

**AUGUST 3, 2022  
COMMITTEE MEETING  
DRAFT MINUTES**

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**MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**  
**August 3, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.**  
**Novi Public Library**  
**45255 Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI 48375**  
**(248) 347-0475**  
**DRAFT MINUTES**

**1. Roll Call**

**Members Present:** *Planning Commission:* David Dismondy (acting Chair), Ramesh Verma  
*City Council:* Dave Staudt  
*Staff:* Lindsay Bell, Victor Cardenas, Ben Croy, Barb McBeth, Mike McCready, Rick Meader

**Absent Excused:** John Avdoulos

**Support/As Needed:** James Hill, Ben Peacock, Beth Saarela

**Consultants:** John locoangeli (Planner), Rowan Brady (Planner)

**2. Approval of Agenda**

The August 3, 2022 agenda was unanimously approved.

**3. Approval of the June 29, 2022 Committee Meeting Minutes**

The June 29, 2022 minutes were unanimously approved.

**4. Discussion Items**

A. Debrief from the site visit to Fishers and Carmel, Indiana

Member McBeth mentioned that some of the Committee members took a trip to Fishers and Carmel, Indiana to look at developments and planning techniques that could be used in Novi. She mentioned that staff planner James Hill has a presentation to share information for committee members that did not attend.

James Hill said while I did not attend the trip, I was able to compile the highlights from Lindsay and Barb alongside Rowan's pictures to provide an overview of what they saw.

Acting Chair Dismondy asked why they visited these two specific cities.

Member Cardenas said we did a Mayor's Exchange with the two communities about 9 years ago. The City Manager was not a part of this, but he recently visited the area and thought that the development styles

might be applicable to Novi. Both cities are very akin to Novi; Carmel had a pseudo-downtown area, but Fishers did not have a downtown development at all. However, they engage in much more public spending, which has led to a good amount of debt.

Member McBeth mentioned that the many of the developments in these areas seemed to be recently built, and how clean the public areas and streetscapes were kept.

James Hill said between the two cities, they visited 3 districts, which we thought would be important to consider as we update our Master Plan and think about districts and focus areas. The two districts in Fishers were the Fishers District and the Nickel Plate District. The Fishers District is off the highway and is more auto-oriented, whereas Carmel is more pedestrian-oriented.

Consultant Rowan Brady mentioned that while there were sidewalks in the Fishers District, there was poor connectivity between them. Member Cardenas reemphasized this by noting that it seemed inefficient to have such large and beautiful developments near each other and not be able to walk between them.

Acting Chair Dismondy noted that the Fishers District looks similar in style to Novi's Fountain Walk from the aerials that were shown on the screen.

Consultant Brady thought that the Fishers District probably had too much parking given the amount of traffic the area had. The Nickel Plate district was much more pedestrian friendly. It also served as the civic area for the city, with the City Hall, police station, and library all within walking distance.

Member McBeth said the Nickel Plate District seemed much more planned out and walkable. Everything seemed to be connected.

Consultant Brady said he noticed the branding effectiveness of the Nickel Plate District. There were signs with a Nickel Plate District logo in many places and the manhole covers were stamped with the same logo.

Consultant Brady went on to discuss the Carmel downtown area, saying that it was primarily centered around the Monan Trail that continues southward into the central business district of Indianapolis.

Member Bell pointed out that the streets were paved with brick in different patterns to accent the different functions: vehicular, pedestrian and recreation. Amenities were provided along the Monan, such as

splash pads, play areas and seating, to create a pedestrian-focused atmosphere.

Member Cardenas said the Monan has taken off as a huge catalyst for development and transit in the Indianapolis metro area.

Consultant Brady also described Carmel's Arts and Design District, which had a lot of design studios and artist offices with more affordable residential units above. This district is also along the Monan Trail, but had a different look and feel than the other areas, with older buildings that were used for retail, restaurants, art galleries and residential, as well as art installations along the streets.

**B. Finalize focus areas and discuss possible minor updates to the Future Land Use Plan**

Member McBeth said we settled on the Regional Malls as a large study area for this Master Plan update. This could include Town Center as well as Twelve Oaks Mall, West Oaks and Fountainwalk. Another area is the southeast corner of Meadowbrook and 12 Mile – it is owned by a hospital group, but it looks like they are trying to sell it. The final focus area is stretched out along Grand River in about 3 pockets. The types of development we're looking to attract might be similar to the developments in Carmel and Fishers with mixed uses, including the possibility commercial uses on the bottom floors and residential above.

Member Bell said one of these areas along Grand River does include the proposed City West District. This area was recommended for redevelopment in the last update, but it could be beneficial to revisit it to determine whether boundaries need to be adjusted. We could also incorporate what we saw from Indiana into what we might like to see developed in that area.

Member McBeth mentioned that several land swaps between the Novi schools and the city have occurred since the last master plan update, so those changes should be reflected in the current update. We also have several PROs that have been approved over the last few years, so the future land use map should be updated to include those changes.

Members McBeth and Bell also mentioned that the Committee should look into updating the existing and future roads map as well as identifying potential park spaces.

**5. Next Steps**

**A. Review Real Estate Market Assessment**

Consultant John locoangeli said we will present a report at the next meeting to identify what is going on locally and regionally with the real estate market.

#### B. Review results of 2022 Master Plan Survey

We got a large boost in responses thanks to Member Meader reaching out to homeowners' associations and businesses. We received close to 850 responses, and we will be interested to see how that data will be summarized. It will be shared at the next meeting.

#### C. Organize engagement session dates

Consultant locoangeli asked what types of developments that were seen in Carmel and Fishers that you think the developers in the Novi area would be inclined to build? What building typology would you like to encourage developers to build?

Member Dismondy mentioned that the easiest loan to get right now is for multi-family residential, so that is likely why developers in the area are not inclined to build mixed-use developments containing both residential and commercial spaces. Adding retail into the development makes leasing much more difficult.

Member McBeth said I would like to see some parking decks. I know that parking decks can be very expensive, but land itself is also valuable.

Consultant locoangeli said the major thing I notice in these regional malls is that there is excess parking. Developers may want parking structures so that extra surface parking space could be used for a more profitable development. I would like to start scheduling meetings with developers to get a better idea of their thoughts.

### **6. Audience Participation and Correspondence**

Mike Duchesneau mentioned that a lot of these mixed-use developments and districts have been reduced commercially to allow for more residential. He said that many of the developments that are only residential should have been required to include some commercial space. Perhaps we should revisit our processes for approving those. We also should stop looking to incorporate a downtown; we have been trying for the last 30 years, and it isn't going to happen – these regional districts seem to make more sense for Novi.

### **7. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:30 PM.