

REGULAR MEETING - PLANNING COMMISSION

CITY OF NOVI

February 22, 2017

Proceedings taken in the matter of the PLANNING  
COMMISSION, at City of Novi, 45175 West Ten Mile Road, Novi,  
Michigan, on Wednesday, February 22, 2017

BOARD MEMBERS

Mark Pehrson, Chairperson

Robert Giacometti

Ted Zuchlewski

John Avdoulos

ALSO PRESENT: Barbara McBeth, City Planner

Rick Meader, Landscape Architect, Beth Saarela, City Attorney,

Certified Shorthand Reporter: Jennifer L. Wall

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Novi, Michigan.

Wednesday, December 7, 2016

7:00 p.m.

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CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Call to  
order the regular meeting of the Novi  
Planning Commission for February 22, 2017.

Barb, can you call the roll.

MS. MCBETH: Member Anthony?

CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Absent,  
excused.

MS. MCBETH: Member Avdoulos?

MR. AVDOULOS: Present.

MS. MCBETH: Member Giacopetti?

MR. GIACOPETTI: Here.

MS. MCBETH: Member Greco?

CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Absent,  
excused.

MS. MCBETH: Member Lynch?

CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Absent,  
excused.

MS. MCBETH: Chair Pehrson?

CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Here.

1 MS. MCBETH: Member Zuchlewski?

2 MR. ZUCHLEWSKI: Here.

3 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: With that,  
4 if we could rise for the Pledge of  
5 Allegiance.

6 (Pledge recited.)

7 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: With that  
8 we will look for a motion to approve or  
9 modify the agenda.

10 MR. GIACOPETTI: Motion to  
11 approve.

12 MR. ZUCHLEWSKI: Second.

13 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: We have a  
14 motion and a second, all those in favor, say  
15 aye.

16 THE BOARD: Aye.

17 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Any  
18 opposed? We have an agenda.

19 Open our first audience  
20 participation. I see two participants that  
21 are going to speak at some point in time. So  
22 open and close the first audience  
23 participation.

1 I don't believe we have any  
2 correspondence.

3 Any committee reports?  
4 City planner report,  
5 Ms. McBeth.

6 MS. MCBETH: Good evening.  
7 Nothing to report this evening.

8 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Awesome.  
9 Bring us to our first public hearing, Item  
10 No. 1 is the 2017-2023 Capital Improvement  
11 Program. Ms. McBeth. Our assistant, City  
12 Manager Victor Cardenas is here along with  
13 Carl Johnson, our finance director, to give a  
14 presentation and to answer any questions.

15 MR. CARDENAS: Good evening.  
16 Thanks for having me. This is the I think  
17 the sixth or seventh time I have made the  
18 pilgrimage to the hallowed halls of the  
19 Planning Commission to give this presentation  
20 to talk about our annual Capital Improvement  
21 Plan.

22 This year it's been a little  
23 different, just because of the passage of the

1 Capital Improvement Fund. So that fund was  
2 supported very generously by our voters and  
3 that has taking care -- it's going to  
4 probably equate to about \$35 to \$40 million  
5 for ten years.

6 So it's going to go to a lot  
7 of projects around the city, specifically  
8 some big projects that we have identified  
9 here later in our presentation.

10 But because of that passage  
11 of that new mileage on the CIP committee,  
12 which is made up of Mr. Giacobetti, Mayor Pro  
13 Tem Stout, Council Member Wroble and Council  
14 Member Much and Commissioner Zuchlewski, kind  
15 of subbed in for Commissioner Lynch, so we  
16 appreciate that.

17 We have been meeting for  
18 quite sometime to talk about those -- that  
19 new fund and what projects are supported in  
20 that. We will really appreciate their  
21 efforts in helping us frame and construct  
22 what we have here for the CIP that's before  
23 you tonight.

1                   So as you can see, we have  
2                   174 projects, \$173 million of city funds, and  
3                   we have \$4 million of leverage funds. Those  
4                   are usually from grants, usually tied to road  
5                   projects, they have got other state or  
6                   federal funds for.

7                   As you can see, the majority  
8                   of that is coming out of the CIP fund. The  
9                   larger projects that we have on tap are  
10                  coming out of the CIP funds, large building  
11                  renovations or new buildings that we are  
12                  proposing. And you can see the road funds  
13                  are followed up by the water, sewer funds.  
14                  We got big water sewer projects that are  
15                  coming that are much needed as well.

16                  So let's talk about these  
17                  actual projects that are -- this is the  
18                  second year we have in digital CIP, for  
19                  everyone sitting at home, and everybody here,  
20                  CIP.cityofnovi.org. So that is an IP,  
21                  revolutionary tool that we have developed.  
22                  We are actually presenting on that at a  
23                  conference in beautiful Tulsa, Oklahoma in

1 April. So it's an innovative idea that we  
2 are presenting, at a government invasion  
3 conference. So those are the icons that  
4 denote what year the comes out of the CIP.

5 We are still making some  
6 final alterations to the website to make it  
7 more user friendly, so looking at improving  
8 upon that in the years to come.

9 So again, getting to these  
10 projects. One thing we have talked about for  
11 several years now, since I have been here, is  
12 the northwest quadrant, Ring Road, which is  
13 the northwest corner of Grand River and Novi  
14 Road. So this is something that's going to  
15 alleviate some of that traffic and that is --  
16 that piles up during rush hour, especially  
17 making a left-hand turn heading north on Novi  
18 Road, and getting some additional exits for a  
19 company Comau, which is over on the west side  
20 of that.

21 So this is the current  
22 design, you can see by the -- this is where  
23 the old Big Boy used to be, now the Blaze and

1 Qdoba, so that stretch is already completed,  
2 so we are looking around \$5 million for this  
3 project, we are using some moneys from a  
4 special assessment fund that will look to get  
5 reimbursed for this project through a new  
6 capital or (unintelligible) improvement  
7 authority that we will be bringing forth to  
8 City Council at a later date.

9 So this has been in the works  
10 for a long time. We have set aside the --  
11 council set aside about \$600,000 about four  
12 or five years ago for this as well. So we  
13 have -- this has been completely designed so  
14 we are really looking forward to getting this  
15 taken care of finally.

16 Next up is our public  
17 services garage, our facility. And this  
18 facility was constructed for Novi about, you  
19 know, 30 years ago, of about maybe 10,000  
20 people.

21 So the biggest need for this  
22 facility is to house all the city's vehicular  
23 assets. So we already can house under a roof



1 all of our one ton single axle, tandem axle  
2 trucks that are the plow trucks, but all of  
3 those pickup trucks and other vehicles that  
4 are out in the elements year-round, so we are  
5 trying to get some kind of structure that  
6 will be able to house all those under those a  
7 roof or two, that will shield them from the  
8 elements.

9 And also some other  
10 improvements to that facility to help improve  
11 and add efficiencies to the plowing efforts,  
12 also in terms of -- a lot of it is geared  
13 towards maintaining the vehicles that we have  
14 and prolonging the life of them.

15 That's still in design right  
16 now. We are thinking to be between five and  
17 seven million dollars, and there is going to  
18 be an additional roadway that is going to be  
19 probably one way in, one way out and adding  
20 additional parking for the firearm training  
21 center up there. And making an additional  
22 parking lot as well.

23 So a lot of improvements to

1 that facility, looking forward to that coming  
2 in the rest of the year, hopefully with a  
3 more hammered out plan soon.

4 Another big one, I spoke to  
5 you -- spoke to the Commission last year  
6 regarding the Lakeshore Park, and they're  
7 completely redoing Lakeshore Park, adding a  
8 facility up there to house elections and be a  
9 precinct up there and a reservational  
10 facility for homeowners associations or small  
11 events up there, mainly to house our  
12 programming that occurs in lakeshore.

13 Right now the building was  
14 currently housed for lakeshore summer camp is  
15 probably from the '60s, and it need to be  
16 replaced.

17 So in addition to that new  
18 building up there to serve the residents on  
19 the north side, also pave the parking lot,  
20 add some new play structures, some new  
21 rentable shelters, so we are looking around  
22 \$5 million for this project as well. Again,  
23 this will be out of the CIP fund.

1                   Again, I have a little  
2                   notation there, it's not the current concept  
3                   it's very fluid and right now City Council  
4                   and city administration is in the process of  
5                   fine tuning this as well.

6                   The building might be on the  
7                   south end of the park, might be on the north,  
8                   might be a little bit in the middle, all is  
9                   up for debate right now. But we really want  
10                  to make sure we optimize this park for the  
11                  residents on the north side and residents for  
12                  the city to enjoy.

13                  Another thing we have been  
14                  talking about for a long time and we are  
15                  nearing the completion of is the ITC corridor  
16                  pathway. So this is taking it from ITC park  
17                  all the way up to Providence Park Hospital.  
18                  So we have completed the trail, that is  
19                  almost linked to ITC park. We need to build  
20                  a trailhead there. But there is a trail  
21                  going from there up to just south of Nine  
22                  Mile. So we now need to do the rest of  
23                  this -- this is the project here for \$2.6

1 million that will complete that stretch from  
2 just south of Nine Mile all the way up to  
3 fire station four.

4 We originally planned to be  
5 at fire station four, but we have acquired  
6 some property just east of that, used to be  
7 an oil company, which has a cell tower, I  
8 believe you have seen that before you in the  
9 past, so we are looking for a trailhead for  
10 that cell tower facility as well, south of  
11 Ten Mile just east of Wixom Road.

12 So once we get this done, we  
13 are to going have to full pathway going all  
14 the way up to Providence Park. So it's  
15 already a small segment that goes south of  
16 Nine Mile, all the way over to ITC is being  
17 used considerably. A lot of people access  
18 that off Deer Run on the south side of town.

19 Finally, something that a lot  
20 of our buildings already have, is a generator  
21 for facilities here in the city, and this is  
22 just slightly before Meadowbrook Commons. We  
23 originally planned this a couple years ago to

1 have a generator there, been using a  
2 generator to repurpose a generator that is  
3 currently servicing other parts of the city.  
4 That didn't work out so much, so we did the  
5 first -- whole new dedicated generator for  
6 Meadowbrook Commons to make sure that kind  
7 of -- in the case of an outage over there, we  
8 can have a generator that pops everything  
9 back on and keeps the necessary utilities at  
10 Meadowbrook Commons going until power is  
11 restored to that area of the town.

12 So with that, a lot of stuff,  
13 lot of projects we have on the horizon. This  
14 is just what's going to be for '17/18, a lot  
15 of more projects looking out to 2023, so we  
16 welcome any questions the Commission might  
17 have.

18 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Very good.  
19 Thank you, sir, appreciate it.

20 This is a public hearing.  
21 And seeing there is no one in the audience,  
22 take a stab with that, close the public  
23 hearing, turn it over to the Planning

1 Commission for their consideration.

2 Who would like to start.

3 Anyone?

4 MR. ZUCHLEWSKI: Only question I  
5 have is the trailhead, what's the width of  
6 that? Do we have a standard width for the  
7 trailhead?

8 MR. CARDENAS: A width. In terms  
9 of what trailhead are you referring to, the  
10 north side one off Ten Mile, or what we are  
11 going to do on the south side?

12 MR. ZUCHLEWSKI: South side.

13 MR. CARDENAS: South side, we  
14 haven't had a lot of discussion about that.  
15 I think it's going to be integrated into the  
16 ITC park itself. So we haven't had many  
17 conversations about that because it's going  
18 to be ITC park as that kind of theater -- the  
19 parking. Up in the north side it's going to  
20 be the -- I mean, I don't have the specific  
21 dimensions, but there is currently a carved  
22 out piece of property there, clearing in that  
23 wooded area, that, you know, maybe three to

1 four car lengths across that will service  
2 that trailhead to the north.

3 MR. ZUCHLEWSKI: Very good.  
4 Beautiful job.

5 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Victor, I  
6 have noticed in some of the future years,  
7 there is a lot of road improvements where  
8 there is moneys that the city has dedicated,  
9 but then there is -- we are waiting on other  
10 moneys. Where do those typically come from?

11 MR. CARDENAS: They come from  
12 federal funds that are allocated through  
13 local county, fiduciary groups. And there is  
14 a committee that gets together every year and  
15 doles out those funds to a certain part of  
16 Oakland County. So we have been generous.  
17 We have been lucky to have some of those  
18 funds allocated. But as -- I think that they  
19 met about a few weeks ago. We weren't --  
20 some of the ones that we proposed, that we  
21 have on tap, did not receive enough votes.  
22 So we will try again next year.

23 But with that said, sometimes

1 the ones that do receive votes, they get  
2 funding from the feds, but then come time to  
3 construct that municipality that received the  
4 support may not have their matching, so then  
5 they might come to us and say hey, do you  
6 have the funds to support this and we might  
7 be able to pull together and make that  
8 happen.

9 So, as of right now, what we  
10 have in the outline of the plan that has  
11 federal funds has been supported by  
12 previous -- what's the group called?

13 MS. JOHNSON: I am trying to  
14 remember.

15 MR. CARDENAS: They have received  
16 funding previously, but in the future we are  
17 still going to keep on trying, to get --

18 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Pretty much  
19 a --

20 MR. CARDENAS: Tri-County funds,  
21 that's what it is.

22 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Very good.  
23 I echo Ted's comments as well. The website



1 and the way that it's laid out is just  
2 beautiful. For anybody that isn't a  
3 financial wizard to actually know where the  
4 money goes for the city, house means, it's  
5 just a wonderful display. I really applaud  
6 the effort.

7 MR. GIACOPETTI: Couple of  
8 questions, Victor. The Beck Road widening  
9 project, which is pushed out to 2021 fiscal  
10 year. And I assume that that is on the list  
11 of projects that are submitted to the  
12 tri-county panel.

13 In the event that there was  
14 money available, I mean, that is a much, much  
15 larger project than a couple extra dollars  
16 lying around.

17 I mean, would there be a  
18 benefit to having it moved forward on the  
19 CIP? Does the committee take that into  
20 consideration when they allocate funds as to  
21 when it is scheduled on your plan?

22 MR. CARDENAS: I mean, I believe  
23 that the plan is kind of predicated on what

1 the committee supports.

2 So if we have that support,  
3 then they would obviously have that sooner in  
4 the plan for your consideration. That  
5 widening project is going to be very  
6 significant. The road construction is going  
7 to be enough -- is going to be significant  
8 enough, but the (unintelligible) acquisition  
9 is even more. We would want to do that in  
10 partnership with our colleagues to the south.  
11 And we are looking at more federal funds and  
12 consultation with our Congressional  
13 representatives and seeing how we can make  
14 that work. Not only just for Novi, but down  
15 to the south, Wayne County. We want that  
16 continuous four lane road all the way from  
17 M14 up to Beck. To acquire all that rights  
18 of way and the road construction in  
19 collaboration with multi jurisdictional  
20 support, is going to be -- it's significant.

21 So once we get that support  
22 and line all that up, yeah, we can go  
23 forward, but it's pretty aspirational right

1 now.

2 There is a lot of due  
3 diligence being accrued right now, in  
4 discussions taking place not only here, but  
5 with our colleagues in Washington.

6 MR. GIACOPETTI: The other  
7 question is concerning the Ring Road project.

8 That project -- starting that  
9 project is contingent on the special  
10 assessment being passed, is that -- do I  
11 understand that correctly?

12 MR. CARDENAS: We have special  
13 assessment dollars currently right now that  
14 are -- that have been set aside for several  
15 years by City Council for a special project  
16 like this. So the dollars are available now.  
17 The reimbursement would be what would be set  
18 up from the (unintelligible) improvement  
19 authority at a later date.

20 I think we have got a little  
21 bit of a chicken and the egg situation. Once  
22 we get the authority set up, then I think we  
23 can pull the trigger on this project.

1 MR. GIACOPETTI: This could be  
2 moved if that's not approved, or it doesn't  
3 come to fruition?

4 MR. CARDENAS: Correct. Or like  
5 in years past, we might fund it in this  
6 fiscal year, but maybe start working on it in  
7 future fiscal years and roll the money over,  
8 just because it's -- how large it is.

9 It might not be able to get  
10 it done in one year, especially with the  
11 bidding, how the weather is.

12 MR. GIACOPETTI: The estimate on  
13 the maintenance facility. You expect to have  
14 that shored up before the budget -- CIP  
15 approved?

16 MR. CARDENAS: Definitely,  
17 definitely.

18 MR. GIACOPETTI: So I want to  
19 echo the other members, comments that the  
20 staff did a fantastic job. I think council  
21 members Wroble and Stout deserve a lot of  
22 credit as well. It was very productive  
23 meetings, a lot of hard work went into this

1 plan. So I fully support it.

2 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: John?

3 MR. AVDOULOS: I have seen the  
4 plans from way back when, and seeing how this  
5 was put together, I think it's very user  
6 friendly.

7 There is a lot of -- kind of  
8 interesting, there is a lot of things that I  
9 have seen that are still here and I know how  
10 the process works and how things move up to  
11 the top and back and froth.

12 It is a great tool to be able  
13 to use -- I was looking at it the other day  
14 with my wife, and she found it very easy to  
15 navigate, and then, you know, zero in on the  
16 areas of your particular interest.

17 Can we move this to this  
18 year, and well, that's up to a group of  
19 people, not individuals.

20 I do live by the ITC trail,  
21 by Garfield, that goes to ITC park. We use  
22 that, you know, constantly. So it's a great  
23 asset to the city, and also the walkability

1 that the city is looking to do. I think it's  
2 fantastic and it's pulling a lot of people  
3 out, and I see people, you know, really  
4 taking to heart, you know, what the city is  
5 providing.

6 The one interesting thing  
7 that I saw and came up in discussion, was the  
8 roundabout at Taft and Nine Mile. I am all  
9 for roundabouts. But, you know, once all  
10 that gets developed, I think, you know, we'll  
11 put the priorities, you know, in the correct  
12 order.

13 But I again, I think it's a  
14 nice tool and appreciate the effort.

15 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Barb?

16 Motion from us?

17 MS. MCBETH: Yes, we do. Motion  
18 for adoption, if you are so inclined.

19 MR. GIACOPETTI: Chair Pehrson, I  
20 failed to mention Council Member Much and the  
21 hard work he put into this as well. Because  
22 I know he reads the minutes of our meetings.

23 MR. CARDENAS: I'm sure he will

1 appreciate that.

2 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: He's the  
3 one.

4 MR. GIACOPETTI: With that, I  
5 would like to make a motion to adopt the  
6 2017-2023 Capital Improvement Program.

7 MR. ZUCHLEWSKI: Second.

8 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: We have a  
9 motion by Member Giacometti, second by Member  
10 Zuchlewski. Any other comments?

11 Barb, can you call the roll.

12 MS. MCBETH: Member Avdoulos?

13 MR. AVDOULOS: Yes.

14 MS. MCBETH: Member Giacometti?

15 MR. GIACOPETTI: Yes.

16 MS. MCBETH: Chair Pehrson?

17 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Yes.

18 MS. MCBETH: Member Zuchlewski?

19 MR. ZUCHLEWSKI: Yes.

20 MS. MCBETH: Motion passes four  
21 to zero.

22 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Thank you.  
23 Appreciate it.

1                   Next on the agenda is the  
2                   landscape order, Text Amendment 18.23. It's  
3                   a public hearing in consideration of Section  
4                   5.5 of the Zoning Ordinance and it's  
5                   accompanying Landscape Design Manual. The  
6                   changes are proposed to make the ordinance  
7                   requirements more achievable and realistic  
8                   given the restraints of most sites to promote  
9                   the visibility of buildings and the health of  
10                  planted materials through the less crowding  
11                  of plantings, to promote the health of  
12                  non-built open areas by additions of certain  
13                  invasive species to the list of species not  
14                  allowed, to clean up the inconsistencies in  
15                  the ordinance, from the intent of the  
16                  ordinance, and to bring the ordinance into  
17                  agreement with the other recently amended  
18                  ordinances.

19                         MR. MEADER: Thank you very much  
20                         for your time. I just wanted to do a brief  
21                         introduction of we are proposing with these  
22                         changes.

23                                 As I mentioned in the



1 introduction, a lot of it is related to  
2 basically trying to avoid the requirement for  
3 a lot of variances and things, especially  
4 these changes are on the commercial and  
5 industrial sector. Actually very little  
6 changes related to anything residential.

7 As an example, what I am  
8 trying to get at is behind you, I don't know  
9 if it shows up on computers. So this is --  
10 if we totally enforce -- this is for  
11 commercial district -- we totally enforce the  
12 rules that are in place now, this is what we  
13 would have, trees on top of trees, and trees  
14 forced into situations where they really  
15 can't survive very well because they are so  
16 crowded on top of each other.

17 So what happens is, I could  
18 either -- when I am reviewing plans, either  
19 choose to make them do this, which is pretty  
20 ridiculous or basically they have to get  
21 waivers or basically kind of say this is good  
22 enough based on having enough trees.

23 So kind of like they have the

1 situation where we have been fully -- beat  
2 the ordinance fully, but it doesn't create  
3 something like this.

4 So the changes that I am  
5 proposing, for example, commercial, that's  
6 105 trees, by the way, the changes still have  
7 significant landscaping, but the most  
8 different changes are less required for  
9 interior landscaping, less required in front  
10 of buildings, so it's better visibilty for  
11 buildings that has been requested by business  
12 people, by the fire marshal, and by  
13 landscaping architects who want to have a  
14 chance to be creative rather than just  
15 cramming trees in to meet an ordinance.

16 So this -- it still creates  
17 the screening required for parking to keep --  
18 because not -- it lets people see the  
19 building, it lets the fire people see the  
20 address on the building, that kind of thing.

21 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: We  
22 appreciate that.

23 MR. MEADER: Kevin thought that

1 would be a good thing, too.

2 So it's a total of 64 trees.  
3 You're down 31 trees, it's still quite  
4 heavily landscaped. So that's one example.

5 Here is another. This is  
6 kind of a new thing I am proposing. This is  
7 for situations for commercial where you have  
8 parking between the building and the road.

9 So if we did full parking  
10 requirements, it would still be blocking the  
11 building. So it's about 50 percent of the  
12 requirements with a berm still required to  
13 block the headlights, but people can see the  
14 building better. It's kind of a different  
15 thing. We don't really have any kind of  
16 situation like in the ordinance right now.

17 And then this is a third  
18 example, this is for the industrial  
19 subdivision. We currently require one canopy  
20 tree for every 30 linear feet plus three sub  
21 canopy for every 40 feet, which basically is  
22 a small tree, like a flowering crab apple, so  
23 we require three for every 40 feet, which is

1 pretty packed in. That's kind of what it  
2 looks like there.

3 Basically I am proposing  
4 fewer sub canopy trees and a few more shrubs  
5 to kind of offset it. But this was building  
6 better, enforce the hedge requirement for  
7 blocking the headlights from the parking, but  
8 loosen up it a little bit you can see still  
9 see the building, you still do a lot of  
10 landscaping but nothing to the amount that we  
11 have there. There is 115 trees, now the  
12 requirement is 31, plus 31 shrubs. You still  
13 are seeing a lot of landscaping, but you're  
14 not seeing this overplanting that's required  
15 by ordinance.

16 So those are the main focuses  
17 of it, kind of loosen it up a little, still  
18 lot of screening, still block the parking,  
19 but get the buildings more visible.

20 Then there is some other kind  
21 of smaller changes that I encourage you to  
22 look through in the ordinance. There is a  
23 lot of changes. I can't go through them all

1 in one night, nor do you want me to go over  
2 them all now.

3 But I am happy to answer any  
4 questions you might have.

5 One thing I do have in there,  
6 is in the Town Center we currently require  
7 just like any other commercial situation,  
8 canopy trees and sub canopy trees. I am  
9 proposing having just one or the other. They  
10 can choose, if they want canopies or a few  
11 more sub canopies, but just one or the other.

12 We don't really do that now  
13 anyway. We don't really have a requirement  
14 in most of the developments. I just want to  
15 make it official.

16 Anyway, whatever you --  
17 comments you have, I am glad to have them.

18 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: We will  
19 open it up to the audience. There is no one  
20 in the audience, so we will close the  
21 audience participation, turn it over the  
22 Planing Commission.

23 MR. ZUCHLEWSKI: Like to make a

1 comment. I think in addition to saving the  
2 developers money to put in plants, then  
3 owners to maintain them, because of dying and  
4 being choked out, normally they don't get  
5 replaced. I think this is -- in the long run  
6 this is going to be very beneficial all the  
7 way around.

8 I also like the idea that the  
9 buildings aren't hidden behind, you know,  
10 from a security standpoint. You know,  
11 inviting break-ins and that sort of thing. I  
12 think people can see around the building and  
13 it's illuminated well and it's not  
14 overcrowded, I think this is going to help in  
15 those cases also.

16 Those are my commends. You  
17 did a lot of work on it, a lot of scratching  
18 out, there wasn't much left. Good job.

19 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Member  
20 Giacometti.

21 MR. GIACOPETTI: I had a couple  
22 of questions about the process.

23 In the amendment, you have

1           referenced that the proposed changes were  
2           sent out to a number of local developers?

3                   MR. MEADER:  Yes, I sent it --  
4           not to developers.  I sent it to 13 different  
5           landscape architects who do a lot of work in  
6           the city to get their comments.  I  
7           incorporated some of them, I couldn't  
8           incorporate all.  Some wanted more trees,  
9           some wanted less, some wanted, you know -- so  
10          I couldn't do everything, but I did get their  
11          comments and I can share with you what they  
12          provided.

13                   But I did try to use as many  
14          as I could that I thought were in line with  
15          what they were trying to do here.

16                   MR. GIACOPETTI:  In summarizing  
17          the comments, did they typically want to back  
18          out more, or -- were there any themes that  
19          jumped out from their comments?

20                   MR. MEADER:  Well, they all like  
21          that there was less.  They all -- none of  
22          them said they thought that this was a  
23          mistake to reduce the number of trees.  It's

1 something they have all been dealing with,  
2 trying to get around the ordinance and they  
3 all are basically tree huggers, they love  
4 trees. They saw a need for not as many.

5 A couple asked if we could do  
6 it based on parking spaces, number of spaces  
7 in an area. I tried a couple of different  
8 scenarios and I couldn't make one work to not  
9 penalize one end or the other. So I just  
10 went with the space that we currently use.

11 I think it makes sense anyway  
12 because part of the problem is if we have --  
13 like this is just parking spaces, but if we  
14 have areas developed with big loading areas,  
15 then if you do it by spaces, then they're  
16 going to be undercounted, or if I jack up the  
17 counts to compensate for them, then the ones  
18 without loading space like this, then they  
19 are penalized. I just figured it would be  
20 fair to lower that area.

21 Some wanted no street trees,  
22 just again, to create the visibility. I just  
23 didn't -- there were no perimeter trees



1 around the parking lot. I didn't want to go  
2 there. I know that there -- I didn't try to  
3 dot the ordinance. I know that a lot of  
4 thought had been going on beforehand. I was  
5 just trying make it work. So some said less  
6 perimeter trees or no perimeter trees.  
7 Generally they didn't fault having good  
8 amount of landscaping. They just had  
9 different ways to look at it.

10 MR. GIACOPETTI: I guess over the  
11 past year or so that you have been working  
12 closely with us, can you think of any  
13 specific plans that we have reviewed that  
14 this would have had very significant impact  
15 or that you would -- the view would have  
16 been -- the original plan would have been in  
17 compliance as initialed proposed? Did any  
18 specific plans come -- you know, do you have  
19 in mind when you developed the --

20 MR. MEADER: Basically I would  
21 say 80 to 90 percent at least of the projects  
22 we've had since I have been here have --  
23 wouldn't have been able to meet the full

1 ordinance as we have it now.

2 So that's what I was kind of  
3 just constantly getting -- seeing this.  
4 That's where I was reacting to mostly  
5 because -- just that we couldn't meet the  
6 ordinance. And so I didn't want to have a  
7 skeletal thing. I think it's nice to have a  
8 lot of trees, so there is no particular  
9 project, there is a lot of them, that they  
10 just couldn't meet the ordinance.

11 The other thing, you know,  
12 the more trees you have -- say the thing was  
13 jammed up with required trees, there is no  
14 room for them to put woodland replacement  
15 trees on the lot. Now here -- granted there  
16 is still a lot of -- you know, there is not a  
17 lot of room for woodland replacement trees,  
18 but there is more if they choose to do that.

19 The way the ordinance is, if  
20 we required them it fully, there is just no  
21 room in most cases for any woodland  
22 replacement trees, aside from residential  
23 lots where they have open -- you know, open

1 parts, that kind of thing. Most commercial  
2 areas, there just is no room for any kind of  
3 woodland replacement trees to do all the  
4 requirements. I had a hard time saying,  
5 okay, we are going to let you not do this  
6 ordinance in order to put woodland  
7 replacement trees on it. I didn't see that I  
8 could really do that. So that was some of  
9 the issue we ran into.

10 MR. GIACOPETTI: My only  
11 questions were concerning the review. This  
12 is very extensive and not within the scope of  
13 my expertise at all. I kill house plants.  
14 But I do appreciate all the work.

15 I wish that some members  
16 of -- some members of the -- you know, the  
17 landscape community had come out tonight to  
18 share some thoughts or concerns, but I  
19 suppose, you know, they had done it through  
20 writing.

21 It's so large I would -- you  
22 know, sort of reviewed -- an independent  
23 review, I would have appreciated for some

1 feedback.

2 MR. MEADER: I would be glad to  
3 send you whatever comments you like to get.  
4 I would be happy to do that.

5 I kind of summarized a few,  
6 not all of them, later on.

7 MR. GIACOPETTI: I support it.

8 MR. MEADER: I wanted comments.  
9 You know, most of them have been dealt with  
10 Novi more than I have, more years. Thanks.

11 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Member  
12 Avdoulos?

13 MR. AVDOULOS: Yes. I had  
14 mentioned the last time that you were here  
15 about the appreciation of making something  
16 that -- when it's -- when a project is  
17 presented to the city that the applicant  
18 doesn't have to go through and exercise the  
19 idea of like asking for a ton of waivers.  
20 And this is very helpful. I think if this  
21 was an issue, a lot of the landscape  
22 architects would have been here. And the  
23 fact that they were contacted to provide

1           their reviews and their comments, and what  
2           they would like to see, I think that's a  
3           great asset from the city to the profession,  
4           because a lot of cities don't do at that.  
5           They will ascribe to what the ordinance  
6           should be and not allow some flexibility.

7                         And I think what we have here  
8           is an opportunity like you had indicated, to  
9           allow landscape architects, you know, to work  
10          with creativity and landscape part and parcel  
11          with the design. And so they should, you  
12          know, be able to work together to create a  
13          nice project.

14                        And I think, you know, from  
15          what I have seen of other projects done in  
16          other cities, you know, this landscape  
17          ordinance is still nicely put together  
18          because it doesn't provide landscape -- you  
19          know, there is a lot of cities -- landscape  
20          architects go in with their idea and, the way  
21          landscape is taken out is through a VE  
22          process rather than here is what we should be  
23          doing.

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So I think this is good.  
It's always, you know, heading in the right direction, to eliminate a lot of the waivers. I like the fact that we added some more trees into the prohibited types, you know, could be sustainable and not have diseases and things like that.

So I think we -- you know, these things always have to get revisited anyway from what I heard. I appreciate the work that's done. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Rick, I just have one question. Section D II, subsection A.

MR. MEADER: Oh, that one.

CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: And it's the one that I happened to mark, there was a couple that I marked just the words, but I didn't say, but this one I did.

It's just a question of, so the comment is, in situations where the building does not allow landscaping immediately adjacent to the building,

1           alternate placements of required foundation  
2           landscaping may be proposed elsewhere on the  
3           property.

4                           And I see the may, I wrote a  
5           note, should it be a shall or a should.  
6           Because you're -- I saw that a couple of  
7           times, kind of a recurring theme.

8                           My only thought was, again,  
9           we were trying to get some flexibility. But  
10          you have gone through such an extensive  
11          rewrite, and in such situations, for this  
12          being adjacent to the building, this always  
13          comes back with I think just about every kind  
14          of applicant that walks in front of us, they  
15          will do the minimum requirement, which is  
16          fine, but I would like to see them maybe  
17          encouraged to do more.

18                           I don't know if that may --  
19          should be a should, or should be a different  
20          word there. But I see that as kind of there,  
21          okay, Rick, put a may in there, so I am going  
22          to get away from that and go somewhere else.  
23          Or come back with another variance or

1 something like that, which is what I think we  
2 are trying to get away from. Especially some  
3 of the bigger properties, where they -- that  
4 landscaping -- that you're talking about,  
5 even though it's lower, a little bit more  
6 visibility, helps everybody for the number of  
7 reasons that you articulated. I just think I  
8 would like to see the should or shall in some  
9 those of descriptors there.

10 I don't want to, again, crowd  
11 these folks into making them do things, but I  
12 think I do. Otherwise you're just going to  
13 end up with street, tree and a building, and  
14 nothing in front of the building. I like  
15 that idea of the greenery in front of the  
16 building or the landscape in front of the  
17 building, then may just kind of give them a  
18 get out jail free card.

19 Ms. McBeth?

20 MS. MCBETH: We will take a look  
21 at that before it moves on. Sometimes the  
22 attorneys take a sharper look at it before it  
23 moves onto City Council just to take a look



1 at those items.

2 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Mr. Schultz  
3 look at that.

4 MR. MEADER: I can tell you what  
5 happened with that.

6 The may was in terms of  
7 positioning, not so -- because we have  
8 situations such as gas stations with a  
9 building surrounded by pavement. And we  
10 allow them to put it somewhere with the  
11 waiver by Planning Commission. So that's  
12 kind of what the may was allowing.

13 It wasn't they wouldn't have  
14 to do the space, but it was if there is just  
15 no place to do it -- I understand what you  
16 are saying. I can certainly change that  
17 word, that's fine. I understand what you are  
18 saying.

19 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: It  
20 encourages the folks to understand that we  
21 want that -- you know, we strive for the kind  
22 of materials that we want on buildings to  
23 bring the level of attractiveness to the

1 buildings. I think the landscaping, what  
2 you're trying to do here is a supplement to  
3 that.

4 Beth can certainly --

5 MR. MEADER: We can work on the  
6 rewording on that.

7 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: That's all  
8 I have. Thanks for doing a wonderful job,  
9 all those cross-outs.

10 I guess we need a motion.

11 MR. GIACOPETTI: Motion to  
12 recommend to City Council the Landscape  
13 Ordinance Text Amendment 18.283.

14 MR. ZUCHLEWSKI: Second.

15 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Motion by  
16 Giacometti, second by Zuchlewski. Any other  
17 comments? Barb can you call the roll.

18 MS. MCBETH: Member Giacometti?

19 MR. GIACOPETTI: Yes.

20 MS. MCBETH: Chair Pehrson?

21 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Yes.

22 MS. MCBETH: Member Zuchlewski?

23 MR. ZUCHLEWSKI: Yes.

1 MS. MCBETH: Member Avdoulos?

2 MR. AVDOULOS: Yes.

3 MS. MCBETH: Motion passes four  
4 to zero.

5 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Thanks,  
6 Rick.

7 Next is the approval of the  
8 January 11, 2017 Planning Commission minutes.  
9 Any modifications, changes? Motion to  
10 approve?

11 MR. ZUCHLEWSKI: Motion to  
12 approve.

13 MR. GIACOPETTI: Second.

14 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Motion by  
15 Zuchlewski, second by Giacometti. Any other  
16 comments? Barb, please.

17 MS. MCBETH: Chair Pehrson?

18 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Yes.

19 MS. MCBETH: Member Zuchlewski?

20 MR. ZUCHLEWSKI: Yes.

21 MS. MCBETH: Member Avdoulos?

22 MR. AVDOULOS: Yes.

23 MS. MCBETH: Member Giacometti?

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MR. GIACOPETTI: Yes.

MS. MCBETH: Motion passes four  
to zero.

CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Matters for  
discussion?

MR. GIACOPETTI: I have a matter  
for discussion.

MS. MCBETH: Please.

MR. GIACOPETTI: Inspired by  
Rick's work. I think the other landscape we  
have seen in the last couple of years, a lot  
of requests for waivers in landscaping. I  
think the other area where you have seen a  
lot of requests for waivers was facade. I  
mean, a lot.

And I guess this is a matter  
for discussion and a question for Ms. McBeth  
is when was the last time we reviewed -- the  
city reviewed its ordinance and standards  
because a lot of -- there is a lot of  
requests for waivers and maybe -- I don't  
know.

MS. MCBETH: It has been a few

1 years, but the good news is that we have  
2 already asked to have a facade consultant to  
3 take a look at that. We expect they will be  
4 presenting a draft of the changes here in the  
5 next few weeks.

6 MR. GIACOPETTI: Recently I mean,  
7 I had seen something that had suggested the  
8 facade ordinances, broadly, which they keep  
9 the community looking good, but they also are  
10 increasing the cost of development to the  
11 point where it's not feasible to have, you  
12 know, diversity of housing options and for --  
13 you know, all the income groups. That's why  
14 it seems to be why we are getting everything  
15 new coming to town is half a million to  
16 million dollars, you know, homes.

17 MR. AVDOULOS: Are the waivers  
18 based on like materials that are being  
19 proposed, or --

20 MR. GIACOPETTI: Typically.

21 MS. MCBETH: Sometimes the  
22 materials and sometimes the percentage of  
23 material doesn't exactly match what the

1 ordinance calls for.

2 MR. AVDOULOS: I know that year  
3 after year, you know, they're doing a lot of  
4 work on materials and they're getting better,  
5 you know, a lot of people are now using  
6 cement board for siding and stuff, vinyl  
7 siding, so it lasts a lot longer. It is  
8 much -- you know, much better in different  
9 types of metals and things like that.

10 But if it's being -- going to  
11 be reviewed, that's a good thing.

12 MR. GIACOPETTI: Brick  
13 (unintelligible) seems to be the most common  
14 waiver request.

15 MR. AVDOULOS: A lot of that is  
16 kind of interest lately, not only when a  
17 downturn in the economy came about, a lot of  
18 the brick facilities closed down. And a lot  
19 of bricklayers got out of business, so  
20 they're trying to limit the amount of  
21 materials they use for speed of construction  
22 and different things.

23 But I think we should take a

1 look at it. I am glad the city has that,  
2 too, because again there is municipalities  
3 that do not have that. They get a lot of  
4 interesting things.

5 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Very good.  
6 Thank you. Any supplemental issues?

7 I am going to take a stab at  
8 the next one, audience participation  
9 adjournment, being not one run on sentence,  
10 but two categories.

11 Seeing no one in the  
12 audience, we will close that last audience  
13 participation. And then look for a motion to  
14 adjourn.

15 MR. ZUCHLEWSKI: Motion to  
16 adjourn.

17 MR. GIACOPETTI: Second.

18 CHAIRPERSON PEHRSON: Al those in  
19 favor?

20 THE BOARD: Aye.

21 (The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.)

22 \*\* \*\* \*\*

23

1 STATE OF MICHIGAN )  
 2 ) ss.  
 3 COUNTY OF OAKLAND )


4 I, Jennifer L. Wall, Notary Public within and for the  
 5 County of Oakland, State of Michigan, do hereby certify that this  
 6 meeting was taken before me in the above entitled matter was by  
 7 me duly sworn at the aforementioned time and place; that the  
 8 testimony given was stenographically recorded in the presence of  
 9 myself and afterward transcribed by computer under my personal  
 10 supervision, and that said testimony is a full, true and correct  
 11 transcript.

12 I further certify that I am not connected by blood or  
 13 marriage with any of the parties or their attorneys, and that I  
 14 am not an employee of either of them, nor financially interested  
 15 in the action.

16 IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the  
 17 City of Walled Lake, County of Oakland, State of Michigan.

18

19 3-27-17

20 

21 Date Jennifer L. Wall CSR-4183  
 22 Oakland County, Michigan  
 23 My Commission Expires 11/12/22