

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NOVI  
MONDAY, APRIL 7, 2008 AT 6:00 P.M.  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS – NOVI CIVIC CENTER – 45175 W. TEN MILE ROAD**

Mayor Landry called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

**ROLL CALL:** Mayor Landry, Mayor Pro Tem Capello, Council Members Crawford, Gatt, Margolis, Mutch, Staudt

**ALSO PRESENT:** Clay Pearson, City Manager  
Pamela Antil, Assistant City Manager  
Tom Schultz, City Attorney  
Randy Auler, Director of Parks, Recreation and Forestry  
Rob Hayes, City Engineer

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Member Gatt added, under Matters for Council Action, Item #5, discussion and potential action on the Fuerst Farm issue.

**CM-08-04-049 Moved by Capello, seconded by Margolis; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY:  
To approve the agenda as amended.**

**Voice vote**

**PRESENTATION**

**1. Study of Potential Uses of the Fuerst Property by Terry Croad, McKenna Associates**

Mr. Auler commented that in November of 2007 the Novi citizens approved a bond measure for the construction of a new library. The construction of the library necessitated the relocation of the Township Hall and presented an opportunity to look at the unutilized City owned property, which was 6.5 acres at the corner of 10 Mile and Taft Roads. The property was commonly referred to as the Fuerst property. The City contracted with McKenna Associates to conduct a study, which included the potential uses of the property, to facilitate community input. So, they had sent out over 660 invitations for citizens to participate and provided several means for citizens to get involved, and they had 152 citizens involved through that process. They prepared two conceptual plans and provided recommendations for the property including the potential relocation site for the Township Hall. The report also analyzed the financial and operational impact of the property as related to both concepts. Mr. Auler said one of the key recommendations of the plan, regardless of the end use, was that the citizens wanted the site to be more accessible and usable for people of all ages. Mr. Auler introduced Terry Croad of McKenna and Associates and Dave Zanley of Wilke and Zanley Associates Architects who would present an overview of the plans.

Mr. Croad said the original farmstead property was 160 acres, which was currently made up of the municipal campus, which included the Novi High School, Civic Center, Library, Ella Mae Power Park and the remaining 6.5 acres. He said surrounding the site to the north was low density residential and to the west low density residential, and there were two office buildings at Taft Road and 10 Mile. He said the majority of the site was in public use.

Mr. Croad noted the current site included the Fuerst house, which was a 2,500 sq. ft. arts and crafts house, built in 1927. There were originally four barns, one was destroyed by fire and the three remaining barns would be referred to as the north, east, and south barns and these structures were adjacent to the school property. He said there was also a former pump house, out house, and chicken coop, which were in disrepair and falling down; there were also a couple dog houses on the site. Mr. Croad said the house sat on top of a knoll, which had an elevation of about 20 ft. that sloped up from Taft Road to the crest of the hill and then gradually sloped eastward toward the library property. The school site used the drive to the south of the site as their bus drop off/pickup area, and for service and delivery to the cafeteria. He said with the passing of the bond for the library construction, there was a new modern facility that would be located immediately adjacent to the property to the east. It would be a modern glass structure with an elevation of over 30 ft. and when sitting at the farmstead the skyline would be dominated by the new structure.

Mr. Croad said many of the City staff talked about this being a municipal campus but when thinking about it in terms of a campus it was a little disjointed. He said several parcels had been developed over the years and currently there were six separate entrances and driveways to the municipal campus. He noted one of the things they found lacking was pedestrian linkages, cross linkages, lack of programming space on the site itself and overall accessibility to the site. He said the context of the farmstead had changed over time with the development that surrounded the property.

Mr. Croad said one of the key elements of the project was to get public participation. The 660 invitations that were sent to key stakeholders included boards and commissions, homeowners associations, key staff, elected officials, school district, Historic Commission and others. He said five focus group meetings were held in February, including one with the Youth Council and each lasted about 90 minutes. There were over 85 participants who attended the meetings. In addition to the meetings, the City posted a survey on the website, which was also available in the atrium and over 55 responses were received. During the course of the focus group meeting they started with a macro and looked at the big picture and then focused on the micro, the farmstead itself. He had asked participants for their comments on the condition of Parks and Recreation and open space and green space in the City. They talked about things they were the most proud of and things that could have been done a little better to get them to focus on the site itself. He asked participants to generate a top ten wish list and the number one wish was development of a new community recreation center, however the Fuerst site was deemed to be too small. He said another response was to establish some type of historic village and an example was Mill Race in Northville. Finally, there was a need for some type of centralized outdoor park or gathering space. He said when they discussed these items with the Youth Council they agreed there was a strong need for an official Novi park, a focal point, a place to hang out that had green space, walking paths and provided both indoor and outdoor venues. When talking about brainstorming on the Fuerst site, there were two strong desires. One was to leave the site in its current historic setting and relocate the Township Hall to the site or to create an historic village on the site. The second desire was to start from fresh with an adaptive reuse of the site. Mr. Croad said in both plans and scenarios there was a strong desire and need to provide more accessible and usable space for all ages including a multi purpose facility. Some of the examples were an amphitheatre that could be used by the Library, school district and the Parks and Recreation Department, additional pathways and

seating to make the site more usable, sculpture, art, and incorporation of the theatre. He said landscape restoration, including a sensory garden or children's garden, had been brought up by several of the groups, and providing a multi purpose indoor/outdoor space that could generate some revenue for the restoration and maintenance of the site. He said the web survey was very similar to what was discussed during public participation.

Mr. Croad stated Concept A had an underlying theme of restoration, and they looked at restoring the existing Fuerst house for meeting space or a museum. He said their February site inspection revealed that the heat in the Fuerst home had been turned off for several years and there was a lot of deterioration within the structure; it would definitely need extensive renovation and redevelopment of the heating, cooling and electrical systems. The other challenge with the property was that to make it accessible there would be serious structural work needed to open up doorways. He said it could all be done at a cost. The other challenge was getting people up to the site because of the long dirt driveway and limited parking space, but they had provided a small drop off area to accommodate 88 barrier free parking spaces with an exterior ramp to access the building. He said behind the property they provided for sensory and children's gardens and reutilized the outbuildings for storage and garden supplies. He said they tried to provide a gateway feature at the northwest corner of the site not only announcing the Fuerst site but that would tie in the entire municipal complex. A new municipal campus sign could be constructed at the southeast corner of Ten Mile and Taft Roads, a plaza would be developed with a focal point that included a water feature or art. He said a pergola was created to pick up on the arts and crafts theme of the house, fieldstone would be incorporated into the design, and this would be a venue and a gateway entrance into the site. To provide access they created a circular looped pathway system, which would tie in all the features of the site. They incorporated into both designs a village green or campus quad feature and the Township Hall would be relocated there and act as a focal point and a place or venue for weddings, photographs or special events. The green would provide an open space or hang out space for high school students.

Mr. Croad noted they looked at restoring the northern and eastern barns to use for agricultural demonstrations and display, areas for a community garden and to create an area for animal demonstrations on special events. They felt the largest and southern barn provided the best opportunity for restoration and rehab to provide a multiple purpose space. He said 50 to 75 people could be seated and the property could be rented out for special events, and could be renovated to open up views to the village green. To the south would be a small visitor parking area and a linear portico to pick up the arts and crafts theme, define the space between the Fuerst Farmstead site and the school district; this would visually tie the campus together. Mr. Croad said it would feature a small amphitheatre that could be used by the library and the school district and several respite stations, kiosks, and interpretive panels throughout the site.

Mr. Croad said the second plan focused on reuse of the site. This would include putting the barns up for salvage value; they thought there was a potential to sell the barns on the private market and relocate them. He said he contacted several historic villages and sites and the Maybury Farm said they would be interested in the barns, if the City were able to pay for the relocation of them. He said the main theme was to create a new multi purpose arts and crafts building that measured about 4,000 sq. ft. to be located on the western portion of the property adjacent to Taft Road. It would provide a signature feature to the site and would define the village green. It would include a 1,400 sq. ft. covered porch that would provide a venue for outdoor activities, displays or programming needs for the Parks and Recreation Department.

The interior space would include a lobby and display area to incorporate the historic heritage of the site and a multi use room that could accommodate up to 125 people with kitchen and rest rooms. He said there would be a larger visitor's parking lot south of the site to provide more immediate access to the new village green and a long portico would be developed and all in the theme of the arts and crafts to pick up on the existing Fuerst homestead. There would be gateway entrances located to the southeast and northeast, northwest of the property and a circular pathway would be included. A slightly larger amphitheatre would be oriented on the north/south access from the village green, which would provide a venue for smaller group meetings in the amphitheatre or larger venue, if people spilled out onto the village green to the south. The Township Hall would be relocated on an angle on the new village green and in the location of the existing house a new High Point Plaza with an obelisk would be created that would provide views across the campus and the site. Again, interpretive panels and a kiosk could be located there as well as seating, a sensory garden would be adjacent to the High Pointe Plaza and footpaths would be added to tie into the circular pathway system. He said both plans included restoration of the former orchard on the northeast portion of the site, and to keep the property adjacent to the new library as passive as possible so the library could take advantage of its natural views.

Mr. Croad said a critical part of both plans included acquisition of the former barnyard, which was now owned by the school district encompassing  $1 \frac{1}{4}$  and  $1 \frac{3}{4}$  acres. He said it provided open level programming space and would enhance both of the plans dramatically. A third option if that was not feasible, would be to square off the property. He said currently there was about  $1 \frac{1}{2}$  acres where the three barns were located, and if they were to trade some of the property with the school district and square that off, about the northern third of the barnyard could be incorporated into the existing Fuerst site. He said that would provide for additional programming space for the City.

Mr. Croad said regarding operation and maintenance, he contacted Mill Race Village in Northville, MSU Tollgate in Novi and the Van Heusen Farm in Rochester Hills. He said each of them have an operating budget of between \$100,000 and \$150,000, which included full and part time staff, basic maintenance and utilities. The Van Heusen Farm's annual operating budget was close to \$500,000. He thought the City's annual operating budget for this site would be \$100,000 to \$150,000 a year for basic operation. He said when talking about funding, he thought one of the pertinent quotes that came up during the public facilitation from private business was that "corporations were willing to fund new construction, things that were exciting but were less likely to fund existing sites just to maintain the old." They investigated funding for historic sites and the Americana Foundation, whose primary focus was protection of easements and purchase of development rights, agricultural sites themselves would not have any funding for this type of facility. They wanted to preserve active agricultural properties that were threatened. Mr. Croad said the Historic Preservation Fund did provide small amounts of money but the City would have to qualify as a certified local government and their annual cash outlay was about \$100,000 for the whole state.

Mayor Landry said they would deal with this later as an action item but if there were any questions, that was fine.

Member Staudt said one of the things he made a statement about was that in both situations he'd like to keep the land as passive as possible, and asked what he would consider passive. Mr. Croad said during the focus group meeting people didn't want to see it developed as

soccer fields or ball fields. So passive recreation would include strolling the park, special events such as ice sculpture, flea market, arts and craft shows, dog walking, Frisbee, reading, hanging out, listening to music, etc. He said there was no desire to develop them for active recreation and everyone agreed that the site was too small for a community recreation center. Member Staudt asked if there was any thought, regarding how this could be used to connect the entire municipal campus and high school. Mr. Croad said they talked about the six driveway entrances into the campus and if they took the arts and crafts theme, and developed gateway entrances to each of those six entrances; it would help visually tie the site in. Also, linkages to the school site, the library, the non-motorized pathway along Taft and 10 Mile and providing a visual focal point at the southeast corner of Taft and 10 Mile with the Gateway Plaza, opportunity for signage, the pergola and fieldstone throughout the multiple pedestrian entrances to the site and throughout the campus would lend itself to connectivity.

Member Mutch said when McKenna proposed this process to the Council and it was approved, the initial proposal included one concept plan. He asked when the decision was made to go to two plans and what drove that decision. Mr. Croad said it was a conclusion on their part after the five public focus group meetings that there was a strong desire for two camps. One was more towards restoration and the other adaptive reuse. He said he wanted to provide the Council with the opportunity to see both plans so they could make an informed decision. Member Mutch said a comment he had heard from a number of people who had read through the focus group comments was that there was a strong voice for preservation and restoration, and only a handful of comments in the web surveys that talked about demolition. He asked why they received equal weight. Mr. Croad said they didn't tabulate the web site results because it would be difficult. He said they had a vote of priorities at each of the focus group meetings and ultimately had a list of what the priorities were. He said when they discussed this at a kick off meeting, they were told that public participation was an important component of this and they were to take that into consideration for the redevelopment of the site. He noted their professional experience and comments from staff were taken under consideration as well. One thing he heard strongly was that the site was underutilized in its current condition, that citizens wanted it to be more accessible and usable on a year around basis. He said in order to accommodate that they decided, as a project team, to come up with Alternative B, which provided for the construction of a new multi use building. Mr. Croad said when looking at the costs to just restore the three barns and the building itself it was over \$1.2 million and he wasn't sure the cost/benefit ratio of spending that kind of money was the kind of return the City was looking for. An additional \$200,000 would have to be spent on the southern barn to make it more usable with regard to rentals or active use, to provide some type of revenue stream. Mr. Croad said now they would be up to \$1.5 million and would still have the challenge of making the homestead site accessible. He said given its current configuration and context, those were challenges that didn't provide a viable alternative without considering a second option. Member Mutch said the comments they had heard from Council members and that Mr. Croad reiterated was that the site was underutilized and some Council members said they wanted to maximize the use of the site. Member Mutch said if he looked at Alternative B and the City property, at least the property that they could control, the uses he saw were walking paths, an amphitheatre on a portion of the property, the overlook and the Township Hall, and there were some small improvements to the site. However, that didn't strike him as being in tune with what he was hearing from Council in terms of the direction they saw for the property. He asked how they squared the comments that the property was underutilized and yet the only major improvements proposed on the City portion of the property were walking trails and an amphitheatre. Mr. Croad said he recommended that the former

barnyard, which was controlled by the school district, be acquired by the City so there would be more usable programming space and a venue for a new multi purpose building would be provided. He said they had considered locating a multi purpose building on the small L shaped parcel where the existing barns were but felt that by locating it there, it turned its back to the school property and the library. He said they wanted to make the site more inclusive to the rest of the campus and that was why they located the multi purpose building along Taft Road. Mr. Croad believed that the walking paths, seating areas, sculpture garden, sensory garden and the amphitheatre were all important passive recreation components that would lend the site to use more often by both citizens and students. He said there were a number of parks that provided active recreation but Novi was lacking a passive park or green space and thought what they had offered was in response to the comments he heard at the focus group meetings and the web page. He commented his own sense, being a resident of Novi for 14 years and what he heard from the Youth Council, he tried to address all of the concerns that were raised and come with a plan that was not too crowded but that related to those responses. Member Mutch said he appreciated that and agreed that several of the improvements in terms of the walking paths, would improve access to the site. He said he was trying to understand how the direction from Council squared with the plan brought forward. Member Mutch said regarding Concept A, one of the issues raised was the phasing and in the phasing proposal they listed that the restoration of the house and barns all be completed in Phase I. He asked if all those renovations had to be completed in Phase I, or could they be phased out as necessary. He said they had discussed the house as a meeting place, the barn as a multi use facility and the other two barns wouldn't have to be done in Phase I. Mr. Croad said anything could be phased out over a long period of time but based on the inspections of the barns, he seriously thought there were strong structural problems with the existing barns and there was potential liability. He said the lack of maintenance over time had deteriorated the integrity of the structures. If the City believed that this was the way to go, why would they prolong the restoration of these facilities? He said they saw serious deterioration in the farmstead because the heat had been turned off for several years, and the longer these facilities go un-buttoned up, the more it would cost to renovate them. Mr. Croad said he knew the school district was using two of the barns for storage, but they had a hard time just walking in those facilities the way they were so jam packed. Mr. Croad said those barns would continue to deteriorate and one barn had already been lost due to fire. When they talked to their barn restoration person, he had indicated that the existing asphalt shingles on the barn were causing the barns to get out of joint because of the weight. He said weather was pervasive in those structures and he thought if the City was serious about Concept A, they should renovate or restore all of the buildings at the same time. Member Mutch said in the village green, Concept A, it was noted that between the two plans it was smaller and part of the reason was because they had reserved space adjacent to the Township Hall for additional building sites. He presumed that was because over time they would move additional buildings, presumably historical buildings, onto the site and create an historical village concept. He asked if that was the intent. Mr. Croad said one of the ideas that came out of the focus group meetings was to create a historic site similar to Mill Race in Northville. Member Mutch said they had noted in Concept A that because the village green had to be smaller, it limited the use of that space. He asked if that space was not reserved for those additional sites and they expanded the village green, could they duplicate the functionality of the village green space making it wider and larger. Mr. Croad said they could find a little more space, if the intent was not to locate any future buildings there. Member Mutch said one cost that jumped out at him was the northwest entry plaza. He said the two plans were essentially the same design but in Concept A the cost was \$137,000, and in Alternate B it was \$38,000. He asked what the

difference between the two was. Mr. Croad said they were essentially the same plan and the cost would be essentially the same. He thought it had to do with the way they broke down the sub categories of the site. Member Mutch asked which of the numbers more accurately reflected the cost, and Mr. Croad said the larger number. Member Mutch said that was relevant because City Administration recommended funding this in the budget and asked what the operational and maintenance costs would be for Alternate B. Mr. Croad said it would depend on the overall use of the new building and how much staff would be needed. Member Mutch said in terms of moving the Township Hall to the site proposed in Alternate B, what was the minimum amount of building and site improvements that needed to be made to make the Township Hall usable. He said there would need to be restroom facilities, barrier free access, and access to parking.

Dave Zanley said they would have to recreate what was there now. The mechanical systems and toilet were in the basement so a barrier free entrance would have to be created and either align the buildings so there could be a basement again, or create those spaces on the first floor. Member Mutch said that had come up before and asked if they had looked at improvements to avoid forcing people into the basement, to use the restroom or kitchen facilities. Mr. Zanley said they had only done a cost based on recreating what was there now and had not done a scheme that changed that scenario. Member Mutch thought that was important and would need to be addressed. He asked Mr. Croad what the site improvements would be so the Township Hall was accessible and usable instead of just sitting on the property. Mr. Croad said in either case a non-motorized pathway or drop off area would have to be provided either from the existing parking lot or the new proposed parking lots to the south. Member Mutch said this wasn't addressed in the City's proposal, and he thought whatever plan went forward it had to be addressed. Member Mutch said there was a significant amount of traffic noise that came off Taft and 10 Mile Roads and asked if they had looked at the impact of that noise, when they sited the amphitheatre. He had heard the noise on Sunday and thought it was quite loud. He was concerned with how well the amphitheatre would function with the road noise.

Mr. Croad said one of the components of an amphitheatre was to take advantage of the existing topography, and they tried to site it so it had the closest connection points to the library. He said they tried to provide some space that offered protection to audio equipment if needed. The orientation of the amphitheatre would be towards the seating area on the hill and primarily be used for small groups and activities. He said they kept it open so they could have some spill out to the south on the larger lawn. Ultimately, a study would have to be done for the final configuration to address some of the issues Member Mutch raised. Member Mutch asked why the multi use facility was put off until Phase 4, when they had highlighted the importance of it in Alternate B. Mr. Croad said if money was no object, everything could be done in one phase, and they tried to anticipate what the City could budget over several phases. He said to address the immediate use of the site; they tried to incorporate things that would cost fewer dollars in the beginning to get immediate use of the site. Mr. Croad said they located the multi purpose building toward the end of the construction phase, however, if the City were to bond or come up with funds to do it all at once, that would be what they would recommend. Member Mutch said although in Concept A those improvements were pushed back. Mr. Croad said, as he stated, they were facing deterioration of existing buildings. So, in Concept A if restoration was the main component of the plan, they would want to restore those buildings up front as opposed to letting them deteriorate even further.

Member Mutch asked Mr. Croad to clarify what he was talking about in regard to Concept C. Mr. Croad said basically they discussed a trade off in Concept C with the idea of purchasing or doing a land swap with the school district so the City could square off their property. Member Mutch asked where the Township Hall would be in Concept C. Mr. Croad displayed where it could be located. Member Mutch asked if there was any reason the Township Hall couldn't go in the space on the City owned property, south of the drive up to the house. Mr. Croad said what they considered was the context and the location of the site and by locating the Township Hall too close to the building site, they thought it would be too compacted. Member Mutch said if the move of the Township Hall was driving the demolition of the farmstead, he thought putting it in a location that didn't require demolition was preferable to whatever contextual offense might be created by putting it there. He thought it was a good location and worked nicely with the house because of the existing landscape. Mr. Croad said he had asked, at the beginning of the project, whether or not he could consider the barnyard or the school site as feasible. He said he was told and assumed that the City could acquire that or negotiate it from the school district. He said after they developed two concept plans the "what if" scenario came up and asked what if they couldn't acquire it, so they postulated on a third option and that was why they came up with squaring off of the property. Member Mutch said they didn't own the property and might never own it and thought they needed to plan accordingly. Mr. Croad thought the history between the school district and the City had been a cooperative one. He said there was a long history of the school district and the City swapping or selling land to each other so, he thought it was reasonable to consider that as being part of the development. Member Mutch agreed they had had a good relationship but he had learned that there should always be a back up plan because the best laid plans don't always come to fruition.

Member Mutch asked about input from Oakland County, the National Trust for Historic Preservation or the National Park Service, which administered the National Register of Historic Places. He noted he didn't see input from those organizations regarding how they viewed the potential loss of this historic resource. Mr. Croad replied each of those organizations were invited to the focus group meetings. He said he had contacted the State Historic Preservation office and spoke with the Deputy Commissioner about all the different scenarios that went with the existing historic site, relocating the historic site to another site or some combination of renovation or additions. He stated there was a process where if the City was interested in maintaining its historic designation, the buildings could be relocated in the same orientation to a new site. However, the City would have to reapply for historic preservation designation but there was a process that allowed that. He also looked at the Register and most funding and tax credits were given to private individual ownership of historic sites that owned or operated the property for business use. Since the City currently owned it and it was tax exempt there was no loss of taxable value that would be lost with the loss of the designation.

Mr. Croad said in either scenario the City could designate as a locally historic site and pay homage to its past through interpretation, demonstrations, kiosks, etc. Member Mutch said the demolished site would locally designate that as historic. Mr. Croad said in both scenarios the City could designate it as an historic site and that the State Historic and National Historic Register did provide options for relocation, renovation and rehabilitation of existing sites. He said there was a process that had to be followed but it was possible to do different things with historic sites and still maintain its historic character.



Member Margolis commented that she appreciated the vast amount of information provided and was pleased that there were two concept plans for the price of one. She asked about the hazard related to the barns being so close to the high school. Mr. Croad agreed there was some jury-rigging over the years, and he would be concerned with saying they were safe, in their current condition, to have the public in them. Mr. Zanley agreed with Mr. Croad and said in the south barn there was some serious racking and the structure had moved, which represented some significant structural problems that would have to be taken care of. A structural engineer had not been brought in to determine whether the buildings were safe or not, but it's obvious the structures were in a state of pretty serious disrepair. She thanked them for a very complete report.

Member Gatt thanked them for a very detailed, complete report. He noted the Fuerst sisters were very reclusive people and they wouldn't be happy with the site in its present state of not being used. One only had to look at the properties being used now on the site that the Fuerst sisters donated, the library, high school, and police department to see that they wanted their property used.

Mayor Landry thanked them for their very detailed presentation and the options presented.

## **INTERVIEW CANDIDATES FOR YOUTH COUNCIL (SCHEDULED FOR 7 P.M.)**

### **1. Aditi Arora**

Ms. Arora said she was a sophomore and volunteered at Beaumont Hospital as a greeter and also at the emergency center where she asked patients and families if they needed anything. Ms. Arora commented that she had launched a new club called Bridgepoint, which helped children attending poverty stricken schools in Detroit. Ms. Arora said achieving better leadership qualities was her goal.

### **2. Emily Bank**

Ms. Bank said she was currently the student representative on the Library Board and wanted to continue in that role. She stated she was president of the sophomore class, an active member of Student Council, and a member of the Teen Advisory Board. She said one of her strengths was getting people involved in her projects. She wanted the library to be an extension of the high school where kids could feel comfortable and further their learning. She said one of her goals was to become involved in politics and government, and she wanted to contribute to her City and government.

### **3. Anagha Bharadwaj**

Ms. Bharadwaj said she would like an opportunity to do something meaningful for society. She said she volunteered at soup kitchens and many other places but had never been able to do something that she could truly call meaningful. Ms. Bharadwaj said the one thing she wanted to take away from the Youth Council was the opportunity to do things on her own and with a group of people for the betterment of society. She felt she would be a good candidate as she had past experiences making decisions and public speaking. She said she would like to work to improve Novi.

#### **4. Dylan Capello**

Mr. Capello felt he would be good because he had been on Student Council since 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and was still an active member of Student Council. He said he attended school board meetings and discussed and updated everyone on what was going on. Mr. Capello said he would like to find somewhere teens could go to hang out, and have things to do without paying a lot of money.

#### **5. Satya Dalavayi**

Mr. Dalavayi said he was a junior at Novi High School and felt that he could have a key role in the Youth Council or the Library Board. He said he wasn't afraid to bring his ideas into the open, and his ultimate goal would be to make sure they could influence other youth to join and participate in the community. While the library was being renovated, it would be good to have a teen voice speak for what they thought was essential. He thought this would be a memorable experience for everyone and they would be able to work with political officials who actually had a voice in the community. He believed if they could say what they believed in, then they should have no problem compromising and maybe even improving the City.

#### **6. Bridget Dunn**

Ms. Dunn said she was actively involved in her school's Student Congress and loved what she did. She said she had just returned from Traverse City where she attended the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual MASC/MAHS State Conference. She said she attended four leadership sessions and three general sessions, whose theme was being a champion in everything you do. She said she loved the library and was a member of the Teen Board, Recycling Club and Rotary Interact.

#### **7. Neelima Goyal**

Ms. Goyal stated she was a freshman at Novi High School and felt she had much to contribute for the betterment of Novi. She said through her activities she had learned to communicate with other people and the qualities of a good leader. She said she joined Model U.N. where she learned to voice her opinion and would use that skill to effectively discuss ideas with the Youth Council. She commented that she was aware of how one person can make a difference through her volunteer work at churches, school events and senior centers. Ms. Goyal said one goal she wanted to accomplish, by doing more for Novi, was creating new programs for teens to reduce teen related violence and crime. She stated she would like to become a respected leader and felt, as a citizen, it was her responsibility to help the City reach its potential.

#### **8. Jillian Hilliard – Not present**

#### **9. Irene Israel**

Ms. Israel thought she would be an asset to and a good candidate for the Youth Council, because of her communication skills obtained through teaching the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade religious education class and tutoring kids. Ms. Israel said she worked with children and very concerned parents and learned to resolve problems, and crucial decision making was not new to her. She felt she had acquired communication skills from being a member of the debate team, and the volunteer work she did with kids had prepared her for this position. One of her

main goals was to give positive input for the new library. She felt more computers were needed at the library and more copies of books. She said she wanted the satisfaction of helping her community.

#### **10. Rachel Manela**

Ms. Manela felt she would be a good candidate because it was a good way to perform a civic duty. She said she was excited that she could do something for the City of Novi and especially with the Historical Commission. She enjoyed working with people and was willing to compromise. Ms. Manela said knowledge was what she wanted to take away from this experience, as she would like to become a lawyer; this would give her some first hand opportunities to see how a City operated.

#### **11. Jason Murray**

Mr. Murray stated he was a freshman at Walled Lake Western High School. He thought he would be a good candidate because of his experience with volunteering with Neighbor to Neighbor in Michigan and Illinois. He felt he could help bridge the gap between Walled Lake and Novi students as he lived in Novi but went to Walled Lake Western High School, which would be his main goal. He noted he would like to take knowledge and experience from this opportunity and use it later in life.

#### **12. Yunbo Nie**

Mr. Nie said the main reason he was a good candidate was his communication skills. He said he participated in Science Club, Quiz Bowl, Debate, Forensics, Track and Field and held officer positions in many of them. He stated communication was essential to running a board such as the Youth Council because he could directly connect with people in the community who give feedback and ideas, and then directly communicate with the board. Mr. Nie said his main goals were to expand his leadership capabilities and felt it was key to playing a prominent role. He commented he had connected with citizens who wanted a sidewalk on Ten Mile Road from Novi Road to Meadowbrook Road to insure the safety of the students who walk home every day. He felt the Library reference books also need to be updated as some of them were from the 80's, 70's and even the 50's.

#### **13. Mariah Smith**

Ms. Smith said she would be a freshman next year and had been involved in many activities in Oakland County. She stated she was a Student Council representative and took that position very seriously. Ms. Smith said she had great leadership skills, loved working with people and went after what she wanted. She thought there was opportunity, being on the Youth Council, to use her voice to better the City. She said she would like to take the experience of working with City personnel to pursue her career in law.

#### **14. Paul Syriac**

Mr. Syriac said he was a junior at Catholic Central and liked to meet new people. He said he didn't belong to any group or click so he thought he could relate to students, and he had a unique ability to remain objective. Mr. Syriac said he wanted to make a difference and to serve

as a good example to friends, family and community. He felt he had the trust and respect of his peers. On the Youth Council, he hoped to show that students had good ideas that could be used effectively in Novi. He commented that he hadn't felt involved in his community and thought this would be a good thing to become more involved. He also thought he would be good on the Historical Commission because he loved local, U.S. and all kinds of history and was hoping to be a history major in college. He felt it was important to learn about the history of the community because it was his own history and who he was.

Mayor Pro Tem Capello said Mr. Syriac had the Youth Council ranked as his fifth choice but he had talked about it a lot. He asked if he was really looking for Youth Council. Mr. Syriac responded that he thought he would be better on the Historical Commission because that was where his strength was. However, it would be great to be on anything.

#### **15. Vinuthna Venigalla**

Ms. Venigalla stated she was a junior at Novi High School. She stated she was responsible, would get things done on time and was committed to everything she did. She said she was a part of Teens Aiding the Cancer Community, had good communication skills being a part of Model UN, and was a volunteer at the Manor of Novi where she interacted with and helped patients. In the future, she wanted to pursue a career in International Relations and thought the Youth Council would be an excellent experience for her.

#### **16. Neha Verma**

Ms. Verma stated she was a sophomore at Novi High School. She said she could effectively express her opinion and was on the Debate Team, Forensics Team and Model UN. She felt her skills and extensive involvement in school made her a strong candidate for a position on the Youth Council. She noted that debate had shown her how to look at an issue from different angles and come up with the best decision, Forensics had honed her public speaking skills and made her an effective communicator and Model U. N. had shown her how teamwork was essential to the success of any group. She said she had recently become involved with the Teen Advisory Board and had seen the value of having an opinion in how a City operated. The Youth Council would give her the opportunity to develop as a leader, citizen and as a person. She hoped to apply all she would learn to a career in law.

#### **17. Marina Vuljaj – Not present**

#### **18. Zhounan Xie**

Ms. Xie said she went to Northville High School but lived in Novi. She felt she would be a good candidate for the Novi Youth Council because of her knowledge and enthusiasm about government and civics. She said she participated in debate and forensics and was constantly dealing with issues about public and social policy. She had learned about things like poverty, AIDS and juvenile crime and through analyzing and reading she had developed a perspective about these issues. She had worked with the Novi community and had developed an understanding and appreciation of what went on in Novi. Ms. Xie said she volunteered at the Manor of Novi, the Novi Library and at the International Fair. She felt she had the dedication and responsibility for the position. At school she participated in the Science Olympiad and Forensics for 5 years, played in an orchestra, and was a straight A student. She wanted to

improve communication between teachers, students, and parents and provide them support. She noted she would like to take away experience in social and public policy and help improve the community.

#### **19. Mark Gardner**

Mr. Gardner said he went to Catholic Central and felt he could bring a different perspective to the Novi Youth Council. He said he went to Novi schools for the first 8 years of his education so he could also understand Novi's perspective, and his three sisters went to Novi schools and they could tell him what they thought. Mr. Gardner said one of his goals was to strengthen the bond between students at Detroit Catholic Central and Novi. He said there had been competitiveness in the sports area but he would like to create a place where Catholic Central students and Novi students could converge peacefully and enjoy one another's company. In the future, he hoped to attend the Naval Academy where very good leadership skills were needed. He believed being on the Youth Council would give him the opportunity to hone his leadership skills, which would help him when he enlisted in the Armed Services.

#### **20. Sudharshan Mohanram**

Mr. Mohanram said he was a junior at Novi High School and had volunteered at Providence Hospital in Southfield helping people get where they needed to go, filing and carrying charts. He said from that experience he gained a feel for the suffering and pain that many people go through, which had made him a more caring person and he felt he had a responsibility to help others. Mr. Mohanram said he also tutored people in many subjects, volunteered at the Novi Library and his local Temple. He said he was the Treasurer of his Math Club, was the secretary the previous year, and had helped the club grow. Mr. Mohanram said he was the Captain of the Michigan Orval Team, which was a group of 15-20 students from Michigan that represented the State and competed in Iowa in a national competition. He organized the talents of the people in the group towards overall success, and felt that was an integral quality to be a part of the Youth Council. He hoped to benefit society and take away some experience. He felt teens were not participating in society but could be motivated to volunteer. He proposed to give more awards and benefits to students who felt the need to give to their society and planned to push for that, if a member of Youth Council. He said he was a member of the AP government class in school and had been studying state and national levels of government but would like a good understanding of local government.

### **PRESENTATIONS**

#### **1. Proclamation in Recognition of Paralyzed Veterans of America Awareness Week, April 13-19, 2008**

Mayor Landry read the proclamation and said the office for the Michigan Paralyzed Veterans of American was located here in Novi on Grand River, and they would welcome anyone this week or at any time.

#### **2. Proclamation in Recognition of National Library Week, April 13-19, 2008**

Mayor Landry presented Ms. Farkas with a proclamation in recognition of National Library Week, April 13-19, 2008 and encouraged all residents to visit the library.

Ms. Farkas invited Laura Casey, Vice President of the Board of Trustees to join her to accept the proclamation. Ms. Farkas said this was an exciting week for the Library and they had a number of programs planned. She said they looked forward to everyone coming to the library during that week to join in the fun. There would be a movie evening for children on Tuesday the 15th; two adult programs were planned for the 16th, which was how to start a book discussion in their neighborhoods. Ms. Farkas said the library would be offering book club kits to people who were interested in starting book clubs in their neighborhoods and community. She said on the 17th there would be a "Saving for Retirement" program sponsored by Rick Bloom.

## **REPORTS**

### **MANAGER/STAFF**

Mr. Pearson said the second budget session would be on Saturday the 19th at 8:30 A.M.

Mr. Pearson said they had a very nice open house at Fire Station #2 located on Thirteen Mile Road because they were expanding the facility. He said the Fire Department did a great job and they had a nice turn out. The Montessori School next door sent a card of congratulations to Chief Smith and the Fire Department on their bigger station.

### **ATTORNEY - None**

### **AUDIENCE COMMENT**

**Dawn Frasa**, of Home Interior Warehouse in Walled Lake, was representing the store owner Jackie Swartz who was on a sales trip. Ms. Frasa commended the City for the proclamation for the Paralyzed Veterans and wanted to remind Council of a very special veteran and resident of Novi who had returned home after serving in Iraq. She said his name was Casimir Werda who was blind because of injuries sustained in Iraq. She said the good news was he was home with a good spirit and was a new Novi homeowner. She said he would be the first Michigan recipient of some home renovation benefits from an organization called Homes for Our Troops. She said their store was hosting an event called the Novi and Walled Lake Community Homecoming on April 26th from 11 A.M. to 5 P.M. They would have a community celebration to welcome Mr. Werda back home to his community. There would be presentations from government officials. She said the Novi High School football team was signing a football to present to him as Mr. Werda played football for Novi High School and was a 2001 graduate. She said they would welcome everyone to the store that day.

**Steve Donohue**, 24379 Glenda St., was present because he was at the Library the other day and was disappointed to see that the site plan had been changed from the original proposal put before the voters on the bond issue. He said the original site plan talked about the new landscape island and combined entrance drive on school property. He then showed the Council the proposal that was now displayed and the entrance to the library off of Ten Mile was back in its original location. He said when he saw the original proposal he was excited about it because getting off of Glenda onto Ten Mile was very difficult, especially during rush hour, and with the driveway there it could create some hazardous situations. He said he supported the original plan and was really disappointed to see that it had changed and thought they should consider going back to the original proposal because it was a lot safer. Mr. Donohue didn't

feel it was right to offer a proposal and then make a significant change after the voters approved it, and secondly they needed to determine which was the safer design. He felt with Novi growing and the new library there would be a lot more traffic, and they should take the time to do it right now that they had the opportunity.

**Dr. Roger Manela**, 40404 Village Wood, said he owned property in Ann Arbor that had a home on it that was built in 1833. He said he had restored the home to keep as a piece of history; it was a beautiful example of Greek revival architecture that was on the corner of Pontiac Trail and Long Shore by the railroad tracks. In Ann Arbor they had something called Cobblestone Farm that the City, through grants and public contributions, had restored and it was a gem of the Ann Arbor community with old time country farm activities, historical tours, etc. He said the main house and the barn had been restored and it was a piece of history that was one of the crown jewels of the community. Dr. Manela said whenever he went by the Fuerst Farm he got a little bit of nostalgia. He thought when one considered what to do with a piece of property like the Fuerst Farm, while it was expensive to restore an old barn in an historically accurate way, restoration could be enriching for the community who observed and documented it as well as those who got involved hands on. He thought it would be a pity to see little pieces of the history of the community whittled away and gone the way of a bulldozer.

**David Sharpe**, resident of Farmington Hills, said the word Novi meant new in Croatia, a Slavic area. He said the changes in Novi in the last 32 years had been incredible. He said when looking at the communities around them they had Greenmead across the street from his subdivision, the Spicer home, etc., and noted they were a viable part of the community. He said Novi had Tollgate Farm of which he thought everyone was very proud of and was quite sure they would be proud if they maintained and refurbished the Fuerst Farm. He said Novi had a treasure and he hoped they thought about the importance of it.

**LuAnne Kozma**, 23837 W. Lebest, commented that the Fuerst Farm was probably the most important historic site in Novi and was on the cover of the Novi Historic District Study Committee Report and was on National Register of Historic places, and the State Register of Historic Sites. Ms. Kozma said they had set the site aside, stabilized and preserved it to the extent that it was now for current and future generations to enjoy. She said she resented this administration's efforts to dictate to the community that they must have another debate and another conversation about the future of this cultural resource; especially one that would even remotely consider demolishing it. She thought the McKenna report was flawed, profoundly biased toward destruction of the community resource and was disdainful of what the community had already done to protect and honor it. She thought it was obviously uninformed and incorrect about its recommendations. She said the restoration plan was not a restoration plan at all and the adaptive re-use proposal was such an incredibly wrong misuse of the words adaptive re-use it was laughable. Ms. Kozma said adaptive re-use was protection not demolition. She felt the whole report was not credible, and didn't feel the process the City went through was a very transparent process. She said the newspaper said over 500 interested residents and key stakeholders were invited to participate, but she was the Chair of the Historic District Study Commission and had not been invited. She noted she was also on many other commissions and she was not invited. She noted communities all across the state are documenting their barns and preserving them, and Novi had one right in the front yard of City Hall on the National Register and wanted to destroy it. She felt this was an attempt to guide the community to a specific outcome that would either destroy the Fuerst Farm while calling it adaptive reuse or add so many non-conforming, non-historic structures to the site that it would

weaken the integrity of the site, and the amenities would never qualify under the Secretary of Interiors rehabilitation criteria. Ms. Kozma said a person couldn't even find the words Fuerst Farm on the City's website and she found that insulting. The report just repeated again and again that it's was a remnant and she thought they had all decided it was a place worthy of protection and preservation. The report didn't mention any of the work of the Historical Commission. She said it was not just sloppy uninformed research but intentional, willful neglect of the information that the community had and that should have been provided to this consultant before he came up with recommendations. Ms. Kozma said she wanted to know how that happened. She said the Fuerst Farm was authentic history.

**Megan Parikh** commented on the idea of playing Frisbee and hackey-sack and said her generation didn't play those anymore. She felt it was being sugar-coated and if that was necessary, it probably wasn't a good idea. She said, a few years back, she and a couple Girl Scouts had worked for 15 hours on the Fuerst Farm planting a sunflower garden and painting dog-houses. She said many of her friends also wanted to keep the property because it was an historic site and should be preserved. Ms. Parikh said she also gave a tour to Commissioner Mutch at the Fuerst Farm Family Day. She said knocking the building down was an awful idea, and she hoped Council agreed with her.

**Marcia Raju** said she was also a Girl Scout, and also helped with the Fuerst Farm Project and was involved in the Fuerst Farm Family Day. She gave a tour to the Mayor of the Fuerst Farm family home. They devoted many hours planning the event. She noted they had also done the washing board game and back then when there were no automatic washers or dryers there were washing boards. The idea of a washboard was discussed for those who used to use them a long time ago and her grandmother still used hers. She said that promoted cultural inheritance, integrity and diversity to the Fuerst family home. Ms. Raju said the Fuerst Family Day was very popular and if they could continue to promote it and create a more able bodied structure to the home, they would be able to promote so much growth between all the students and faculty. She said tearing down the building was wrong and every time she came back from school she saw the Fuerst Farm home, and if it was torn down it would just be another corner on the street. She asked that Council please find it in their hearts not to tear it down.

**Carol Crawford**, 22135 Beck Road, said she was a former history teacher and her preference was Concept A. She thought they should hang on to any little bit of Novi history they had left. She noted there wasn't a lot of Novi history left and they wouldn't have the Tollgate Farm, if it were not for Michigan State. She said they could not put together any kind of village because all that was left was one rock at Guernseys, one church, one Town Hall, and four houses not including the Fuerst Farm. She said they rezoned the Lincoln home, which should have been saved, into zoning for condos. She thought that tying the Fuerst Farm in with the schools and the library would be a wonderful thing. She gave an example of things that could be done with the Fuerst Farm barns and house.

**Margaret Schmidt**, said she lived on a small farm at 25377 Wixom Road, and she thought about all the things she could do with her new granddaughter on her farm. She said she reminisced about the 4H Club and all the things she did on the farm, and the kids she worked with at their farm camp. She felt that the Fuerst sisters would be upset with the fact that the City turned the heat off at the farmstead and allowed it to get into the condition it was in today. They would be really upset that it had been in disuse for 20 plus years, as it wasn't supposed to be like that. She said plan after plan had come up where it would have been put to use.



She felt If it was torn down, that the whole community would lose something because it was their history. Ms. Schmidt said children don't need a \$100,000 garden, etc., and don't need \$160,000 for a kiosk. This was not a campus or green space, it's a farm and it would offer a lot to the community. She felt if it was torn down, Council was doing a tremendous disservice to the children of Novi.

**Sherry Konkus**, 22278 Cascade, said she was in one of the focus groups and appreciated the difficulty Council would have in dealing with Novi's growth and needs. She quoted an earlier speaker who said "I like hearing about our history because it's who we are". She asked who are we? She said they had been really good at developing this City, and the City had a lot of false starts over their history in preserving the past. She asked Council to think hard about this last sliver of land as they looked and captained the sub-committee that came up with these options with both the charge of addressing new City needs, and preserving Novi's history. She asked if these were the options they would have to vote on, if they considered both important. She said she wasn't sure equal importance was given to the proposals and didn't want to outsource Novi's history to Northville. She asked that Council put the property, staff and money behind our history before making a decision on this parcel. If those buildings were in neglect today, we should look upon our collective failure to act. She stated she would like to see a re-purposing of the farm for this century, a community garden, wind power, and an alternative green building on that land that would work together with the schools for the education of our children. She said let's find someplace to honor our history in Novi.

**Chuck Tindall**, 2453 Shawood, said he favored preserving the Fuerst Farm and thought the McKenna report was flawed. He said a banquet facility had been mentioned but there was an amendment to the City Charter in 1999 that prevented the City from building a banquet facility on any land the City owned at that time, and this would qualify. He said he was suspect if McKenna was offering recommendations to Council and they didn't know what could and could not be done. Mr. Tindall stated he was still a candidate for the House Representative of the 38<sup>th</sup> District as a Democrat.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS AND APPROVALS (See items A-L)**

Member Staudt removed Item J and Member Mutch removed Item H.

**CM-08-04-050 Moved by Gatt, seconded by Capello; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY:  
To approve the Consent Agenda as amended.**

**Roll call vote on CM-08-04-050 Yeas; Capello, Crawford, Gatt, Margolis,  
Mutch, Staudt, Landry  
Nays: None**

- A. Approve Minutes of:
  - 1. March 17, 2008 – Regular meeting
  
- B. Enter Executive Session immediately following the regular meeting of April 7, 2008 in the Council Annex for the purpose of discussing pending litigation, property acquisition and privileged correspondence from legal counsel.

- C. Approval of Ordinance 08-37.34 for the change in delinquent water and sewer charges to be added to the tax roll when account is three months (previously six months) delinquent. **Second Reading**
- D. Approval of amendments to Chapter 20, Massage, Ordinance No. 08-120.05, amending Article I, In General, Article II, Business License, and Article III, Massage Therapist Permit. **Second Reading**
- E. Approval to enter into agreement with Oakland County for the use and maintenance of Live Scan Equipment for submission and exchange of fingerprint information.
- F. Approval to award the 2008 landscape contract for service at Meadowbrook Commons to Absolute Outdoor Service, the low bidder, in the amount of \$24,000 and the fertilization contract to Weed Man, the low bidder, in the amount of \$3,000.
- G. Approval of the second year renewal option to Meadowbrook Commons Management Agreement with KMG - Prestige (Keystone Management Group).
- I. Approval of a Completion Agreement for SP04-43 Bolingbroke Site Condominiums in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 26.5.
- K. Approval of Uninsured Claims to Midwest Claims in the amount of \$40,000.
- L. Approval of Claims and Accounts – Warrant No. 766

#### **MATTERS FOR COUNCIL ACTION – Part I**

##### **1. Approval of City Entryway Signage design and authorization to bid for construction and installation.**

Ms. Walsh said last fall the new logo was approved for the City and City wide templates were created for a variety of City communications, flyers, memo's, letters, etc. She said one of the big components of that project was City entryway signage. They had discussed this previously but waited for the new logo to be approved, and she was now before Council with a proposed design for City entryway signage. They had interviewed several organizations in the area and chose SignGraphics for their experience with the City and their experience with other organizations that did business in Novi, such as current clients Providence Park, ITC and Ryder. She said these clients had a great working experience with them. A team of City staff met with representatives of SignGraphics several times to discuss design and what they thought the image of the City should be perpetrated in a progressive, dynamic yet classic and stately manner. She said they had come up with 19 proposed sign locations throughout the community. Ms. Walsh introduced Bill Lutz of SignGraphics.

Mr. Lutz said there were photographs of the signs dropped into actual photographs of the areas that were proposed for some of the signs in the Council's packets. These pictures showed them landscaped correctly and in their right environment. He said there were two sizes proposed and there were small differences in how the logo had been utilized as the redesigned logo had been incorporated in a couple different ways. He said they had taken the new logo and made it an architectural detail on the signage so it appeared as a keystone from a

distance. While a car might be very far away they would see the City name of Novi, but as they approached the sign the keystone would reveal itself as the new City logo. Their intent was to present different elements at different ranges that looked traditional yet still evolved into a more contemporary look because the City was still changing. He said the City colors were used and the signs came in two sizes.

Member Staudt said he was concerned with the size of the signs related to the businesses in close proximity. He asked if they had talked with the businesses, about what they thought of the design. Ms. Walsh said they just toured the community and nothing would be set on private property and nothing was set in stone, but they were looking for approval of this item. Member Staudt said looking at the Chili's location for example, he would like to know what a business thought before putting a 6 ft. by 12 ft. sign in front of their facility. He said before doing any of this they should ask how they felt about it. Member Staudt commented he didn't like the very large sign and years of experience had taught him that ground signs near a grass area would be abused by weed whackers used by lawn care people. He asked if there would be a maintenance program that City employees would follow to take care of the signs. Mr. Lutz said he highly recommended heavy landscaping around the signs because it drew the eye to the sign and kept the lawn care people away from them. Ms. Walsh said there had been previous discussion about having the Beautification Committee involved in this and they had also discussed looking at landscaping companies in the City. Member Staudt was concerned that the gold color would not be seen off the blue. His biggest concern was with the size of the signs and would lean more towards the monument size sign. He said there had been discussions regarding obtaining corporate sponsors in the past, and he would like some consideration of that idea.

Mayor Pro Tem Capello had two problems with the sign and one was with the process. He said about a year ago they received various different designs of signs and had provided Administration with input on what they liked and didn't like. Now, in front of Council, was a sign that was not consistent with any of the comments provided in the past by Council, and it reminded him of when they dealt with the logo. He said all of a sudden they came before Council with one logo, take it or leave it. He said they asked for alternatives, but here tonight there was only one sign, take it or leave it. Mayor Pro Tem Capello said he would have appreciated it if they had come back with some of the previous designs and alternatives. He said he was not pleased with the sign at all and it reminded him of the industrial tech sign that would be seen going into an older industrial park. Mayor Pro Tem Capello said the sign in front Chili's was a prime example because they wouldn't allow this much metal on any building on the major thoroughfares. He said they required a brick façade. This sign didn't say "Welcome to Novi a warm welcome to a warm community". He felt they were trying to get a tech look to it; he wanted people to understand that Novi was a progressive City but also a City of stable, traditional residential homes. He thought the texture looked like barn siding and he thought it looked cheap.

Member Gatt said he didn't expect the comments he was hearing tonight, and he might not have done it this way but would accept it because it was not opposed to anything Council said. He said many Council members didn't like the logo a year ago but now look at it and think it was one of the most attractive designs they could have come up with. He noted he was prepared to vote in favor of the sign.

Member Mutch said the memo talked about the total cost of installing illuminated signs at each proposed location including electrical power would be \$309,000. He asked if that was for the 19 signs, and Ms. Walsh said it was. Member Mutch said then the memo said illuminated signs would not be able to go at every location. Ms. Walsh said that was very conservative if they could supply electric to every location they desired and was approved that would be the cost. She said that would not go out for bid so since that time they had met with SignGraphics and they believed the estimate was on the high side. She said some of the locations might be extremely well lit eliminating the need to internally light the sign, or they might not want to spend \$3,000 to \$4,000 to bring electricity to a location because of the time of day the road was more traveled than others.

Member Crawford said she liked the sign. She said she passed the Farmington Hills sign this morning and it was very simplistic with the gold and she felt it really warmed up the sign.

Member Margolis said she agreed with Member Gatt and she was happy to leave this up to anyone who had a vested interest in the sign.

Mayor Landry said he would support this and had been a fan of trying to get signs around the City for a long time. He said it was one thing they lacked and the community needed to get an identity and get its brand out there; other cities had entrance signs and they were consistent, so he was very much in favor of this sign project. He said there was money in this budget to place three of these signs, if they chose to do that. Mayor Landry noted he had asked Ms. Walsh why the signs weren't brick and she said because they would be in City rights-of-way and would be very near moving vehicles and a brick structure would become very dangerous.

**CM-08-04-051 Moved by Gatt; seconded by Margolis; MOTION CARRIED:  
To approve City Entryway Signage design and authorization to bid  
for construction and installation.**

**Roll call vote on CM-08-04-051 Yeas: Crawford, Gatt, Margolis, Landry  
Nays: Mutch, Staudt, Capello**

- 2. Consideration of the request of Best Buy for (a) Special Land Use and (b) Preliminary Site Plan approvals. The subject property is located in Section 14, on the east side of Novi Road, between I-96 and Twelve Mile Road. The subject property is approximately 3.3 acres and the applicant is proposing to remove the closed bank and furniture store and construct a 30,891 square foot Best Buy store.**

Brian Aman, Best Buy, said they were returning to provide and respond to the additional information they had provided based on the previous discussion of the March 17<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. They were prepared to answer any questions Council had.

Mayor Pro Tem Capello asked if Administration had any further comments. Mr. Pearson said the only specific request last time was some information from the Taubman Company and that had been provided. They had stated they had no objection to the Best Buy location. He said there was a positive recommendation from the Planning Commission and the staff.

Member Gatt said if this was passed, what were Best Buy's intentions for the store on Haggerty Road. Mr. Aman said it was to keep that store there and they hoped it would take some pressure off that store and that intersection.

Member Margolis said one of the comments in Council packets was a letter from Taubman Company and that someone from Taubman would be present tonight. Mr. Aman said he was present. Member Margolis asked to hear from him. Member Margolis said her major question was whether Taubman was in support of a Best Buy at this location. Bernard Thomas, representing Taubman, responded that they supported a Best Buy at that location. He said they qualified their remarks only because they were waiting for Council's approval before giving their consent because they were concerned that if Council required changes to the site plan, they would have to go through their review process all over again. He said their review process was very extensive and involved an architect's review, traffic engineer review, civil engineer review and his review. It was very time consuming and he wanted to make best use of his staff time. Member Margolis thought the Best Buy fit in the location, and Taubman also did, and a lot of the questions brought up were answered in terms of traffic impact. She said it would increase traffic at certain times but decrease it at other times. She said she would be in support of this but the only thing she would not be in support of was the façade waiver. She thought staff had questions about that and she thought the blue backing was an intention of being a sign and that went against the ordinance.

Mayor Pro Tem Capello said he could not vote in favor of the special land use for the Best Buy. He said he looked at Twelve Oaks making a huge effort bring Nordstrom in along with other up scale stores, redoing the entranceway and trying to turn this into a higher quality mall and maybe competing with Somerset. He said bringing in Best Buy was bringing in a big box and changing the aesthetics of the Twelve Oaks Mall. He also had a problem with the location. He said he had talked with the Hotel Baronette and they said they were bringing in a lot of clientele into the area who were looking for a higher quality establishment to stay at. He just didn't see a Best Buy next to the Hotel Baronette and next to the office building on the other side. He didn't like the big blue check and yellow sign especially on three or four sides of the building. He said the Best Buy traffic came in and out much quicker than the mall where they might shop four or five stores. He said that exit of the mall was the busiest of all four by far and there was always a back up; he thought it was the worse location they could put this type of an establishment. He said he would support a motion to deny special land use, if it was made. He said there was a vacant store in West Oaks next to Toys R Us that he thought would be perfect for them, and he thought Fountain Walk could find a great location for their store.

Member Mutch said concerns he had last time were in terms of signage and façade and how those two interplayed. He said there was a letter from Mr. Amolsch where he addressed the signage, and his opinion was that it was not a sign issue it was a façade issue. Mr. Necci, façade consultant, said they would still consider the blue check mark a component intended to do the same thing as a sign did and that was to advertise. The fact that the Sign Ordinance addressed it differently really didn't affect the Façade Ordinance. He had read that it was to be akin to an entrance canopy or entrance/exit feature, and if it was a simple normal form, that would be a valid statement. However, given they had augmented the shape to be a kind of a corporate symbol; it then went towards being a sign. Member Mutch thought that the fact that it was blue it tended to coordinate with the signage as Mr. Necci stated. He said it was a concern for some Council members and was an issue they needed to address, and asked Mr.

Necci if he had any suggestions. Mr. Necci said they had toned down the blue so he didn't think the color would be the biggest issue and since they had done that he thought they would be satisfied. He said it was the shape and if the two lines were straight, it would look like a building element instead of a symbol of a corporation.

**CM-08-04-052 Moved by Margolis, seconded by Staudt; MOTION CARRIED:**  
**To approve the Special Land Use Permit for the proposed Best Buy, SP-08-03, subject to the following: 1) Relative to other feasible uses of the site the proposed use will not cause any detrimental impact to existing thoroughfares, 2) Relative to other feasible uses of the site the proposed use would not cause any detrimental impact on the capabilities of public services and facilities, 3) Relative to other feasible uses it was compatible with the natural features and characteristics of the land. 4) Relative to other feasible uses it's compatible with adjacent land uses in terms of location, size, character, impact on adjacent property and surrounding neighborhood, 5) Relative to other feasible uses it's consistent with the goals and objectives of the City Master Plan for Land Use, and 6) Relative to other feasible uses it would promote the use of land in a socially and economically desirable manner. It also is listed among the provisions and the uses requiring special land uses set forth in the zoning districts, and was in harmony with the purposes and design regulations of the zoning district. Also, they must comply with the items in the staff letters and consultant review letters.**

## **DISCUSSION**

Member Gatt said he would decline to support the motion for all the reasons that Mayor Pro Tem Capello articulated. He said he wished they had chosen a different location.

**Roll call vote on CM-08-04-052**                      **Yeas: Margolis, Mutch, Staudt, Landry**  
**Nays: Gatt, Capello, Crawford**

**CM-08-04-053 Moved by Margolis, seconded by Staudt; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY:**  
**To approve the Preliminary Site Plan for the proposed Best Buy, SP-08-03, subject to the following: 1) City Council waiver for the berm Requirement along Novi Road, 2) a Zoning Board of Appeals variance for the northern and eastern building setbacks, 3) A Zoning Board of Appeals variance to allow the loading area in the exterior side yard, 4) A Zoning Board of Appeals variance to allow the trash compactor in an exterior side yard, and subject to the conditions and items listed in the staff and consultant review letter.**

Mayor Landry said this did not include a Section 9 Façade waiver, Member Margolis said he was correct.

**Roll call vote on CM-08-04-053**

**Yeas: Margolis, Mutch, Staudt, Landry,  
Capello, Crawford, Gatt,  
Nays: None**

Mr. Schultz said essentially without including the Section 9 waiver, we intend them to meet the ordinance requirements, is that correct. Mayor Landry said he was correct. Mr. Schultz said clarify it with that after the motion it didn't have to be part of the motion.

**AUDIENCE COMMENT**

**Roy Prentice**, 28115 Meadowbrook Road, said he was a member of the Historical Commission. Mr. Prentice said there were a number of people present who supported Concept A, as set forth, indicating a strong support for restoring the existing buildings. He said it was clear to him, since the barns were full, that there was a need for them. If they were as structurally unsound as they were led to believe, the school wouldn't be letting the children in there to move things in or out. He said the Historical Commission had Steve Steier look at the buildings and he felt they were eminently restorable and some of the doom and gloom heard earlier was misplaced. He wondered if a study had been done to see whether or not there was a need for a park at this development level. He said with either option they were talking about \$3 million, and he was concerned when talking about that much money. Mr. Prentice asked about deed restrictions on the property, and whether there were any that would have a bearing on the use of the property now. He knew when initially considering moving the Town Hall, the report that he saw mentioned the Town Hall might be relocated to Tollgate, which he managed, or to Maybury. However, he was never contacted about that but felt the Fuerst Farm property really needed to be used. Mr. Prentice noted it couldn't stay the way it was, the buildings needed attention and the property needed to be used. He thought the value of the property from a historical sense was that the placement of the buildings allowed visitors to the site to see what a farmstead looked like. If they start moving buildings around, then they didn't really appreciate the historical significance of the site. Mr. Prentice preferred Concept A.

**Kathy Mutch**, 24541 Hampton, noted the only reason the City owned the property was because of the owner in the 1990's. There was discussion about demolishing the buildings and paving the property for parking and there was such community outrage. The school district owned it and the City was already in negotiations for property at 11 Mile and Wixom. She said the City negotiated a price and passed it on to the school district and they bought the Deerfield and Middle School properties at a price that was reduced by the value of the Fuerst Farm. She said that was how the City acquired it. There was no other reason for the City to acquire that property other than to quell the community outcry for it to be preserved. She said everyone understood there was no money to put into it, but the need was great and the community spoke. Ms. Mutch said this wasn't our personal or family history it was our community's history. It represented a significant part of the history of Novi and Novi as it related to the broader community of Oakland County. There was information available all along for anyone interested in having it. Mr. Croad said they had not involved a structural engineer, but there were two structural engineering reports done and they were available as a part of City records. She noted structural reports on the condition of the barns were done last April and was also available. The Historical Commission was not consulted in any way to take advantage of the files that had accumulated, and when she talked with Mr. Croad he said most of the information had not been passed on to him. Ms. Mutch said the Historical Commission was sponsoring a

Fuerst Farm walk around on April 19<sup>th</sup> from 1 P.M. to 3 P.M., meeting at the Township Hall and then at the barn, house and orchard areas with a discussion from Steve Steier about the condition of the barns, etc. Mr. Steier would answer any questions asked.

Ms. Mutch said former Mayor McLallen had written a comment regarding this and it was given to the Clerk. It read " Please either support a realistic financial plan of support for these buildings or be candid and admit the City had no place or funds for historic preservation and then just demolish them. But once gone they can never be replaced".

### **MATTERS FOR COUNCIL ACTION – Part II**

- 3. Approval to award a construction contract for the 2007 Neighborhood Road Program Contract 3 (Elizabeth Lane and Sunnybrook Lane from Beck to Whitehall) to Century Cement Co., Inc., the lowest qualified bidder, in the amount of \$466,776.**

**CM-08-04-054 Moved by Capello, seconded by Gatt; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY:  
To approve award of construction contract for the 2007  
Neighborhood Road Program Contract 3 (Elizabeth Lane and  
Sunnybrook Lane from Beck to Whitehall) to Century Cement Co.,  
Inc., the lowest qualified bidder, in the amount of \$466,776.**

### **DISCUSSION**

Member Mutch said the second lowest bidder by less than \$100 was Hard Rock Concrete and their work on various neighborhood road projects had been exemplary according to reports from staff. He knew they were looking at the lowest bid but based on their previous experience with the City was there any consideration of giving the bid to them. Mr. Pearson said they had 12 bidders on this and he thought it gave credence to the perception that this was an open low bid process. However, in the end there was no reason to disqualify Century Cement and to do justice to the process, they thought it was good to keep the competition going and go with the low bidder. Member Mutch asked what work Century Cement had done in the City. Mr. Hayes said they had not worked in Novi but had worked in at least two dozen communities in southeast Michigan; they were qualified to do the work and had performed good work for each of those other communities. Member Mutch said he understood but was concerned because neighborhood streets were the more intensive and disruptive programs. He said when there's a company that had been successful in Novi, \$40 over what kind of challenges might be down the road was not a lot of money. He said he would be interested in revisiting this down the road to see what the performance was from Century Cement. Mr. Hayes said the gold standard they used was the largest buyer of construction in the State was MDOT and they never took anyone but the low bidder.

Mayor Pro Tem Capello said they would be replacing concrete with concrete. Mr. Hayes agreed. Mayor Pro Tem Capello said it seemed that every year the major problems they were having was with concrete roads. He said Mr. McCusker said asphalt was much easier to maintain and repair and asked why they weren't putting asphalt roads in instead of concrete. Mr. Hayes said the concrete roads replaced since he had been with the City were based on a former design standard that didn't include any base material beneath the concrete. He said it was laid over clay soils, which were expansive, and that was the root cause of the problems



with concrete. Since that time, the standard was up dated and included a thick layer of base material beneath a thick layer of concrete. Mayor Pro Tem Capello asked if it was easier and cheaper to maintain the asphalt than the concrete. Mr. Hayes said it was pretty much a wash. If looking at the life cycle cost of concrete and asphalt, they were close in price.

**Roll call vote on CM-08-04-054**

**Yeas: Mutch, Staudt, Landry, Capello,  
Crawford, Gatt, Margolis  
Nays: None**

- 4. Approval of engineering contract amendment to URS Corporation for additional construction engineering services for the 2007 Neighborhood Road Program in the amount of \$29,874 (equal to 6.4% of the Contract 3 construction award amount).**

**CM-08-04-055**

**Moved by Capello, seconded by Margolis; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY:  
To approve engineering contract amendment to URS Corporation for  
additional construction engineering services for the 2007  
Neighborhood Road Program in the amount of \$29,874 (equal to 6.4%  
of the Contract 3 construction award amount).**

**Roll call vote on CM-08-04-055**

**Yeas: Staudt, Landry, Capello, Crawford, Gatt,  
Margolis, Mutch  
Nays: None**

- 5. Council discussion and potential action on the Fuerst Farm issue.**

Member Staudt said he viewed the study done by McKenna and Associates as advisory and something that would help Council work through the process. He said he never viewed option A or B as anything other than some good information that would allow Council to make decisions at a later date. The study was not an all or nothing nor was it intended to be but he thought it was helpful, and looking at a \$3 million figure, he said he would probably dismiss it as out of hand, at this point. Member Staudt said the Fuerst Farm had a history of acquisition and abandonment. The school district purchased the building but didn't know what to do with the farmstead and passed it on to the City that had no plan or financial means to restore it. He said there was a 2000 study and tremendous recommendations were made and with an entirely detailed process, and did virtually nothing with it. Now in 2008 we're looking at it again. He said he was willing to take this on once and for all. Member Staudt said passing the buck to future Councils and not making decisions was something he was not willing to do. He thought Council, as a whole, was looking to resolve this issue for the long haul. Member Staudt said his personal preference would be for restoration and renovation of some of the facilities but he didn't know which ones or how. However, he knew he would not support taxpayer money for restoration of the facilities. He noted he would support infrastructure, landscaping and many other things. However, working with historical buildings for many years told him that the best way to do this was to find a group willing to pull out their check books and do it on their own. This was not something he thought the taxpayers wanted to do at the moment, and there were a lot of things that could be done with the property to make it useful, and he was not totally opposed to keeping the buildings. However, it was about time, if they were going to do something, to organize, get some money and do it, and he would support a period of time to allow that to happen. He suggested 90 days for someone or a group to come

back to Council with some good ideas and look at this one final time. He said if they came up with anything, he would want to require timelines. This idea of never ending, ongoing promises and stops needed to end. Mr. Staudt said he spent time in Houston, Texas this week and saw a 12 acre piece of land that the City of Houston spent \$144 million on. He said it was the most spectacular landscape and green space he'd ever seen. He said \$80 million of that money came from individual donors, the land was paid for by the City, and everything else was paid for by the public. He thought it was time to look into those options. Finally, he asked if the deed restrictions had been reviewed for the property. Mr. Schultz said they had ordered title work but didn't think it was in yet. They had done their own review of the documents that were available at the Register of Deeds. There was a requirement that it be a public use or "something happens" but that "something happens" was mostly related to the schools options, not the limitations on the use by the City. Member Staudt believed it would be a public use and if it wasn't, he wouldn't support it.

Member Gatt said he would also go along with giving a grace period to the people who came before Council tonight, to appear before Council with a plan and how it would be paid for. He said the City didn't have the money and to restore this property was not in the plan. Member Gatt said people talk about this being a historic site, but it was not. It was a farm just like Erwin's Orchard was a farm and the whole City of Novi was a farm. He said development happened and no one at the Council table wanted to develop the property into condos, etc. He said Council wanted to make it a useful piece of property; right now people drive right by it and two or three times a year a march around the building was organized. Member Gatt said that was not how Ruby and Iva Fuerst would want it used. He said if the people who want to restore the farm can come up with \$3 million that would be great. However, if they can't, then it would behoove the City to move forward with Alternate B that McKenna put forward. Member Gatt said he didn't think it was proper that the McKenna people were called liars or that they mislead the people of Novi. He didn't think so at all and, in fact, they did an admirable job, they studied the facts and came forward with a very detailed plan that they all agreed they should look at. Whether one group liked it and the other didn't wasn't the issue tonight as they had to come up with a reason to act on Concept A or Alternate B. He said Concept A was \$3 million up front, and the City didn't have it. Member Gatt heard it said that it should be preserved for the children. He thought they were talking about education and that was the responsibility of the schools, not the City. The school was charged with educating the students and the City with keeping residents safe.

Mayor Pro Tem Capello agreed with Member Gatt and said the Fuerst Farm was no longer a farm, and the barns were a mess and used for storage. He said the barns were all chopped up and he didn't think it was worthwhile to preserve them. The house wasn't a real farm house, it was a mess and the rooms were chopped up and small, the kitchen was small and not very usable and even from the outside, it was not very unique and didn't warrant the kind of money they were talking about. The history was there because it was donated property and from that a high school, library, City Hall, Police Department etc., were built. He said whatever was developed there would be a benefit to the City and another advancement that the Fuerst sisters intended the property to be and that's part of the City. Otherwise, their farm would not be any different than any other farm land except theirs was a community as opposed to condos or homes. He would not be opposed to giving someone time, if they wanted the buildings, to find somewhere to move them and the funds to do that. He said it didn't make sense to him to try to save the buildings because they really had no historic or economic value to the City.

Member Margolis said she agreed that preserving history was important. She noted studies had been done but nothing happened and it continued to go down hill. She said just to make it usable would take \$1.2 million for Phase 1 and that didn't include long term maintenance. Member Margolis said it was just not going to happen. She said it was a farm but hadn't been used as a farm for many years and wouldn't operate as one. She would also support it if someone wanted the buildings and could raise the money quickly, but she wouldn't support giving someone a long time to do that and didn't believe it would happen. Member Margolis said in terms of Alternate B, it talked about "having a green space that would unify three public uses", and she would love to walk on that property and use trails and keep the historic nature of the site. She saw the property as more historic than the home, which was built in 1927. Member Margolis thought it was important to keep the Town Hall as it has been kept in good condition, and was so much a part of Novi's history. She thought it should be put on a site where it could be accessed and used and some history preserved about what that site was all about. Member Margolis thought that the library use of that space was really important for kids to come out and walk on a trail and be in the Fuerst Farm site. She noted she would like to see Alternate B move forward. As direction for staff, she said she didn't think Alternate B was exactly what she would want that site to be but the reuse and relocation of the Township Hall, the pathways, passive use, markers, gardens, etc., would be wonderful. Member Margolis commented that she had a friend who was really into historical gardens and had always talked about the Fuerst Farm having a historically accurate garden and plantings, and something that the library and high school could use. She said the sculpture and sensory gardens and those kinds of things could be done cheaply, and she would support moving forward with those kinds of things. She was not talking about buildings and wasn't sure that the building made sense there.

**CM-08-04- Moved by Margolis, seconded by Staudt; WITHDRAWN:  
That Council direct staff to move forward with Alternate B on the  
Fuerst Farm and come back with a feasible phasing plan that could  
be put into the budget.**

## **DISCUSSION**

Member Mutch said he would not support the motion as proposed. He said for those who looked at the budget over the weekend they would have seen that the City Administration had already provided the phasing plan for Alternate B. He said they had already decided in advance of Council discussion that they would include money in the budget for demolition and for the Gateway Plaza at Taft Road and Ten Mile Road. He noted, they had discovered tonight, that it would be actually \$100,000 more than Council was told in the report. He thought they were creating a false impression regarding what the options were. He said he heard Council members talking that they were going to embrace Alternate B and put the dollars behind it. Member Mutch said Alternate B talked about spending \$3 million for a lot of uses and many of them were on property the City didn't even own. Then they present that in contrast to Concept A, the restoration plan, and talk about the need to raise \$3 million, as if it was the responsibility of residents concerned about restoration to pay for the entire cost of the park, which would include many things that a number of residents had indicated they didn't want to see in the park. He said he had not heard of one that could not be accomplished while leaving the structures intact. He said he had not heard how the Township Hall would be moved and sited and made usable on this site. In fact, if they looked at the budget proposal, it put no money in to address the issues of access to the Township Hall so they could utilize the

way it was today. He thought there was some real gaps in terms of what they were hearing and what actually would happen there. Member Mutch said one thing he could tell residents he was confident about was that if Council adopted Alternate B, he doubted very much that many of the elements of Alternate B would ever be adopted. He said, from his viewpoint, they went through this process to get to an outcome that would justify demolition. He said that wasn't why he did it, but from the beginning it was his gut feeling that this was going to be the outcome. He said one of the Council members correctly noted that this Council was not going to commit those dollars to this area. He noted he would be shocked if Council committed any significant dollars to this area, other than for the demolition of the structures and moving of the Township Hall. He said he would love to see Council actually commit dollars to do the improvements that they said they wanted to see on the site. He noted that almost all Oakland County Communities had made the effort to protect the historic sites remaining in their cities, townships and villages. He said not only to preserve them but to utilize them as a historic, educational and community resource. He said Novi would apparently be the lone exception to that in sacrificing what we have. He noted that several speakers have commented what was so special about this location because there were farms all over Novi, and he agreed but they didn't exist anymore. Member Mutch said he wanted to see Council preserve, restore and reuse this farmstead because he thought it was an important part of Novi's history and thought there were a lot of opportunities to do that. He said the Council was familiar with the Celery Flats Historical Center in Portage, as they had visited it. He said it didn't exist 16 years ago but the City of Portage made a commitment to preserve some of their historical resources and moved a house, school, grain elevator and the Hayloft Theatre onto the site. He said they were restored and made accessible to the community through public and private dollars. He said Northville Township was just awarded the State Farm Preservation Network Award for their efforts in moving and restoring a barn; it was a success story and one Novi could emulate. He said Novi had its success story with the Sally Thornton house, the Township Hall and the Old Methodist Church that was now used as a functional church. He said there had been a number of projects done at the Fuerst Farm. He said two of the barns had been painted, Mayor Csordas organized college painters and got paint donated to paint the barns, another was painted ten years ago. He said there was the wherewithal and interest from the community to do it and it could be done for a lot less than \$1.2 million. He would guarantee them there were a lot of people who would put time and money in to preservation who wouldn't have any interest in fake farmhouses or sensory gardens. Member Mutch said he could not support the motion.

Member Crawford said they had struggled with this issue for years and it was important. She believed people's action or inaction affirmed what they valued. She attended some of the focus groups and had read the letters and plans and talked with many people asking for their view and opinions. She said farmers valued the land but her farming relatives also believed in the logical and practical maximizing use of the land. Novi had never been like Northville, Farmington, Wixom and Walled Lake who have historic downtowns. Those historic downtowns had contributed to their identity and Novi had never had that history. Novi's history had been an amusement park, casino, gas stations, repair shops, orchards, the dairies, vegetable gardens and had been the dumping grounds for all the surrounding communities and even Detroit. Novi's historic identity was indelibly linked to its small farms, most of which had been demolished. She said Novi had pursued the high tech, modern, unique and prestigious and so now Novi had very little tangible evidence of the past. Member Crawford could not agree to total demolition of all the buildings. She said the home was a great example of Novi's past and the City owned it. She said she couldn't support the motion for Alternate B. However, she

would ask fellow Council members and Administration to consider that perhaps a melding of both plans could be accomplished. She believed they could at least restore the house for its use and maybe an herb garden and a couple of small buildings and use it for active programming. Member Crawford suggested a museum, and had wanted Novi to have a museum for a long time, and knew many long time residents in the community who had been waiting to donate items to the museum. She knew they could get a great museum going in Novi and a lot of people who would be actively involved in it as Friends of the Novi Museum. She was also confident there was a way to create a campus quad type park on this property that showed we valued the property with a meld of the old and the new together. Member Crawford stated she could not support the total demolition of the farmstead.

Mayor Landry commented that it was important not to shoot the messenger. He said McKenna came forth with a proposal to keep and restore and a proposal called adaptive reuse. He said he attended one of the meetings and everything in the proposal was stated by someone at the meeting he attended. Mayor Landry said it was hard for anyone to oppose history or preserving something but when talking about government money, he thought they had to balance the cost with the utility; meaning what would you get in the end if the money was spent. Mayor Landry said he would support the motion for Alternate B for three reasons: 1) It maintained the area as green space, 2) It maintained an historical aspect to the site 3) It provided residents with the most usable option for the site. He said everyone who had come up to him out of the blue and mentioned the site, the first thing out of their mouths was "what's wrong with keeping the area green." He said Alternate B kept the area open and green. He believed the historical significance was the site and not the buildings on it. He said the site was believed to be the site of the first Town Meeting, which was based on an essay written in 1876 that said the first Town Meeting was at the Simmons House, where George Dennis now lived, which happened to be where the Fuerst Farm was. He said what was there now was a house built in 1927 and some 1930's barns. He was sure that was significant to some but to Maybury the barns were not significant enough for them to want to pay and come and get them. Mayor Landry said what he couldn't ignore was the fact that in 2000 there was a very complete Fuerst Farm Task Force Report and it recommended refurbishing the buildings, had a phasing plan and dollar figures. However, for 8 years, no one had raised any money or garnered any monetary support. In the same 8 years \$1 million had been donated to the library, and the Parks Foundation had come up with over \$500,000 for park improvements. The Fuerst Farm Task Force Report was out there and had not received any financial support and he couldn't ignore that. He said if money was spent, they would end up with a Fuerst Farm House with a living room, dining room and 6 small bedrooms and the rooms would be too small to be used by civic groups. Mayor Landry noted that if there was an historic building, they would have to pay someone to manage it. Also, he couldn't ignore that it was located next to a high school where there were buses with 1,800 students every day. Alternate B had walkable trails, village green, gateway features, amphitheater, ice rink, High Point Plaza, sensory garden, historical markers and a usable Township Hall. He said they could not afford to just leave it there to decay. He said with Alternate B, they could put some money into it now; it could become usable and have the amenities above. Mayor Landry proposed moving forward with Alternate B, the budget had not been passed yet and if someone wanted to put some money together with a proposal, Council would consider it.

Member Mutch asked if the intent was to see \$500,000 put into the property in the short term to make it available, and was it their intent to direct City Administration that it was something Council wanted to see in the budget. Mayor Landry said it was not. He said Phase 1 and

Phase 2, for about \$550,000, would provide all of those things. He said what was in the proposed budget was money for Phase 1, and he would be looking next year to look at Phase 2. Member Mutch said then no usability for the property for the upcoming year. Mayor Landry said the upcoming year would be removing the buildings and relocating the Township Hall.

Member Mutch said Council created an impression for the community that they were going to take action that would make the property accessible and usable, but were not putting any money behind it and then they would talk about maybe next year. He thought it was interesting because they were then pointing at those who support preservation saying "where's the money, you haven't made the commitment towards restoration", and yet we as a City didn't make a commitment to make this property usable even though they kept saying to the community it was Council's intent and goal. But not today or next year but maybe a couple of years down the road they'll put some trails in. Member Mutch thought the other point, in terms of the improvements that Mayor Landry talked about, was that every single one of those improvements could go onto the property a year or two or three years from now and would not require that one building be taken down. It would not require them to do anything that would change the underlying historic nature of the site. He said all those improvements could be in place, they were in both plans on this property, if the money was put into it. He commented he could not support a motion that talked about demolition and could not support a motion that presented a promise that something was going to be done, but didn't put any money towards it. Member Mutch said he would be shocked if he saw anything more than the dollars to tear down the barns, and maybe do a couple cosmetic improvements. He stated he just didn't see that commitment from the Council to that property.

Member Staudt asked the motion maker if it was her intent that they support Alternate 2 as written, or as articulated by the Mayor. Member Margolis said her motion was to give support to Alternate B and ask the Administration to come to Council with a phasing plan for it. So, to say that they had not put any money behind it, yes, the Administration had money in the budget but the budget had not been passed. She said one of the things they would have to grapple with in the budget was what money was there. She said she would support doing some things to make the land usable, and that would be her intent. Member Margolis thought it was a matter to discuss at budget and see what's there. She thought it would be premature to make a decision now because they had not gotten into the budget figures. Member Staudt said if Alternate 2 supported an \$800,000 multi use facility, he would be very opposed to that. He said he would like to see a rephrased motion that didn't use Concept 1 or Alternate 2 but instead reflected specifically what she was looking to do. He thought if they were going to do Alternate 2, they were voting on a very specific set of recommendations that he would not be willing to support. Member Staudt said he appreciated Mayor Landry's comments about sites being important and at some point down the road they would have this almost identical conversation about the historical Landings property, the Walled Lake Casino. He didn't think there was any question amongst them that that was probably a far more historical site than anything else Novi had.

Member Margolis stated she would be open to a friendly amendment because she didn't know if she supported every element of Alternate B. However, she didn't want to be specific about what pieces they did and didn't support because that would take some grappling at budget time to see what that was.

**The amended motion.**

**CM-08-04-056 Moved by Margolis, seconded by Capello; MOTION CARRIED:  
To support the general intent of Alternate B and to direct the  
Administration to come back with a phasing plan for consideration  
for Council at budget time that would give them the opportunity to  
decide which elements of the plan they were willing to support with  
the option that if a group came forward within 90 days for the  
funding for full restoration the Council would be willing to support  
reconsidering this motion.**

Member Staudt asked if they could leave open the option of potential restoration, if a group came back within 90 days. Member Margolis agreed.

Mayor Landry said Member Mutch indicated that suggesting something without funding might not be something he could support, and Mayor Landry understood that. He asked if this Council were to approve the funds for Phase 1 and Phase 2 of Alternate B, which included everything he mentioned would he support it. Member Mutch said Member Margolis was correct; this had to be discussed in the context of the budget. He said his comments were in response to an impression given to the public in terms of where they would spend that money.

**Roll call vote on CM-08-04-056 Yeas: Landry, Capello, Gatt, Margolis, Staudt  
Nays: Crawford, Mutch**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS - None**

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL ISSUES - None**

**CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS FOR COUNCIL ACTION**

**H. Approval to award the spring 2008 Tree Planting bid of 500 trees to Panoramic Landscaping, Inc., in the amount of \$95,580.00 – Member Mutch**

Member Mutch said the major element of the tree planting program was tree planting at the I-96 and Beck Road interchange, which were well needed as it was pretty stark and barren. He said the problem he had with the proposal put forward by Administration was a fair number of those trees were located within the City of Wixom. He recognized the benefit of being a good neighbor and the benefit of having the improvements done to that interchange so it made sense for one agency to do the design and implementation of that landscaping plan. However, the Tree Fund wasn't established and those funds were not collected to plant trees or landscape in Wixom. He said he asked Administration if they had contacted Wixom, and Mr. Pearson indicated he did but had not heard back from them. Member Mutch said he had a problem with Wixom not paying their share of it, as there were a number of places trees were needed in Novi, such as the M-5/ 12 Mile interchange. He said he knew Mr. Printz was aware of the dead trees out there and he was trying to address that, and he knew it was in a future year tree planting. He couldn't support the plan until he saw some commitment from them to put some money into the project.

Mr. Pearson said this was a major intersection with the bridge that was just completed, Providence Hospital was going in there and for all intents and purposes this was a Novi intersection, whether that portion of the State right-of-way might technically lie over the line. The majority of the plantings were south of 12 Mile Road area. Mr. Pearson said, if Wixom, he wouldn't put money to it either and would save the money for the intersection at Wixom and I-96. He said he still recommended it and wanted to get it done with the new entryway signage coming in.

**CM-08-04-057      Moved by Margolis, seconded by Gatt; MOTION CARRIED:  
To approve award of the spring 2008 Tree Planting bid of 500 trees to  
Panoramic Landscaping, Inc., in the amount of \$95,580.00.**

### **DISCUSSION**

Member Mutch said Council had budgeted money for the Wixom Road interchange project, and he wasn't sure where those plantings would go. He said not only were they going to foot the bill for Wixom's share of this interchange, they would also be putting money towards plantings in that area. He thought Novi was going above and beyond their duty and the Tree Fund had limited dollars.

**Roll call vote on CM-08-04-057      Yeas: Capello, Crawford, Gatt, Margolis, Staudt,  
Landry  
Nays: Mutch**

### **J. Approval of Traffic Control Orders:**

- a) **No. 08-02 for No Left Turn from northbound Willowbrook Drive onto the northern and middle drives of Village Oaks School from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**
- b) **No. 08-03 for No Left Turn from Village Oaks School drives onto Willowbrook Drive from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. – Member Staudt**

Member Staudt wanted to point out that this was something that was requested by a resident and a reaction to a dangerous situation near one of the public schools. He said working with the City Administration and the School District they came up with some very good solutions. Member Staudt thanked the Administration and the School District for working this out.

**CM-08-04-058      Moved by Staudt, seconded by Gatt; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY:  
To approve Traffic Control Orders:**

- a) **No. 08-02 for No Left Turn from northbound Willowbrook Drive onto the northern and middle drives of Village Oaks School from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**
- b) **No. 08-03 for No Left Turn from Village Oaks School drives onto Willowbrook Drive from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**



**Voice Vote**

**COMMUNICATIONS**

**AUDIENCE COMMENT - None**

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 10:10 P.M.

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David Landry, Mayor

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Maryanne Cornelius, City Clerk

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Transcribed by Charlene Mc Lean

Date approved: May 12, 2008