

FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING

A special meeting of the Farmington City Council was held on Monday, December 3, 2007, in Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan. Notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with Public Act 267-1976.

The meeting was called to order at 6:50 p.m. by Mayor Knol.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Buck, Knol, McShane, Wiggins, Wright.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

FARMINGTON CITY REPRESENTATIVES: City Clerk Halberstadt, City Manager Pastue, Building Inspector Koncsol.

HISTORIC COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: James Atkinson, Charles Carvell, Jane Gundlach, William Lindblad (Chair), Laura Myers.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Kevin Christiansen, David Gronbach (Chair), William Ingalls, Terri Sutton, Jeffery Scott, James Pogue.

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Buyers, Kevin Christiansen.

MICHIGAN SUBURBS ALLIANCE PRESENTATION – MELANIE PIANA

Present: Melanie Piana, Associate Director of the Michigan Suburbs Alliance

Melanie Piana provided a brief overview of Redevelopment Ready Communities Best Practices and the process for achieving certification.

CITY MASTER PLAN DISCUSSION

Present: LSL Planning, Inc. representatives: Sherrin Hood, Jeff Purdy and Brad Strader

Jeff Purdy discussed the process for updating the Master Plan with a focus on redevelopment outside of the downtown area. He stated the purpose of the meeting is to frame a vision for redevelopment ideas and opportunities.

Purdy summarized the process for updating the Master Plan which included:

- Existing conditions analysis
- Joint Council/Commission meeting
- Vision statement
- Future land use plan
- Planning Commission review
- Draft Plan

SPECIAL MEETING -2-
December 3, 2007

- Planning Commission review
- City Council review and approval for public review
- Distribution for review
- Public Hearing
- Planning Commission adoption

Purdy indicated the updated plan should be ready for adoption by the Fall of 2008.

Purdy reviewed the provisions of the 1998 Master Plan which will be used as a basis for the update building on some of the recommendations.

Purdy discussed household trends, noting only a slight increase over the next two decades. He stated the projected stability in population for a built-out City such as Farmington is a very healthy sign. He noted the largest land use is residential at 40%. He further noted a significant amount of multi-family residential. He stated the City has a very diverse mixture of land use and housing types.

Purdy discussed some of the redevelopment opportunities in the commercial corridors including: the former courthouse on Ten Mile Road, West Grand River, Grand River and Power, Grand River and Orchard Lake, and South Farmington Road.

Discussion followed regarding redevelopment opportunities for the former courthouse property. Responding to a question, Purdy stated opportunity for residential development is very limited in the current economic environment.

Councilmember McShane noted one of the earlier proposals for the courthouse property was an assisted living facility.

Responding to a question, Purdy stated live/work units have had mixed success. He noted there is opportunity for this type of use in the downtown.

Grand River Halsted Plaza

Purdy discussed the Grand River Halsted Plaza and the opportunity for redevelopment. He stated there is more parking than is necessary for the current retail uses which presents an opportunity for infill or redevelopment on that site.

Mayor Knol discussed the high number of multiple-family dwellings in Farmington as compared to other cities. She noted this type of use can be more of a drain on City services. She stated her belief that there is opportunity to re-zone some of these areas into mixed uses.

Purdy concurred that the City should look at redevelopment options along the west Grand River corridor. He recommended redevelopment along the frontage of the apartment complexes. He stated he would like to see a move towards an urban character where buildings are close to the road and there is a vertical mixture of uses with parking to the side or rear of the buildings.

SPECIAL MEETING -3-
December 3, 2007

Commissioner Christiansen noted the Grand River/Halstead corridor is the focal point for the western entrance to the City and currently has no identity. He stated this area should be a focus for a special district with new design and mixed use.

Councilmember Buck noted that if the K-Mart Center was more accessible to the surrounding communities it could be more inviting.

Purdy concurred that as a C-3 district there is opportunity for redevelopment of the K-Mart Center.

Drakeshire Apartments/Worldwide Center

Purdy discussed the Walgreens redevelopment of the Drakeshire Plaza which will provide for enhanced architecture. He discussed redevelopment opportunities of the Drakeshire Apartments. He noted the need for redevelopment or upgrade to the Worldwide Center.

Commissioner Christiansen discussed cohesive redevelopment of the shopping centers west of Gill Road. Purdy noted this section of roadway is a C-2 district that would allow buildings with residential above commercial.

Grand River and Power Road

Purdy indicated this is a C-2 district that has its own unique identity. He noted the sites are small in scale with shallow setbacks. He stated there may be some opportunity for infill development in this area. He recommended establishing a more pedestrian friendly environment with buildings pushed up to the roadway.

Orchard Lake Road and Grand River

Purdy noted the Farmington Plaza is nonconforming in terms of no landscaping and inappropriate lighting in the parking lot. He again cited the opportunity for redevelopment noting it is a C-3 district.

Purdy discussed the development of an overlay district for the corridor on Grand River east of Orchard Lake.

Commissioner Sutton asked about opportunities for the Winery building. Purdy responded there are limitations with the building, but noted that any redevelopment on the south side of Grand River should regard the Rouge River as a real asset.

Discussion followed regarding the lot size requirements in that area. Christiansen recommended getting away from lot size and setback requirements focusing on design standards that create an optimal environment.

Nine Mile Road and Farmington

Purdy questioned whether the Nine Mile corridor going east should remain industrial or whether there should be additional commercial development.

Historic Preservation

Purdy discussed historic preservation and the creation of design standards to protect the historic character of the community.

McShane recommended pursuing an historic district ordinance in order to ensure preservation of historic properties.

Commissioner Lindblad spoke of the importance of maintaining streetscapes to ensure the integrity of the historic areas.

Other

Discussion followed regarding the downtown design standards and minimizing the obstacles to development. Discussion continued regarding front versus rear parking and the move toward a pedestrian friendly environment.

Councilmember Wright brought up the issue of an aging population as it relates to a pedestrian friendly community versus the ability to drive to a destination and park.

Purdy discussed the goal of a walkable community citing the need for adequate sidewalk widths. He stated there needs to be consolidation of driveways and a reduction of driveway widths. He discussed the need for links between residential and commercial areas. He stated a goal is to reduce auto dependency.

Purdy reiterated the next steps in updating the Master Plan.

City Manager Pastue asked the Commissioners and Council to forward any thoughts and comments regarding updating the Master Plan to him.

Commissioner Gronbach recommended coordinating this update with current studies that are underway such as the downtown parking study.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None were heard.

COUNCIL COMMENT

Wiggins reminded everyone about the Consolidation Study meeting scheduled for the following evening.

SPECIAL MEETING -5-
December 3, 2007

Mayor Knol requested the City Manager send a get-well card to Representative Vagnozzi.

ADJOURNMENT

Council concurred to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Valerie S. Knol, Mayor

Susan K. Halberstadt, City Clerk

APPROVED: December 17, 2007