Panera Bread
  - f. Worldwide Center – new owner – looking to repurpose center
4. Other projects
  - a. Planning Commission – outdoor displays sales and storage
  - b. Multi committee – update signs
  - c. 2014 community events – Farmers Market – Summer Concert Series – Art on the Grand – Harvest Moon – Founders Festival - Holly Days.
  - d. Michigan Municipal League visit
  - e. Updating Parks and Rec Master Plan

Bowman thanked Kevin for the update.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None heard

**PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENT**

The Grand Bakery and Café was discussed briefly.

**ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Buyers, seconded by Crutcher, to adjourn the meeting.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Secretary