



PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

CITY OF NOVI

Regular Meeting

February 23, 2022 7:00 PM

Council Chambers | Novi Civic Center
45175 W. Ten Mile (248) 347-0475

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present: Member Avdoulos, Member Becker, Member Lynch, Chair Pehrson, Member Roney, Member Verma

Absent Excused: Member Dismondy

Staff: Barbara McBeth, City Planner; Beth Saarela, City Attorney; Lindsay Bell, Senior Planner; Rick Meader, Landscape Architect; Victor Boron, Plan Review Engineer; Ben Peacock, Planning Assistant; Saumil Shah, Traffic Consultant; Doug Necci, Façade Consultant

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Member Roney led the meeting attendees in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Member Verma and seconded by Member Lynch.

VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 23, 2022 PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA MOVED BY MEMBER VERMA AND SECONDED BY MEMBER LYNCH.

Motion to approve the February 23, 2022 Planning Commission Agenda. Motion carried 6-0.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Chair Pehrson invited members of the audience who wished to address the Planning Commission during the first audience participation to come forward. Seeing that nobody wished to participate, Chair Pehrson closed the first public participation.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was not any correspondence.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were not any committee reports.

CITY PLANNER REPORT

City Planner McBeth had nothing to report.

CONSENT AGENDA – REMOVALS AND APPROVALS

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. 2022-2028 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

City Planner McBeth said as you know, Victor Cardenas usually presents this plan to the Planning Commission, but he is out of town. Our Finance Director, Carl Johnson, is here to present it this year.

Carl Johnson, CFO for the City of Novi, said the Capital Improvement Plan is a part of our annual operating budget. We do a three-year budget here, and the CIP plan actually extends to six years. The process starts in October, and we go around to the different departments to determine what their wants and needs are. We then come up with a plan and balance our budget. We meet with the CIP Committee which consist of three Council members and two Planning Commissioners. We met a few weeks ago; at that meeting, it was recommended we push forward a couple of items. One of these items was the drone for public safety and cemetery improvements planned for year two within the CIP plan. We seek your recommendation of approval of the plan presented to you tonight to the City Council.

Mr. Johnson continued saying the majority of this plan is roads. We invest 14 to 15 million dollars per year in road projects. The six-year plan includes 93 million dollars' worth of planned road projects. The first three years are funded. The biggest project in the out years is Beck Road, which is a huge cost. We are currently trying to determine whether we can get federal grants for that, and, if not, how we will fund it. Every dollar of the road millage and our share of the gasoline tax from the state goes into our roads, and there are no administrative fees. Our next highest cost in the plan is our water and sewer infrastructure. We have planned to invest 37 million dollars into this infrastructure over the next six years. Parks and Recreation in number three in terms of investment in this plan. We have a substantial Parks and Rec programs. One of the largest items concerns ITC Park. We have roughly 10 million dollars there as a placeholder until we determine what we will do with the park now that Bosco Fields will be opening.

Mr. Johnson then said we have 145 different projects planned. On average, we spend 20 to 25 million on capital out of roughly 130 million of total city funds. While we are still trying to work out the Beck Road funding situation, we wanted to bring it before you to let you know that it is one of our top priorities. We are trying to figure out the cheapest way to get that done. Taft Road is one of the major projects we have planned for next year. We are going to spend about 2.6 million dollars on redoing Taft Road from 8 Mile to 10 Mile. A roundabout is included in this project at the intersection of 9 Mile and Taft. Some have mentioned to me that they don't understand why we would put in a roundabout there; they do not think it is needed and they would prefer to spend the money elsewhere. One of the reasons we are able to do this project is federal funding. Attached to those federal dollars is the requirement to include a roundabout for public safety purposes. Without the roundabout, we would not get significant federal funding. When we originally applied for this, the Mayor and Council at the time wanted a roundabout, but that was about 5 years ago.

Mr. Johnson continued to say we had a goal setting session with Mayor and Council about a week ago. They had a significant interest in pushing the splash pad project up, which was originally planned for three years out. The amount we had budgeted for year three was \$400,000 for the city share of the cost. The overall estimated cost is \$800,00. The Park Foundation is trying to raise \$400,000 for it, and the city would kick in the other \$400,000. Council was clear

that they want this pushed forward, and they want it done at the City of Novi's standards. Not only is the \$800,000 budgeted, but we have added another \$700,000 because the original amount was only funding the splash pad. We would like to put in changing stations, we need to run the water and sewer lines, etcetera. This will be a state-of-the-art splash pad, and we hope to break ground this spring or summer to have it open for the following spring or summer. Also, as we continue to improve Lakeshore Park, the building has been completed and the park looks outstanding. The tunnel under the road is old and due for replacement. It wasn't in the original plan for the building, so that is in the plan for next year. It will require some road shutdowns, so we won't be doing it in the middle of the summer – it will be done during the off season. Regardless, it is long overdue, and the cost is about half a million dollars.

Mr. Johnson concluded by saying lastly, we continue to invest in public safety. Two years ago, we bought a new ladder truck, which is about 1.5 million dollars. This fiscal year, we bought a pumper truck – those are \$900,000. We plan to buy another one in each of the following two years. The funding for that came from the voter approved CIP millage. Without that, we would not be able to afford those trucks on an annual basis.

Chair Pehrson invited members of the audience who wished to participate in the public hearing to approach the podium.

Mike Duchesneau, 1191 South Lake Drive, said there was obviously a lot of work put into this plan and it is well-balanced. It is nice to see the Parks and Rec improvements, particularly the parking added at the south side of Lakeshore Park being expanded. I'd like to see some money allocated to cleaning up Shawood Lake; we have discussed that in several settings in the past. This could include shoreline clean-ups and dredging of the canal. The City of Novi owns over half of the Shawood Lake shoreline, and Lakeshore Park has an access point that would be perfect for putting in kayaks or canoes. I also support purchasing the island on Shawood Lake.

Seeing that nobody else wished to speak, Chair Pehrson closed the public hearing and turned it over to the Planning Commission for consideration.

Member Lynch said I was one of the members on this Committee. I didn't realize how thorough the city is. Coming from a large corporation where I handled large budgets, I'm very impressed with how the city does it. In fact, I was mentioning earlier that I wish I had this software when I was at Ford. It looks like they've done a thorough analysis of the needs throughout the city, even amongst the competing demands. Based on the amount of dollars we have available, they have done a good job dispersing the funds evenly. If you get the chance, go to the website to check out all the different projects.

Member Becker had no comments.

Member Verma asked has the city received the federal funding for the Taft Road project yet?

Carl Johnson said it has been approved, but we have not received it. It is more of a pay as you go situation. Invoices come in throughout the process, and we pay our percentage while the federal government pays their percentage. They don't give us the money up front, but they have approved the grant.

Member Verma asked how much in total will we be receiving from the federal government?

Mr. Johnson said I believe it is around 75 percent, so it's substantial.

Member Roney said this is my first time seeing the CIP, and I am very impressed. Coming from the corporate world, we don't see this kind of planning, so you all have done a great job.

Member Avdoulos said I've seen this information over several years now, but each year it becomes clearer. I have a quick question on the roundabout at Taft and 9 Mile. Just for scale, is it going to be similar in size to the one between 8 and 9 Mile or will it be twice that size?

Mr. Johnson said it is my understanding that it will fit in the footprint of the intersection there right now. As you probably know that intersection is quite large.

Member Avdoulos said it is quite large, but the boulevards and islands kind of spread that out. I know people are going to ask, so I want to give them a point of reference.

Mr. Johnson said it will fit in that footprint, and we have also been in communication with property owners at the four corners of that intersection. We are doing our best to make sure it stays within that range.

Chair Pehrson said if you have a chance, go on the website, and take a look at this. It isn't available anywhere else. There are hours, days, and months put into this; it doesn't happen by happenstance. This proves the financial stability of the city, and I applaud this effort.

Motion made by member Lynch and seconded by Member Avdoulos.

ROLL CALL VOTE TO APPROVE THE 2022-2028 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM MOVED BY MEMBER LYNCH AND SECONDED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS.

Motion to approve the 2022-2028 Capital Improvement Program. Motion carried 6-0.

2. GRIFFIN NOVI JSP 20-27

Public hearing at the request of Singh Development, LLC for JSP 20-27 Griffin Novi for Planning Commission's recommendation to the City Council for approval of a Preliminary Site Plan with a PD-2 Option, Special Land Use permit, Wetland Permit, and Stormwater Management Plan approval. The subject property is located at the southeast corner of Twelve Mile Road and Twelve Oaks Mall access drive in Section 14. The applicant proposes to utilize the Planned Development 2 (PD-2) option to develop 174 multi-family residential units. A private street network is proposed to connect the development to Twelve Mile Road and the Twelve Oaks Mall access drive on the west side of the property

Senior Planner Bell said the subject property is approximately 7.55 acres and is located south of Twelve Mile Road, northeast of the Twelve Oaks Mall in the RC Regional Center District – section 14 of the city. The property is zoned RC Regional Center, with the same zoning to the east, which is a medical office facility, and west, which is currently vacant. To the south is zoned RM-1 Low Rise Multifamily Residential and developed with the Waltonwood senior living facility. To the north is part of the MSU Tollgate Farm property, which is zoned RA Residential Acreage. The Future Land Use map indicates Regional Commercial with the Planned Development 2 option for the subject property, Educational Facility to the north, Office R&D Technology to the east, and PD-1 Option to the south. The applicant is proposing to develop the vacant parcel with 174 rental multi-family residential units. Four multi-story apartment buildings and four townhouse-style buildings are proposed, with one clubhouse building with community amenities that will also contain residential units on the upper floor. An outdoor pool area is adjacent to the clubhouse, and three pocket park amenities are shown on the plan. Parking would be provided in ground-level garages in the apartment buildings and in direct-entry garages for the townhomes. Additional surface lots and on-street spaces are also provided. A private street network is proposed to connect the development to Twelve Mile Road and the Twelve Oaks Mall access drive on the west side of the property. Both exits will be limited to right-turn only due to the presence of boulevard medians at those locations. Sidewalks are provided along the roadways, as well as an off-site sidewalk to the south along the Twelve Oaks Mall Road for residents to be

able to walk to the mall area.

Senior Planner Bell continued to say Section 3.31.4 of the zoning ordinance outlines the review procedures for Preliminary Site Plans using the PD-2 Option. This requires the Preliminary Site Plan to receive a recommendation for approval or denial from the Planning Commission with City Council ultimately approving or denying the proposed plan. It also outlines specific factors the Planning Commission and City Council shall consider in the review, as well as the findings for Special Land Use review, and demonstrating compliance with Section 3.31.7.B as it relates to standards residential developments. These findings and standards are all listed in the Planning Review in your packet. Under the PD-2 Option, City Council is authorized to grant deviations from the strict requirements of the Zoning Ordinance related to area, bulk, yard, and dimensions. For this project the applicant is requesting 22 such deviations. Several of these are for building setbacks. Because the site will have road frontage on 3 sides, this creates some constraints. The applicant also states the setbacks for the district are for more suburban style developments while they describe their proposal as more urban in nature. Deviations for building height, length, and distance between buildings are also requested for certain buildings, with a similar justification that the project is more of an urban style, as well as site topography. The dumpster locations require deviations as the three frontages limit the locations and they need to be accessible by waste hauler vehicles. There are several landscaping deviations requested. A few of these are necessary due to the presence of utilities or existing trees that provide alternative screening, and others are due to the constrained layout. The deviation to allow 13% fewer parking spaces than required by the ordinance is supported by the applicant's parking analysis memo that indicates their experience with similar rental properties in other locations confirm a peak parking demand of about 1.6 spaces per unit, while they will be providing 1.77 spaces per unit. The Façade review notes that in general the buildings exhibit well balanced proportions and composition of materials that are consistent with the intent and purpose of the Façade Ordinance. The proposed Section 9 waiver for Vertical Batten siding on the side elevations are minor in nature and that the overall appearance of the building would not be significantly improved by strict application of the percentage listed in the Ordinance. The applicant has provided a façade board. A wetland delineation indicated there are two small wetland areas on the site, which will be permanently impacted by the proposed development. The proposed fill amount requires a Non-Minor Wetland Permit, but the area of impact does not meet the City's threshold for mitigation.

Senior Planner Bell concluded by saying all reviewers are recommending approval. The Planning Commission is asked to hold the public hearing and consider making a recommendation to City Council to either approve or deny the Preliminary Site Plan with PD-2 Option, Special Land Use Permit, Wetland permit, and Storm Water Management Plan. The City's traffic and façade consultants are also here, along with staff, to answer any questions you may have. The applicant Todd Rankin from Singh Development and engineer Mike Noles are here to tell you more about their project.

Mike Noles, with Umlor Group and on behalf of Singh Development, said there have been many consultants working on this project. Standing with me here tonight is Todd Rankin. Todd would like to say a couple of words about Singh Development in general and their long history in Novi.

Todd Rankin, with Singh Development, said I've been with Singh for 16 years, and for those not as familiar with Singh, we are about to celebrate our 49th anniversary. Back in the mid to late 1970s, we first came to Novi. Since then, we have developed over a thousand single family subdivision lots, we have four apartment projects in Novi, we have one senior living facility just south of this site, and we have a 27-hole golf course down the street. We are very active in Novi. After watching the Capital Improvements presentations, it seems like some very good things are in store for the city in the coming years, and we hope we can be one of those things.

Mike Noles said the property consists of 7.55 underutilized acres of prime real estate in a very highly developed area of the city. It is adjacent to the Twelve Oaks Mall and to the Waltonwood Senior Living, which was also developed by Singh Development. The property had road access to both 12 Mile and the Twelve Oaks Mall Access Road. Singh proposes 174 stylish rental apartment units in four multistory apartments building and four townhouse style buildings. The site provides significant community benefits. Singh proposes to build high quality housing opportunities for a diverse population that tends to be underserved in today's marketplace. A variety of open spaces are provided for the residents. The Griffin Royal Oak location has been very successful, and it is the model which we based this project on. The Griffin creates a diverse community where millennials and smaller households can find modern accommodations for their everchanging way of life. We have also found that demographics of 'empty-nesters' have moved in at the Royal Oak location as well as young professionals in the medical field. There are a variety of open spaces, and I would like to point of a couple of features. We have some indoor bike parking, and there are three pocket parks in this plan. The main feature in the central community clubhouse and fitness room. It also has an outdoor pool and a centralized mail kiosk. Bike racks are scattered throughout the development, and there is a recycling center as well. Pedestrian connectivity exists with sidewalks along the frontage of 12 Mile Road and Twelve Oaks access drive. Singh has agreed to continue that sidewalk along the frontage of Waltonwood down to Twelve Oaks Mall. They are in the process of working with the Taubman companies to secure those easements.

Mr. Noles continued to say the stylish architecture provides an attractive and modern façade in this highly visible area of the city. Each unit has private garages and private balconies. These amenities will work together to create a vibrant community in a relatively urban setting. We are fortunate to come to you tonight with unanimous recommendations from all your staff and consultants. That doesn't happen overnight; we have been working on this project for about a year. We had a pre-application review plus two formal site plan reviews. We went through several iterations with traffic and landscaping to make sure that we brought a staff recommended project before you tonight. This project has mostly brick and stone façade materials. One of the waivers for façade that you are seeing is for vertical siding. It is all done with high quality materials, and it creates a modern appearance. One thing you did hear already tonight is that there are many variances. For example, one variance in your packet is for building height. We have a 55-foot-high building. All the three-story buildings are the same height. The variances themselves are for 8 inches and a foot and a half, and these vary because of the topography of the site. Therefore, this isn't out of ordinary; we aren't trying to build super high buildings – rather we just want to add on a few more unnoticeable inches. We have also obtained staff support for all those variances. Overall, we have a fantastic project that we're very excited about. We hope that we can count on your support this evening, and myself, Todd, and several others are here tonight to answer any questions you might have.

Chair Pehrson invited members of the audience who wished to participate in the public hearing to approach the podium.

Dave Greenwood, resident of the Enclave, said I've lived in the Enclave apartments for about 20 years, and those apartments are about 40 years old. The proposed site plan for the 174 units is going to be built on 7.5 acres, and that is too large of a development for that site. The Enclave has 90 on about 16 acres. This site cannot be allowed to use the existing mall access road to exit the property. They should only be allowed to exit on 12 Mile Road. The mall traffic is too heavy on holidays and shopping days. It's not all day, but the real restriction is 3pm to 7pm. You can almost not get off the property, and more traffic exiting onto the ring road from this site would make that worse. There have been times where I've gotten stuck on that road, and I have had to go through the Waltonwood parking lot and the DMC property to exit. Let's say there is an average of two cars per unit: you'd have 348 cars, but you only have about 305 parking spaces. In the southeastern portion of the site, there is a large building that is very close

to the DMC facility. There doesn't appear to be a fence around the property, so some people may begin to park in the DMC parking lot and walk over. Finally, the residents of the Enclave have been paying dues for the maintenance of the ring road and the exit roads for the past 40 years. It was written in the contract by Taubman when they sold the property to the developer who built the Enclave. That is a line item in our budget.

Linda Rudolphi, Vice President of the Enclave Condominium homeowner's association, said our biggest issue is the traffic, and it is because of the existing issues with the Chick-Fil-A. What I would suggest to the builders is to not put the exit onto the mall road but use that Huron Circle Road that many of us use to sneak out. When you get to the top, there is a red light. You can turn right out of there, and you can turn into the complex coming west bound on 12 Mile Road. If you try to do this from the Twelve Oaks Road, you sit there for 10 minutes because the lights don't change. When you do get to the entrance, there are large signs that say no turns. You can only go straight through, which would cause all that traffic to go into the mall. Then they would have to make a U-turn if they could or drive all the way around the mall to get back. People come into our subdivision all the time thinking that there is a shortcut to 12 Mile, so we get 40 to 50 cars a day trying to go through the Enclave from Chick-Fil-A. If the other exit were moved to the Huron Circle Road, then the traffic would be reduced greatly and there would still be two points of exiting and entering.

Mike Duchesneau, 1191 South Lake Drive, said I have a strong preference for units for sale. Hopefully some of these units will be for sale as opposed to for rent.

Seeing that nobody else in the audience wished to speak, Chair Pehrson turned it over to Member Lynch for correspondence received on this item.

Member Lynch said Dave Greenwood, who we just heard spoke, mentions traffic, and this seems to be a common theme. Christine Kim – concerned about the natural environment. Saul Lenhoff – traffic. Mary Hoey – traffic. Lonnie C. mentions traffic. Sally Goyette – traffic, as well as Diana Pinto who also has a concern about the stress on the water system. LaRue and Andrea Davis – traffic. Anthony Ganaway, Margaret Penzo, Geraldine Alam – all traffic. They all object.

Chair Pehrson closed the public hearing and turned it over to the Planning Commission for consideration.

Member Becker said it seemed to me that, even amongst staff, one of the most concerning things was building setbacks along 12 Mile and Twelve Oaks Mall entrance road. Regarding the setbacks, this plan looks similar to two other high-rise residential developments along a thoroughfare, namely Gateway Village and Huntley Manor – both of which are along Grand River. I'd like to have the staff comment on the setbacks for each of these two existing developments and compare them to the setbacks for this proposed development.

Senior Planner Bell said for Huntley Manor, the setback from the property line is 35 feet, and the setback from the property line for Gateway Village is 30 feet. What is proposed for Griffin along 12 Mile is a 20-foot setback.

Member Becker said I also noticed that Huntley Manor uses a rather high wrought iron metal fencing as an addition barrier, and Gateway Village uses a lower metal gate that is similar. The proposal for the applicant appears to only use trees along 12 Mile and shrubs along the entrance road. Is that correct, or am I missing something?

Senior Planner Bell stated that she did not believe there was a fence.

Member Becker asked are there any safety concerns from planning staff regarding lack of an actual barrier? I think this is especially pertinent given that many of these units have 2 to 3 bedrooms and families with children could reside there.

Senior Planner Bell said that is not a requirement of the ordinance, so we do not review plans for that.

Member Becker said I understand that the applicant is about 13 percent short on what we require for parking spaces. My concern is that the parking spaces on that southside look to be parallel parking spots as opposed to turn in spots. If there were parallel parked cars on both sides of that road, would there still be enough room for emergency vehicles and school buses?

Senior Planner Bell said yes, it would maintain a 26-foot-wide access aisle.

Member Becker said the last thing I looked at where the two points of paved access to Huron Circle were located on the map. I also used that road to visit the property, and I came up right between Waltonwood and the DMC. I thought that it was nice because it seemed like another entrance. Then, I noticed on the plans it says that it is a private drive. If it is a private drive, does that mean that we are somehow going to restrict people from the Griffin development from using that road?

City Attorney Saarela said if they are planning to let out onto a property that they do not own, then they would need an easement. They would have to negotiate an agreement with that property owner that would allow them to use that.

Member Becker said sometimes they have to do cutouts for emergency access, and I couldn't tell if that's what those two points were for or if they were for general traffic.

Member Lynch asked the city's traffic consultant, Saumil Shah, to approach the podium. Member Lynch then said I do see one curb cut off 12 Mile.

Saumil Shah said no, I believe that is an existing cut out.

Member Lynch said so they are putting another curb cut on the access road.

Mr. Shah said yes, and it is a right turn in and right turn out.

Member Lynch said I do have personal experience with the traffic in the area, and I would just like to get your opinion of what is going on over there.

Mr. Shah said we have reviewed the traffic study conducted by the developer's consultant. Typically, traffic is reviewed during peak traffic hours, usually morning 7:30 to 8:30 pm and then 4:00 to 5:00 pm. These are the times when the applicant collected their traffic data, and they collected this data pre-COVID between March 3 and 5 of 2020.

Member Lynch said I am glad that you said that, because if they had collected the data during COVID, it wouldn't mean as much because most people were not on the roads.

Mr. Shah said due to this specific development, their peak hours discuss weekdays from 8:00 to 10:00 in the morning and 4:00 to 6:00 in the evening. We reviewed their study, and all the intersections and turning moments were of 'level of service D' or better, meaning an acceptable amount of service per our guidelines.

Member Lynch asked the applicant if they were sure they had enough parking.

Mr. Noles said yes, and a couple of other things. We thought we had enough parking prior to adding the parallel spaces. We did a study of some similar developments in Cary, North Carolina where Singh Development has also built a number of projects to show that the parking levels in the ordinance are more than what would be mandated by this type of development. What we found and submitted is that we have 61 spaces in excess from the peak hours. We did several different iterations at several different times to make sure we had enough parking, and every one of these units has their own private garages. In addition, we have 308 spaces on the whole site, and, again, we've shown that is 61 spaces over what is required.

Member Lynch said however, you're not going to sell any units if traffic is so bad that people can't get in there to see them. By just looking at the development layout, it does appear to me that the Twelve Oaks access road is not going to get most of the activity. It seems the point of least resistance is the new curb cut you're going to put in on Twelve Mile. I do understand the traffic concerns of those who have spoken tonight, but with that curb cut there, the problem isn't going to be on that access drive – it's going to be internal. People will wait on that road for 15 minutes at certain points in the day, and I think that would be the case trying to exit from the new curb cut onto 12 Mile. With only one curb cut, I wouldn't even think about approving this, but with the second curb cut it appears that the development will be essentially on its own. You may have some traffic on the access drive, and I'm sure you will be paying Taubman for use of that drive, just like everyone else in the area. I don't believe that this will add to the existing problem with traffic that exists on the access road.

Mr. Noles said that is correct Commissioner, and you correctly pointed out is because of the 12 Mile access, the route along Huron Circle, or what one speaker referred to as the secret cut-through road, will not be there. It is going to become part of the Griffin, so folks who are trying to exit can't even turn left onto the access road because it is a divided median. Most people would not go out there just to do a circle to get back to where they originally were. The way that this development is configured makes the 12 Mile outlet the most efficient way in and out.

Mr. Rankin said we approached the parking by providing one parking space for bedroom. Using that calculation, we still have 11 spaces over that amount. We've found that formula tends to yield consistently positive response.

Member Lynch said just so my fellow Commissioners are aware, the Enclave complex just south of this development only has one access in and out onto the mall ring road. That is why I have made such a point about the parking. In my opinion, that drive is already much too subscribed to. With the curb cut there, I do not believe that this development is not going to have a significant impact on that road.

Member Avdoulos said the way this site is laid out makes it essentially its own island. It's autonomous and does not seem to add to traffic because everyone can get out onto 12 Mile. Even if you turn onto the access road, you can only turn right. That is a shorter distance than the folks at Waltonwood or the other development below that. The other thing is that the development at Waltonwood has access to the Griffin to be able to get out, so they don't have to get onto the access road. With all of that, it seems that this will work. I agree on the parking; I appreciate the explanation of the one spot per bedroom – that is typically how these types of developments work. I'm also fine with the 13 percent reduction from the ordinance requirement. I think the planned use is appropriate for the area. I think it is in concert with what is already in that area. This is a high-quality project, and it follows the market trend. It does have dedicated walking paths that connect to the surrounding area. I was also going to ask, do these units allow for pets?

The applicant confirmed that pets would be allowed.

Member Avdoulos said that is the other thing: you need to have room to walk your pets and take them outside. Those little pocket parks are nice for people to go out and have passive relaxation. I think this will have a positive impact to the area because there will be more residents there to support the regional businesses. I think the overall design is going to enhance the area. It will be a little different from what is already there, but it will make it nicer by using quality materials. We are targeting a diverse population, and these types of developments are popping up all over even if they may seem different.

Member Roney said I am glad you brought up the height variance; I am glad to hear it is a small number. I am concerned about the setbacks for the buildings along Twelve Mile. I know 20 feet was mentioned, but that is a 20-foot variance and not 20 feet off Twelve Mile, correct?

Chair Pehrson confirmed that it would be 20 feet off the property line.

Member Roney said I share Member Becker's concern on those two developments along Grand River. I've always thought those were too close to the road. I wish there was a better graphic of the proposed view from 12 Mile, but it is hard to tell from the rendering provided. I happened to drive by there yesterday, and it is a nice piece of property that rolls downward toward the mall. I almost don't want to lose that view, and if we have buildings that are essentially billboards along the side then we will lose the view of the mall. I'm also concerned about the number of units at 174, but this does seem to be how they design hotels these days being a frequent business traveler. I was also thinking about traffic, and people will try to use this property as a cut through, so the applicant should be aware that there may be heavy traffic backups on the site from that. I'm hesitant on this one, and I am still making up my mind on my decision.

Member Verma stated that all his comments and concerns had been addressed and had nothing further to add.

Chair Pehrson said when we look at something like this, we are looking at making a recommendation to City Council who will make the final decision on this request. Part of our charter is to look at the special land use, and as we look at points 1 through 7 of the special land use and the consideration thereof, I find all the points are in a positive manner for this applicant. Probably the largest issue that we fight internally amongst ourselves when we review these types of projects is the waivers. I see quite a few landscape deviations being requested. What is our Landscape Architect's opinion of those?

Landscape Architect Meader said based on the density of the site, I think they've done the best they can do given the protection from the properties to the east I was looking for. There isn't really any space for more trees without removing units. However, I am pretty comfortable with what they have done. There are some variances, and they have worked to reduce them.

Chair Pehrson said looking at some of these other deviations, I believe that our planner said that many of these may be a result of having the frontage on three roadways as opposed to the developments at Huntley Manor and Gateway Village. This property poses additional issues relative to that.

Senior Planner Bell said that is correct. When you have a road frontage, you must observe the front setback for each of those frontages. This does not give the applicant a rear yard or interior side yard to have a reduced setback.

Chair Pehrson said I think traffic has come up many times in my years on the Commission. I look at it a little differently: if this did not have a secondary egress point onto 12 Mile Road, we wouldn't be talking about this right now. I also would like to comment that while traffic does get

heavy at certain times in the area, the Chick-Fil-A traffic should not affect this because it is on the other side of the mall. Some people may turn right out of there and chose to go all the way around the ring road, but I would suggest that most of that traffic is subject to the other side of the mall. I would also like everyone to consider the fact that the mall tenants at Sears and Lord & Taylor are now gone, and this has reduced traffic in the area. I don't see the traffic coming back to the state that it once was given COVID and the number of stores that have closed in the mall. I think that you have planned all of this out well, and I am in support.

Member Avdoulos said I just wanted to add to that for some of the Commissioners who might be hesitant about the setbacks. I think because we are in suburbia, we tend to feel that we need a lot of frontage space. However, if you look at many developments, such as the apartment complex on 8 Mile Road near the border of Novi and Northville, they are close to the road. It sometimes depends on the lay of the land. This is a main drag, and it has a quasi-urban and suburban feel to it, and that is why it is a little bit closer to the road. Since this is more residential, it has been pushed forward to give an urban feel, and the parking is located behind everything. I understand the concern, but the people who will be renting these places typically know what they are looking for and know what they are going to get.

Motion made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Lynch.

In the matter of JSP 20-27 Griffin Novi, motion to recommend approval to the City Council for Special Land Use based on and subject to the following:

- 1. The proposed use will not cause detrimental impact on existing thoroughfares (based on Traffic review);**
- 2. The proposed use will not cause a detrimental impact on the capabilities of public services and facilities (based on Engineering review);**
- 3. The proposed use is compatible with the natural features and characteristics of the land (because there are no regulated woodlands on site, and minimal impacts to wetland areas are proposed);**
- 4. The proposed use is compatible with adjacent uses of land (because the proposed use is similar to the residential community to the south and complements other nearby uses);**
- 5. The proposed use is consistent with the goals, objectives, and recommendations of the City's Master Plan for Land Use (as it fulfills the Master Plan objectives to provide a wide range of housing options and to provide residential developments that support healthy lifestyles);**
- 6. The proposed use will promote the use of land in a socially and economically desirable manner (as it fulfills one of the Master Plan objectives to ensure compatibility between residential and non-residential developments);**
- 7. The proposed use is (1) listed among the provision of uses requiring special land use review as set forth in the various zoning districts of this Ordinance, and (2) is in harmony with the purposes and conforms to the applicable site design regulations of the zoning district in which it is located.**

ROLL CALL VOTE TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL LAND USE FOR JSP20-27 GRIFFIN NOVI TO CITY COUNCIL MOVED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER LYNCH.

Motion to recommend approval of the Special Land Use for JSP20-27 Griffin Novi to City Council. *Motion carried 5-1.*

Motion made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Lynch.

In the matter of JSP 20-27 Griffin Novi, motion to recommend approval to the City Council for Preliminary Site Plan with a PD-2 Option based on and subject to the following:

1. Planning Commission findings that the standards of Section 3.31.4 of the Zoning Ordinance are adequately addressed, as identified in the Planning Review Letter.
2. Planning Commission findings that the standards of Section 3.31.7.B.viii.d of the Zoning Ordinance are adequately addressed, as identified in the Planning Review Letter.
3. The recommendation includes the following ordinance deviations for consideration by the Planning Commission in its recommendation to the City Council:
 - i. Deviation from Section 3.31.7.D for not meeting the minimum building setback requirements for front yard (Twelve Mile frontage). A minimum of 50 feet is required, 20 feet is provided. The applicant states the standard setbacks of the district are for a more suburban style of development and the deviations would be consistent with a more urban development as they propose.
 - ii. Deviation from Section 3.31.7.D for not meeting the minimum building setback requirements for western exterior side yard (Twelve Oaks Mall Road frontage). A minimum of 50 feet is required, 30 feet is provided. The applicant states the setbacks of the district are for a more suburban style of development and the deviations would be consistent with a more urban development as they propose.
 - iii. Deviation from Section 3.31.7.D for not meeting the minimum building setback requirements for southern exterior side yard (Access Drive frontage). A minimum of 50 feet is required, 42 feet is provided. The applicant states the setbacks of the district are for a more suburban style of development and the deviations would be consistent with a more urban development as they propose.
 - iv. Deviation from Section 3.31.7.D for not meeting the minimum building setback requirements for the eastern side yard. A minimum of 35 feet is required, 19.2 feet is provided. The applicant states the setbacks of the district are for a more suburban style of development and the deviations would be consistent with a more urban development as they propose.
 - v. Deviation from Section 3.6.2.H for not meeting the requirement for additional setback from a residential district to the south. A minimum of 174 feet is required for a building 58 feet in height, 87 feet is provided. This deviation is supported as the uses are both multi-family residential and the additional protection afforded by the larger setback is not warranted. However, the ZBA granted a conditional approval for a setback variance for the Waltonwood Phase 2 in 2003 that stated any building on the subject property would be a minimum of 150 feet from those buildings, which is shown on the plans and is consistent with the ZBA's previous approval.
 - vi. Deviation from Section 3.31.7.B.viii.b.iv to exceed the maximum building height of 55 feet for Building C (58 feet proposed) and Building D (56 feet 7.5 inches proposed). The applicant states that the minor deviations for additional height are due to the site topography and will not be perceivable to the human eye from ground level.
 - vii. Deviation from Section 3.31.7.B.viii.b.vii to exceed the maximum building length of 125 feet without providing pedestrian entranceways every 125 feet along the frontage for Building B (135 feet proposed) and Building D (135 feet proposed). The applicant states that pedestrian entranceways are geared toward the parking lot and resident garages at the back of the building. There are entrances on the Twelve Mile Road frontage to individual units, which meets the intent of the ordinance.
 - viii. Deviation from Section 3.8.2.H to allow a reduction in the minimum distance between buildings in two locations: between Buildings E & F (21.5 feet proposed, at least 30 feet required), between Buildings F & G (20 feet proposed, at least 30 feet required). The applicant states the setbacks of the

district are for a more suburban style of development and the deviations would be consistent with a more urban development as they propose. Pedestrian access and landscaping have been provided at these locations, so the site is not compromised as a result of this deviation.

- ix. Deviation from Sec. 5.2.12.C to allow reduction of minimum required parking spaces for multiple family residential uses. A minimum of 355 are required, 308 spaces are provided. The proposed parking supply (308 spaces) is 25% higher than the projected peak demand (247 spaces), and therefore seems to contain a reasonable safeguard should these assumptions be off by some degree. Staff recommends approval of the deviation to allow for a 13% reduction in parking from the Ordinance requirement consistent with the applicant's request.
- x. Deviation from Section 5.10.1.B.vi to allow parking stalls within 25 feet of Building D and the Clubhouse in a residential district (8-10 feet proposed, 25 feet required). The applicant states maintaining adequate parking for visitors is an important feature of the site. The unusual configuration of the property boundary creates some awkward angles that are not conducive to consistent rectilinear buffers. The deviations requested are located in areas that are less objectionable. For example, locating ADA accessible spaces closer to the building, near the community clubhouse, and near the high traffic Twelve Oaks Mall Road.
- xi. Deviation from Section 4.19.2.F for allowing a dumpster in the side yard instead of required rear yard. Staff supports this deviation as the site has three street frontages, which limits the possibilities to conform. The applicant indicates the dumpster has been located to best avoid negative views from unit balconies and exterior roadways, while still being accessible to waste hauler vehicles.
- xii. Design & Construction Standards variance for lack of sidewalk offset from the travel way near the pool. Supported by staff as compliance will be achieved in other locations.
- xiii. *Landscape deviation from Section 5.5.3.B.ii and iii for lack of 4.5-6-foot landscaped berm along eastern property line. Supported by staff as alternative screening is provided with large evergreen trees and the applicant will add additional fencing to block the headlights from the parking lot.*
- xiv. *Landscape deviation from Section 5.5.3.B.ii and iii for lack of berm or wall in the greenbelt of Twelve Mile Road, Twelve Oaks Drive, and the southern road. Supported by staff due to the topography and presence of utilities, but the proposed hedges must be planted adjacent to the parking lots in order to screen headlights effectively.*
- xv. *Landscape deviation from Section 5.5.3.B.ii and iii for deficiency in greenbelt canopy trees on Twelve Oaks Drive. Supported by staff due to utility conflicts.*
- xvi. *Landscape deviation from Section 5.5.3.B.ii and iii for deficiency in street trees on Twelve Oaks Drive. Supported by staff due to utility conflicts.*
- xvii. *Landscape deviation from Section 5.5.3xx for a 25% deficiency in multi-family unit trees. Supported by staff as 75% of requirement will be provided.*
- xviii. *Landscape deviation to permit up to 30% of the multi-family unit trees to consist of subcanopy species. Supported by staff.*
- xix. *Landscape deviation from Section 5.5.3.C.iii for deficiency in parking lot perimeter landscaping. Supported by staff as the parking areas are fully landscaped.*
- xx. *Landscape deviation from Sec 5.5.3.E.ii for deficiency in multifamily building foundation landscaping along interior drives. Support by staff as the applicant will include small beds to provide relief between garages.*

- xxi. *Façade deviation under Section 9 of the Façade Ordinance to permit an overage of vertical batten siding on the side elevations of buildings B, C and D (maximum of 50% permitted, 51-59% proposed). Supported by façade consultant as the deviation is minor in nature and is consistent with the overall compositions of the facades.*
 - xxii. *Deviation from Section 5.7.3.K to allow the average to minimum light ratio to exceed the 4:1 maximum (5:1 proposed).*
4. *The findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters, and the conditions and items listed in those letters being addressed on the Final Site Plan.*

ROLL CALL VOTE TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN FOR JSP20-27 GRIFFIN NOVI TO CITY COUNCIL MOVED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER LYNCH.

Motion to recommend approval of the Preliminary Site Plan for JSP20-27 Griffin Novi to City Council. Motion carried 4-2.

Motion made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Lynch.

In the matter of JSP 20-27 Griffin Novi, motion to approve the Wetland Permit based on and subject to the findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters, and the conditions and items listed in those letters being addressed on the Final Site Plan.

ROLL CALL VOTE TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE WETLAND PERMIT FOR JSP20-27 GRIFFIN NOVI TO CITY COUNCIL MOVED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER LYNCH.

Motion to recommend approval of the Wetland Permit for JSP20-27 Griffin Novi to City Council. Motion carried 6-0.

Motion made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Lynch

In the matter of JSP 20-27 Griffin Novi, motion to recommend approval to the City Council for Stormwater Management Plan based on and subject to the findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters, and the conditions and items listed in those letters being addressed on the Final Site Plan.

ROLL CALL VOTE TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE STORMWATER MANEGEMEENT PLAN FOR JSP20-27 GRIFFIN NOVI TO CITY COUNCIL MOVED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER LYNCH.

Motion to recommend approval of the Stormwater Management Plan for JSP20-27 Griffin Novi to City Council. Motion carried 6-0.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

There were not any matters for consideration.

CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS FOR COMMISSION ACTION

There were not any consent agenda removals.

SUPPLEMENTAL ISSUES/TRAINING UPDATES

City Planner McBeth said there is a planned training opportunity for the Planning Commission

and the Zoning Board of Appeals. It will be on Wednesday March 2 at 7pm.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Shirley Kest, 31004 Tanglewood Drive, said the one thing you've missed is in the upper left-hand side. That driveway going to the mall has a light there, and the traffic from the businesses across the street has not even been mentioned. Those buildings have a huge setback, and you have ignored the setbacks and deviations. Shame on you.

Seeing that nobody else in the audience wished to speak, Chair Pehrson closed the final audience participation.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by member Lynch.

VOICE VOTE TO ADJOURN THE FEBRUARY 23, 2022 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINNG MOVED BY MEMBER LYNCH.

Motion to adjourn the February 23, 2022 Planning Commission meeting. Motion carried 6-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:19 PM.