

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NOVI
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2024, AT 7:00 P.M.**

Mayor Fischer called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL: Mayor Fischer, Mayor Pro Tem Casey, Council Members Gurumurthy, Heintz, Smith, Staudt, Thomas

ALSO PRESENT: Victor Cardenas, City Manager
Danielle Mahoney, Assistant City Manager
Elizabeth Saarela, City Attorney

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

CM 24-11-156 Moved by Thomas, seconded by Smith; MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

To approve the agenda as presented.

Roll call vote on CM 24-11-156 **Yeas: Casey, Gurumurthy, Heintz, Smith, Staudt, Thomas, Fischer**
Nays: None

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Strategic Community Recreation and Master Park Plan: No public comments were made.

PRESENTATIONS: None

CITY MANAGER REPORT: None

ATTORNEY REPORT: None

AUDIENCE COMMENTS #1: None

CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS AND APPROVALS:

- A. Approve Minutes of:
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- B. Approval of Zoning Map Amendment 18.747 to rezone approximately 107 acres of property located south of Grand River Avenue, east of Beck Road and west of Taft Road, from Light Industrial, Residential Acreage, and Office Service to the new City West District. SECOND READING

- C. Approval of Resolution approving the City's renewal of participation in the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS), an intergovernmental agreement providing fire mutual aid assistance among its signatories.

in place. They are always looking at their emergency access trail signage and maintaining staff certifications and constantly improving park and facility amenities. That is the gist of where they go next with the action plan. Their team would move into charting out the goal and objectives they've laid out every year. They track those on a quarterly basis because that is part of their CAPRA accreditation. This plan is fluid and can change so their action plans are evolving and they're always updating as well. Their mission is to provide exceptional park recreational and cultural opportunities that are diverse and enhance lives. Their vision is that they have now incorporated at the City staffing level.

The Mayor said he appreciates the work that Mr. Muck and his staff have done.

Member Smith said Mr. Muck's staff has done an exceptional job. He asked Mr. Muck to expand briefly on the CAPRA certification. Mr. Muck responded that Novi is one of three agencies in all of Michigan who are currently CAPRA accredited. Accreditation touches on human resources to inventory to programming to surveys, community input. It runs the spectrum over 144 different standards that have to be met. They have to update processes, manuals, policies every year so they'll be ready for the next re-accreditation. Member Smith said that he saw how hard they worked on that and wanted people to understand how hard the Parks department is working for them. Member Smith appreciated the report's 10 minute walkability map. That gives a good basis for trying to create pocket parks in small areas that are not accessible. He would like to see going forward is Villa Bar, as that seems underutilized. He also thinks the Air Line Trail needs to be looked at in providing better access. Mr. Muck said Deputy Director Ringle has conducted a Villa Bar strategic plan and has worked with the Friends of Villa Bar and he thinks they could potentially incorporate that as an appendix item into this plan. Mr. Muck also said that with regard to Air Line Trail, they still have the City Council goal of the trail connections and exploring those options with other communities.

Member Staudt said that he was chairman of the first committee that did the initial community parks and rec master plan. He is happy to see this completed and is hopeful they will continue to pursue the grants that are available from the state.

CM 24-11-158 Moved by Staudt, seconded by Smith; MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Approval of the resolution to adopt the Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services 2025-29 Strategic Community Recreation and Master Park Plan.

Member Thomas appreciates the work that went into this. She loves that they take the time to listen to their constituents and neighbors. She looks forward to seeing how they can meet some of those needs in the future.

Member Gurumurthy wanted to commend the team for the master plan and would like to see more people participate in the surveys.

Member Heintz said he liked the report, and his favorite page was the park inventory. He said there are pieces of land not able to be fully appreciated and used by residents. He said overall it was a great job.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey said this was a wonderful document. She appreciates the call out to residents with disabilities. She thinks this needs to be a continued focus in terms of making sure the community is welcoming and accessible to all residents including those with disabilities.

Roll call vote on CM 24-11-158

**Yeas: Heintz, Smith, Staudt, Thomas, Fischer,
Casey, Gurumurthy
Nays: None**

2. Consideration of approval of a grant agreement with the Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) in connection with the Community Energy Management Program (CEM) in the amount of \$100,000.

City Manager Cardenas gave props to staff members Matt Turko, Ezeikiel Chojnacki and Danielle Mahoney in their efforts to apply for and secure this grant. They estimate the audit will cost about \$30,000. This will audit the different facilities that are here in the City of Novi with the remaining \$70,000 to go toward low hanging fruit that 's identified in the audit process. He did get a question about switching out buildings that might be repurposed. They can do that if indeed they identify buildings that won't be there in the future, and they'll leave them in the audit currently until they are otherwise identified. Once those decisions are made, they will keep them in the audit. They did this about 14 years ago and it was productive, and a lot of changes were made at this facility. Now they're looking to evaluate what's left in the City's census of buildings.

Member Smith said this is one of those essential pieces of work to find waste, reduce energy, save money and reduce greenhouse gases. He is looking forward to getting the results of this report.

CM 24-11-159

Moved by Smith, seconded by Thomas; MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Approval of a grant agreement with the Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) in connection with the Community Energy Management Program (CEM) in the amount of \$100,000.

Roll call vote on CM 24-11-159

**Yeas: Smith, Staudt, Thomas, Fischer, Casey,
Gurumurthy, Heintz
Nays: None**

3. Consideration of approval to award engineering services to Spalding DeDecker to update the City's Stormwater Master Plan in the amount of \$110,200.

Member Smith asked if this plan includes a study or way to reduce invasives that get into those ponds. The City Manager replied that it does not. Member Smith asked if they could have them take a look at this as part of the task. The City Manager said he'd have to get back to Member Smith about that.

CM 24-11-160 Moved by Smith, seconded by Casey; MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Approval to award engineering services to Spalding DeDecker to update the City's Stormwater Master Plan in the amount of \$110,200.

Roll call vote on CM 24-11-160

**Yeas: Staudt, Thomas, Fischer, Casey,
Gurumurthy, Heintz, Smith
Nays: None**

4. Consideration of tentative approval of Sakura East JZ23-41 with Zoning Map Amendment 18.743, to rezone from Light Industrial to Town Center One with a Planned Rezoning Overlay (PRO).

City Manager Cardenas said that Council saw this back in February earlier this year and then the Planning Commission approved it and recommended it for Council consideration this past October. Plans have since been modified to provide a wetland overlook on the adjacent City property. The PRO is requesting a rezoning of 3.5 acres in a transition area near the Novi Town Center. The applicant is proposing a development of 45 unit multi-family townhome development. The public benefit offered is a design and constructive pocket park wetland overlook on the City parcel to the west. Staff is suggesting that the overlook be moved to the east side so it connects the possible street that's going to connect Eleven Mile to Grand River.

The Mayor asked City Attorney Saarela to confirm that Council's process at this meeting is to go ahead and consider this for a tentative approval of the PRO which would then give her and staff the direction to come back with a final document and she responded that was correct, that they'll come back with a rezoning overlay agreement that will basically adopt the plan that Council's approving tonight with more specific details about conditions.

Tim Loughrin of Robertson Brothers Homes, 6905 Telegraph Road, was present to represent the development team of Sakura Novi. Changes have been made to the development since Council last saw the plans. They have worked with staff to come up with solutions that they have made. They've created buffers to the adjacent properties. One request was to add buffer plantings, and they've reduced the count from 52 to 45, which freed up space to do landscaping and added additional open space. The public amenity they are proposing was born from the City Council. Rather than having a walkway, we had a trail that went from Eleven Mile to Grand River. It made sense to utilize that wetland area with something that people could use and not just Sakura Novi but the public at large. They came up with an amenity on the City owned wetland property that would invite people in and create an overlook that will be inviting for everybody that would be low

impact but have a visual aspect that people have when they walk by. Staff had asked if they could consider something on the east side of the site. They are amenable to anything but request that they could move forward with development while they work out this with either a subcommittee or with staff. They've got three distinct amenity areas with 48.5% of the site provided as open space. Nobody's had interest in this property. Office space isn't coming back and it's too small for industrial. It seems logical that residential would be the use and as an extension of Sakura Novi, they would be utilizing the same amenities. They've worked with staff to find the right fit for landscaping and amenities. There are three areas that are for passive and active use by the residents. Next to building eight there is a fire pit area, a seating area and a congregating area next to the wetland. They will be keeping the wetland in its natural state. On the east, they wanted to have an active play area along with seating. The City's wetland is in between, and they think it's a great use of space and does function as one form together. The whole thing will be called Sakura Novi. This is perfect timing to move forward with this last phase. The zoning is I-1, and it seems logical to expansion of Town Center Gateway. In summary, the project is 3.13 net acres, the current zoning is I-1, the proposed zoning is TC-1 PRO, the number of proposed homes is 45, the plan type is rental townhomes, unit sizes will be 1,330 – 1,600 square feet, and 48.9% of the site will be open space. These will be high quality townhomes, a productive use of land in the City's core, a walkable & inviting community, a housing option for residents that are underserved, and an appropriate continuation of the Sakura Novi community. It'll be the same housing product that they're building right now in Sakura.

Member Gurumurthy said she was glad they are protecting and enhancing the wetland. She is in support of the overlook being on the east side to keep the long-term vision as well as where they are going with active mobility. She asked if there were other things that could be highlighted, like the wetland. She also saw only one charger in the visuals as well as a note about invasive species removal and treatment and asked if that was something that is considered as well. Mr. Loughrin responded that they are fine with moving the overlook to the east side and he knows the ring road is not 100% at this point but they are willing to keep that process open. He said that there are car chargers in the parking lot. As far as the invasive species, he thinks that would just be part of the agreement they make for that amenity. He thinks it's something they can accomplish when they do the design and construction. Member Gurumurthy then stated that in terms of a walkable community, there was a comment or recommendation about doing a mid-block crosswalk to help residents and bikers and would like that to be considered. She asked Mr. Loughrin if he had an idea of when this project will start, and he replied that hopefully they will acquire approvals tonight such that they can start their construction documents and that would get them starting sometime in late spring and early to mid-summer with land development. Member Gurumurthy stated that she wanted to understand how they protect the residents of the south and east side if something comes up and they change and do something different than what is already there. Barb McBeth responded that this has been discussed at the Planning Commission on at least a couple of projects. When residential abuts light industrial, there is a greater need for screening in between the uses and the long term use of the zoning ordinance there's been a requirement for a 10 – 15 foot berm. In some cases, they've seen a highly

planted berm, but this site is small so that wouldn't be practical in this case. The developer is proposing a double row of evergreen trees as well as a wooden fence along the south property line. The residents that move there would have a bugger from the existing cell tower. If someone was to come and build something on this cell tower property, then it's likely if they built something that was in the industrial zoning district, they would be required to provide this berm. Member Gurumurthy then said she was trying to understand the highway easement and the different options in front of them in regard to Eleven Mile. Ms. McBeth replied that currently there is a 43' highway easement along Eleven Mile Road frontage in front of the two parcels. It indicated on one of the plans that the highway easement would be moved from the property. The City would just want to make sure that they had either the right of way itself dedicated to the City as part of this agreement or that the 43' highway easement would be maintained so that the City could go in and continue to access and maintain the roads, utilities and sidewalk that would be along Eleven Mile Road. Member Gurumurthy asked if there is a preference on which option is better, and Ms. McBeth replied that from a planning perspective, she thinks the City would be interested in maintaining the access to it one way or the other through the highway easement or the dedication of the right of way and preferably the full 42' so that the sidewalk would be contained within that. Member Gurumurthy said she was glad to see the Sakura extension.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey said she would prefer to see the overlook on the east side. She is agnostic in the terms chosen, whether it is a highway easement or right of way but will be looking forward to seeing the 42 or 43 feet will be there as the staff has asked for. The Mayor Pro Tem asked if any of the units had first floor living space and Mr. Loughrin replied that the garage and entrance are on the first floor but that there is a bonus room down there that is livable space but it's not a bedroom. She asked if any of the surrounding I-1's change and there is a new development or building that comes in, those sites still have the requirement to put in the berm or additional screening and what's being done on Sakura will not eliminate that requirement on those I-1 properties. Ms. McBeth stated that she was mostly talking about the property to the south because the property to the west is City owned and there is already a development to the east. If anyone wanted to develop the property to the south, a developer would need to go to the Planning Commission with a site plan and then the berm requirements would be discussed at that point. The property to the east is not fully developed but all buildings have been approved with the initial submittal. Mayor Pro Tem Casey told Mr. Loughrin that she is satisfied with the residential screening and how the development has come together.

Member Staudt stated the reduction in units, the changes in public amenities, the changes in public benefit have all been addressed in a satisfactory way to him. This is a nice extension and looks very nice.

CM 24-11-161

Moved by Staudt, seconded by Casey; MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Tentative indication that Council may approve the request of Sakura Novi Residential, LLC, for Sakura East JZ23-41 with Zoning Map Amendment 18.743, to rezone from Light Industrial (I-1) to Town Center One (TC-1), subject to a Planned Rezoning Overlay (PRO) Agreement, and corresponding PRO Concept Plan, and direction to the City Attorney to prepare the PRO Agreement including items A through C:

A. All deviations from the ordinance requirements shall be identified and included in PRO Agreement, including:

1. Allowable Number of Rooms (4.82.2.B): Planning deviation from Section 4.82.2.B to allow an increase in the number of rooms permitted on the property up to 225 rooms, because it is within the allowable increase of the TC-1 ordinance.

2. Sidewalks (Sec 3.27.1.I): Planning deviation from Section 3.27.1.I to permit the existing 6-foot sidewalk rather than the 12.5-foot-wide sidewalk required in the TC1 District on a non-residential collector road, as this is consistent with the existing sidewalk width along 11 Mile Road and is not considered a gathering space in this area.

3. Pedestrian Connectivity (Sec. 3.8.2.G): Planning deviation to allow a 5-foot sidewalk along the west side of the entrance driveway only instead of on both sides of the drive, since it is a relatively small development and areas to the east do not have many walkable destinations, and fewer trees would be provided.

4. Landscape Screening (Sec. 5.5.3.B.ii and iii): Landscaping deviation from Section 5.5.3.B.ii and iii. for the lack of a berm between the site and adjacent industrial properties, as the applicant has provided evergreen trees and arborvitae for screening, as well as a fence along the southern property line.

5. Major Drive (Sec. 5.10): Planning deviation to allow a 24-foot driveway width entering the site, where the

ordinance requires a major drive to be 28-feet back-to-back width, as the site has a relatively low number of trips.

6. Section 9 Waiver (Section 5.15): Façade deviation from Section 5.15 to permit the underage of brick (26% proposed, 30% required) on the front façade, and the overage of Cement Fiber Siding (58% proposed, 50% allowed) on the side facades of the Matsu building style, as the deviation is minor and does not adversely impact the aesthetic quality of the building.

B. The following conditions shall be requirements of the PRO Agreement:

1. The height of the buildings will be limited to 35 feet. The ordinance permits up to 5 stories or 65 feet in TC-1, so limiting the height would be more restrictive.

2. The use of the property is restricted to 45 attached residential units, with a total room count of 225 and a density of 14.3. This would provide a restriction of the use of the property, as well as layout in conformity with the PRO Plan.

3. The total open space of the site will exceed the 15% requirement, with no less than 48% provided, which exceeds the ordinance requirements. The amenities

4. The distance between buildings will be a minimum of 15 feet.

5. No more than 7 units would be in a single building, which is more limiting than the ordinance allows.

6. Screening between adjacent properties including fences and landscaping as shown in the PRO Plan.

C. This motion is made because the proposed Town Center One zoning district is a reasonable alternative to the Gateway East District recommended in the Future Land Use Map, and fulfills the intent of the Master Plan for Land Use, and because:

1. A reduction in traffic compared to development under the current zoning. The traffic study shows a difference of about 20 fewer trips compared to a

general light industrial use, or up to 835 fewer trips compared to a medical office use.

2. The plan shows that the total open space areas to be provided will exceed the 15% Open Space requirement of the TC-1 district, with approximately 45% shown.

3. The project will exceed the 9,000 square foot Usable Open Space requirement, with about 17,200 square feet proposed.

4. Preservation of the on-site wetland. The wetland is very small in size (less than 0.1 acre) but does represent an ecological benefit.

5. A publicly accessible wetland overlook amenity to be provided on the City's parcel on the east side of the pond with similar amenities as shown on the plan for the west side of the pond, that shall be shown on a revised PRO Plan.

6. The detriments to the City from the multiple family development as proposed in this location are not substantial overall, so while the benefits to the public of this proposed use resulting from the conditions above are somewhat minor, they do tend to outweigh the detriments.

Member Heintz said he enjoyed the evolution of this project and it's been nice and supportive of the wetland overlook. He noticed that in the centerpiece for both sides of the secure development that 18 of the 29 plants species will be native plants and would like it to reflect a larger number of native plants. Mr. Loughrin said they could take a harder look at that.

Member Smith asked if the garages would be pre-wired for car chargers and Mr. Loughrin said yes, they are. He likes the wetland overlook. He wanted to restate rooftop solar, in-ground heat exchangers for heat pumps, highlight the LEED features and possibly permeable pavement in the parking lots. He thinks those are a benefit for the residents but a public benefit by saving energy and less carbon emissions. He likes the look and thinks this will be an exciting place.

Mayor Fischer asked if there would be a clubhouse and Mr. Loughrin said they don't typically do clubhouse and focus on type of units and location as the amenity. Based on the previous discussion on the City's parks master plan and the recommendation from staff is that from a cohesive perspective, east makes most sense for the City.

Roll call vote on CM 24-11-161

**Yeas: Thomas, Fischer, Casey, Gurumurthy,
Heintz, Smith, Staudt**

Nays: None

AUDIENCE COMMENTS #2:

Tammi Swanigan spoke about issues she was having with Kelly Breen and how she feels she is being harassed and intimidated with threatening texts. She doesn't know why but would like it to stop. She filed a police report but feels she is also being harassed by Seargent Boody. She voted for the Mayor and would appreciate it if he could do something.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Public Utilities & Technology Committee

Council Member Thomas said at the public meeting on the 19th they engaged with fiber industry professionals who shared insights into the factor that companies consider when deciding where to install fiber. They discussed what made certain areas more attractive for installation and what challenges can arise in others. They also talked about different things the City could do to encourage investment within the community in expanding the fiber availability for the residents.

2. Finance & Administration Committee

Mayor Fischer said the Committee met las week with the Novi Community School District. The district shared their plans for the future as well as bonding initiatives that they may be taking on and invited the Committee to consider partnerships going forward. The Mayor considered it a preliminary but good conversation. The Committee signaled an interest in continuing to partner with them and hearing more about their plans. The big concept was that both the City and the school district spend a lot of money on capital facilities and uses and the more they can utilize those in a cohesive function would be a better efficiency of tax dollar usage.

3. Mobility Committee

Council Member Smith said the Committee gave directions to staff to plan a 10-district sidewalk repair plan based on a trial period that they did in Meadowbrook Glens. The City would be repairing three quarter inch or more deflections, 25% or more panel degradation. If there's greater than two-inch deflection that's reported, that will be taken care of whether that's in that district or not. This is not going to require any ordinance changes. We will see this at next year's budget. The Committee also met with the Mayor Pro Tem and Planner from Northville to discuss non-motorized access across Novi Road between Eight and Nine Mile roads to get residents that are in Northville over to the businesses on Novi Road. It's going to be an ongoing discussion.

4. Long-Range Strategic Planning Committee

Mayor Pro Tem Casey said the Committee met just before the Council meeting and they are making progress in terms of starting to flesh out a time timeline for what it will take to start executing against a long range strategic plan. They are taking some vision from their Olathe, Kansas trip in terms of how they laid out their timeline. She thinks it would be appropriate to get a memo out to Council in an admin pack and talk about the timing and some of the tins that they're looking at. In the beginning of 2025, her colleagues should expect conversations that they as a council should have before they talk broadly to the public. She's giving Council a heads up that the Committee will be asking for their time and involvement in early 2025 to keep progress on track.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL ISSUES:

1. Pavillion Shore Park tribute plaque

Council Member Staudt said 30 years ago he was introduced to a gentleman named Lee Allen. Lee was a DJ in Detroit in the early 60's through the mid 70's. Lee was also the DJ at the Walled Lake Casin here in Novi. In the early 2000's, Lee took Member Staudt to a property and said it would be a great location for a park. It turns out that the City owned that property and now it's the Pavillion Shore Park. Lee passed away two weeks ago at the age of 90. Lee was a protégé of Casey Kasem. He had many mentors but also mentored hundred of DJ's that are currently still on the air. Lee's most important connection to Novi is in early 1960, he started having dances at the Walled Lake Casino and for about five years, he packed the casino virtually every night binging acts like Stevie Wonder, Chuck Berry, the Four Seasons, Fabian. Hundreds of people would be turned away every night se Lee started to broadcast live the Novi. From 1961 to 1965, Novi was on the radio every night in Metro Detroit and Lee Allen was here broadcasting it all live. Lee loved the park, and the Walled Lake Casino and Member Staudt thinks it would be appropriate to put a little plaque on the building that would memorialize Lee, the Walled Lake Casino and Novi's part in the history of rock and roll. There would be no cost to the City as the entire cost would be done through a grant from a nonprofit. Member Staudt just asks for support in a memorial to a very interesting guy who had a big part in Novi's past.

Mayor Fischer appreciates Member Staudt knowing the history and coordinating this with no cost to residents. It's a wonderful tribute to this gentleman. He's in full support of and asks that they be kept posted and hopefully there can be an event once the plaque is dedicated.

COMMUNICATIONS: None

ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 P.M.

Cortney Hanson, City Clerk

Justin Fischer, Mayor

Transcribed by Becky Dockery,
Account Clerk

Date approved: December 2, 2024