



CITY OF NOVI
Beautification Commission
Wednesday, March 12, 2025 6:00 pm
Mayor's Conference Room
Novi Civic Center | 45175 Ten Mile Road

Call to Order – 6:08 p.m.

Roll Call – Gareth Crawford, Yogesh Kumar, Jan Lach, Dinesh Seksaria, Mary Angela Winter, Torry Yu

Present – Gareth Crawford, Yogesh Kumar, Jan Lach, Mary Angela Winter, Torry Yu

Absent Excused – Dinesh Seksaria

Approval of Agenda

Motion: Winter; Seconded: Yu; Approved 5:0

Approval of Minutes – January 8, 2025

Motion: Winter; Seconded: Lach; Approved 5:0

Chair – Jan Lach

Secretary – Torry Yu

City Liaison – Kate Oppermann

Purpose of the Meeting

1. 2025 Neighborhood Entryway Enhancement Matching Grant Program

The Commission reviewed the applications submitted for the 2025 cycle of the program, as well as comments from staff regarding the applications.

Their discussion included the necessity of conditions for two of the grants, Chamberlin Crossing would need to revise their plan so that no landscape boulders are included in the right-of-way/crash zone and the understanding that entryway gates are not permitted on public streets. Vista Hills had a plan that, while otherwise satisfactory, included the invasive *Vinca minor*, also known as periwinkle/myrtle. As such, Vista Hills will need to work with their landscaper to select a different, noninvasive shrub to replace the *Vinca minor* in their plans (ideally with a native plant). This revised plan must be submitted for approval by

city staff prior to any work.

Additionally, they felt that the submission for Berkshire Point was primarily maintenance work (sod installation and sprinkler repair) and is therefore not applicable for the grant. The Commission did still wish to recognize and support the installation of new trees/shrubs and therefore suggested the approval of the reduced amount of \$1,500 rather than their original request of \$5,000. Staff Liaison Oppermann will reach out to the Berkshire Point HOA to let them know of their options regarding the matter - either accepting the offered \$1,500 in the 2025 cycle, knowing they will not again be eligible for the grant until 2028, or retracting their current application with the opportunity to reapply in 2026 (minus the maintenance items and ideally with a more robust landscaping plan, including native plants) for the maximum award amount.

Following this, the Commission determined to make the following recommendations to City Council:

To recommend approval to award the Neighborhood Entryway Enhancement Matching Grant to the following neighborhoods upon successful completion of the entryway work depicted in the application Berkshire Point (\$1,500), Chamberlin Crossing (\$5,000) with conditions, Lochmoor Village (\$2,816.50), and Vista Hills (\$5,000) with conditions.

Motion: Yu, Seconded: Winter; Approved 5:0

Roundtable Discussion:

1. Beehives – Commissioner Kumar asked what the metrics are for the success of the beehive pilot program. Ms. Oppermann said that currently, it is simply the viability of the hives in the selected location at Bosco Park. We will need to ensure the bees are safe from pests/predation, productive in creating their honey stores, and very importantly, are able to survive winter to be productive once more in spring 2026. Staff, primarily resident beekeeper Cpt. Theisen, will be regularly attending to the hives to observe progress and make interventions, if needed, to promote success. Secondly, we hope to use the hives as an educational tool regarding pollinators and their benefits through the Novi communications team.

It was suggested that we might consider making information regarding beekeeping more readily available for residents (currently it is housed within the Code of Ordinances). Commissioner Crawford suggested that in the future we might consider a beehive grant.

Commissioner Winter asked if there will be programming options in the future for

the beehives. Ms. Oppermann stated that while we will need to wait to confirm viability in 2026 before proceeding further, PRCS has expressed interest in programming related to the hives. Relatedly, we will be looking at programs offered in other communities that already have established hives in place.

2. Events – Ms. Oppermann reminded the group of the upcoming Arbor Day event and asked for the Commissioners to let her know if they intend to attend the event as soon as possible. She also shared some of the planned table materials. Commissioner Crawford inquired if there was also an opportunity for the Commission to table at the upcoming CommunityFest. Ms. Oppermann stated that there was certainly the opportunity and she could confirm with Community Relations, there would need to be a sufficient number of Commissioners interested in attending given that CommunityFest is a very large scale event.

Public Comment: none

Adjournment: 6:57 p.m.

Upcoming Meetings – 4/9, 5/14, 6/11, 7/9, 8/13, 9/10, 10/8, 11/12, 12/10

Upcoming Events – Arbor Day Celebration (Saturday, April 26th 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)
Perennial Exchange (Saturday, September 20th 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.)