



PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

CITY OF NOVI
Regular Meeting

February 7, 2024 7:00 PM

Council Chambers | Novi Civic Center
45175 Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI 48375 (248) 347-0475

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Present: Member Dismondy, Member Lynch, Chair Pehrson, Member Roney, Member Verma

Absent Excused: Member Avdoulos, Member Becker

Staff: Barb McBeth, City Planner; Beth Saarela, City Attorney; Lindsay Bell, Senior Planner; James Hill, Planner; Rick Meader, Landscape Architect

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Pehrson led the meeting attendees in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by Member Lynch and seconded by Member Verma to approve the February 7, 2024 Planning Commission Agenda.

VOICE VOTE ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 7, 2024 PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA MOVED BY MEMBER LYNCH AND SECONDED BY MEMBER VERMA. Motion carried 5-0.

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 no one, Chair Pehrson closed the first public audience participation.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was not any correspondence.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Committee reports.

CITY PLANNER REPORT

City Planner Barb McBeth stated a reminder for the agenda that Planning Commissioners received the Grand River Veterinary Clinic revised motion sheet prior to the meeting, as the applicant is ready to move forward. The revised motion sheet is also included in the Planning Commissioner's packets.

CONSENT AGENDA - REMOVALS AND APPROVALS

There were no Consent Agenda – Removals and Approvals.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. DRAFT 2023 ACTIVE MOBILITY PLAN

Receive public comment and input on the draft 2023 Active Mobility Plan.

- Executive Summary
- Network Map
- Full Report

Senior Planner Lindsay Bell stated encouraging health through active lifestyles has been a focus for the City of Novi for many years. The Non-Motorized Master Plan adopted in 2011 served as a foundation for the past 12 years for providing an interconnected and comprehensive system of pathways, sidewalks, and other facilities. The implementation of that plan was tracked annually, and the prioritization of new investments in missing segments was built on that foundation. Many of the strategies recommended were implemented throughout the years, with over 16 miles of trails and sidewalks completed between 2011 and 2022 by public and private funding in Novi.

Recognizing the success of the 2011 plan, and the realization that standards continue to adapt to new technologies and awareness, City Council contracted with The Greenway Collaborative to produce a comprehensive update to the Non-Motorized Plan. That process kicked off in December of 2022, and continued through 2023.

The public input process included two public open houses, which were held last winter, a survey to get initial feedback and another after draft preliminary plans were shared, as well as several pop-up events attended by James Hill and the consultant team to share information and get feedback from the community. There was also a session held at Lakeshore Park to hear from community members near Walled Lake about options to consider for South Lake Drive and East Lake Drive. During the process, several meetings with a Technical Advisory Committee consisting of staff from various departments in the City and the Walkable Novi Committee were held, both provided valuable feedback. Thank you to Members Becker and Roney for their involvement as members of the Walkable Novi Committee.

Work on the latest update, now named the Active Mobility Plan (AMP), is now near completion. At the Walkable Novi Committee's December meeting, the members gave comments on the draft final Active Mobility Plan. The latest draft presented tonight reflects all edits made since then.

Norm Cox from The Greenway Collaborative will provide a more in-depth presentation on the various components of the plan.

The draft documents have been posted online for public review with a feedback form to receive comments since January 18, 2024. Comments received as of today have been included in the printouts in the Planning Commission packet. As the draft report continues through the process further edits may be made as appropriate.

Tonight, the Planning Commission is asked to hold a public hearing, offer any recommendations for improvements, and make a recommendation for adoption to City Council.

Norm Cox thanked the Planning Commission for the opportunity to present and talk about the Active Mobility project. Mr. Cox reiterated the importance of the people that have contributed to the project. The core team from Community Development – City Planner Barb McBeth, Senior Planner Lindsay Bell, and Planner James Hill, have been critical. Regular meetings with them have been held every other week throughout the course of the project and the guidance and the support they provided was invaluable. The same applies to the multiple meetings with the Technical Advisory Committee and the Walkable Novi Committee, their input was very much appreciated as well.

Mr. Cox relayed his colleague Carolyn Prudhomme is not present tonight, but TJ Likens with Fishbeck Engineering is present and will speak as well.

The name change from the 2011 Non-Motorized plan to Active Mobility really is the idea of integrating physical activity into everyday transportation. This has given us a wealth of benefits not just to the individual, but the community. Mr. Cox underscored that in the last 12 years, the world of non-motorized transportation planning has changed dramatically. This was an opportunity to revisit and get the latest best practices put into the plan and set up the City for the next 12 years. The City has done an outstanding job implementing the first plan. Mr. Cox hopes the 2023 plan will provide good guidance to continue forward.

Mr. Cox introduced TJ Likens from Fishbeck to speak about his role in the project.

TJ Likens, Traffic Engineer with Fishbeck, relayed as a subconsultant on the project he is working through various questions that might relate to not only non-motorized but vehicular traffic as well. Clearly, those have to work together in order for this plan to be effective. His role has been to ask questions, to try and solve problems. As Mr. Cox said, the best practices are continuing to evolve at a much more rapid pace than they had in the past in terms of non-motorized. How we deal with non-motorized traffic is not a secondary thought, but as primary objective, so Mr. Likens supported the team when those types of questions came up.

Mr. Cox relayed that Mr. Likens has been great to work with and Greenway Collaborative has worked with him on numerous projects in the past and some coming up in the future.

Some of the key elements of the plan as outlined are the report, the executive summary, and the large network map. An overview of the process included evaluating existing conditions, the facility types and guides, guidelines for the major corridors, a long-term vision, what could be accomplished in the near term, thoughts on some specific areas, then how to implement the plan and take care of it. The process had a lot of community input including ideas, identifying issues, and getting feedback on major concepts. Continuing through this, we try to get this in front of the Community as often as possible as well as go to group meetings to try to get a good cross section of community input.

The existing conditions really inform quite a bit. Time was spent trying to understand what was happening from traffic mobility standpoint, what is happening with Community demographics, what facilities are existing or proposed, safety concerns, looking at existing policies and programs, and where deficiencies or gaps are in the system. Then a prioritization of corridors where the facilities are needed the most and will have the greatest impact was put together.

A lot of pictures and diagrams were included that explain these different types of facilities and what they look like to help convey, for example a crossing island, that can be referenced to see what it is and how it relates to some best practices and additional resources.

All the ideas presented in the plan are based on national best practices and resources are outlined for reference. These are constantly being updated, but best practices from the various resources were combined and applied to the City of Novi. A part of that was looking at major road systems, breaking them into three types of roads and how they operate currently with the overlay of new transit corridors.

For each different road type, the team looked at the buffer along the right of way, the crossing or trail crossing, the stop, the different types of intersections, the best practice for pedestrians, bicycles and micro mobility, and other kinds of features there should be around the corridor. What the corridors are now and ideally what they are changing to in the future was discussed. This is the outline of how to apply best practices and those guides that were discussed for the different corridors. Mr. Cox will be the first to say these are fairly ambitious, but they reflect current best practices and really what we should be aiming for.

The team took that information for the three different corridor types and tried to outline the long-term network. Different elements go into that, where sidewalks and side paths are now, where new ones should go in, what width they should be. The team spent a lot of time on the mid-block crosswalks, how to improve what is there, and where to put new crosswalks in to make sure it's easy to get across busy mile roads and especially to build better connections between the neighborhoods.

Bike lanes, and these are not just painted bike lanes but protected facilities, were looked at to determine where they should be located, the degree of buffer and separation from motorized traffic based on the road characteristics, and how to fit them into the big regional trail Greenway network. There is an opportunity to have an established 30-mile loop that goes through the City and ties into the regional trail system with some fairly minor connections. That's pretty exciting for someone to be able to bike this loop through the City and the surrounding area. The team also looked at local road routes for those who don't want to bike along major roads, even if it's on a side path, to get to connections using the neighborhood roadways and some of the connecting pathways to get to things like their schools and the ITC trail, etc.

The team outlined some of the ways to expand on that system and the key to this is the near-term network. If that's the grand vision, this is the focus for the foreseeable future. As this was taken forward for public engagement, three main elements kind of came to the top. This neighborhood greenway network, the idea of a very comfortable system along roads and the ITC trail to get people to key destinations, connecting to transit, and also improving shopping or improving access to shopping and dining.

The neighborhood greenway network is building on all the work that has been done for the past number of years. With a few key side paths, a few key connections, and crosswalks, the outline of a foundation network can connect to all the key elements in the City. This is kind of the core network, and it should be made a high quality experience, not just solely functional but a beautiful corridor that people really would enjoy biking and walking along. In addition to facilities, all the policies, programs and metrics that go along with that greenway network were outlined that will really make it function.

In terms of connecting the transit, seizing on the new transit routes that Smart has defined and the stops that they have located, how do we make the best of that? There are a lot of corridors where the transit is, but there are large gaps in the sidewalk and side path system, so there is not a good way to cross the road. When someone gets on or off the bus, they need a way to get across a busy five lane road. There are a number of isolated neighborhoods that need to be linked into the transit.

Another thing heard from public engagement was access to shopping and dining. The City is doing a great job providing facilities along the road right of way, but how do you get from that path into the commercial areas and the restaurants, enhancing that to make sure everything works together?

The Greenway Collaborative has worked with the City to try to make sure the plan is integrated into the capital improvement plan, building on what is already being done.

Some of the near-term infrastructure projects that will make that greenway neighborhood network are three miles of sidewalks, five miles of shared use pathways, and 17 crosswalk improvements. With those types of improvements, it will complete the network.

In looking at the specific areas of East Lake Drive and South Lake Drive, a final solution was not determined. Mr. Cox met with the neighborhoods and heard a lot of the concerns that have been outlined here. There is good potential up there, but to really take the next step a meeting needs to be held to focus on these two roadways with all the residents who live up and down the road. Residents are interested in making a change, they're interested in considering some pretty radical changes. It will take a whole other study of traffic elements that are outside the scope of this project, but there are some good opportunities up there.

The team has also been considering how this relates to the City West project, and that it could be kind of a showpiece of how this gets integrated into new development.

Mr. Cox has also been working with the City of Northville on how the Riverwalk vision they are developing ties into the City of Novi and how the systems work together.

In addition, how the plan is implemented and funded was looked at. A fair amount of time was spent on the maintenance resources in terms of what is needed in four different seasons for the different types of facilities, then looking out every two years, every five years, every 10 years, every 20 to 25 years, and what

different regiments are needed to make sure the system is maintained and cared for.

Mr. Cox referenced the network map, admittedly rather busy, but it tries to put everything on one piece of paper to have a summary of how it all fits together. Public input was received on this, and all comments were discussed yesterday with the city staff as to how best to respond. Most of the comments that came up were able to be addressed with fairly minor amendments to the plan as outlined in the framework.

A new two-page spread will be added that will address communications from the City to the residents in general, and how progress is being made on the system. Once feedback is heard today, info will be posted online regarding what was heard and specifically how it's being responded to so people can see what changes are being made.

Mr. Cox concluded by stating he would like to hear from the Planning Commission and the public tonight to see what other plan elements need to be addressed prior to this being presented to City Council and requested that a recommendation be made for City Council to approve it with some final amendments that will be worked out with City staff based on the comments heard this evening. Mr. Cox and Mr. Likens are happy to answer any questions.

Chair Pehrson opened the Public Hearing and invited members of the audience who wished to participate to approach the podium.

Mike Duchesneau, 1191 South Lake Drive, relayed that quite often when groups are hired to put together a presentation and do a study we end up with a lot of fluff. In this case, this is very detailed, very interesting information, and Mr. Duchesneau would like to commend the group that did this study.

Seeing no other audience members who wished to speak, and confirming no written correspondence was received, Chair Pehrson closed the Public Hearing and turned the matter over to the Planning Commission for consideration.

Member Lynch said he agreed with the gentleman who just spoke, this is very well done. He likes the idea that safety was included in the overall plan, it's family friendly, and thought was put into people going across busy highways. Member Lynch thinks this is important for Novi's brand of being family friendly. This is something that makes Novi a little bit different than other cities and might attract people. Member Lynch has heard feedback that some people didn't know Novi had these trails and networks until they came here, they thought it was just about a shopping mall. People are exploring and learning they can walk just about everywhere with this active network, which should be publicized more.

Member Lynch thinks this is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds, mainly because it falls into one of the major legs of the Novi brand, which is the family friendly portion. He thinks the team did a great job. The City Council may have some comments, but from a planning standpoint, it looks like a very thorough analysis, and he has no issues.

Member Dismondy relayed we are lucky to have the resources to do such a detailed study and have a plan. He inquired as to where it was left around the lake area. Mr. Cox responded that there is very limited real estate there from both a right of way standpoint and physical constraints with the road. Top concerns heard were speeding and solving the traffic issue. There were objections to expanding the road, and attaining additional right of way is going to be next to impossible in many of these areas, so analysis using the framework of the existing asphalt path needs to be done.

One of the things considered was to make the roads one way, so space could be allocated towards more bicycle and pedestrian paths. From a quick thumbnail sketch, this could work, but fire vehicle access needs to be considered. There are so many difficult points with curves and the topography around the park near the tunnel, that something dramatic needs to be done to solve the problem.

Residents did not have an endorsement of one idea over another but are willing to look and consider something dramatic. The next step is to continue that discussion. The neighborhoods seem to be open to

ideas, and reasonable solutions exist, but it can't be determined yet what will work.

Member Verma inquired if Walled Lake, South Lyon, and other surrounding cities were contacted in addition to Northville. Mr. Cox relayed that a meeting was held with all the different surrounding communities to discuss regional trail connections and how to link up to the trail, and there was a lot of interest in that. There was a unified interest in a joint kind of wayfinding and promotion of all the systems in the area, not just within the City, but for example how to get down to the State Park and how to get up to the different trails in the area. Another next step could be joint wayfinding in the promotion of all the resources in the area. Member Verma stated the plan is very well done, it's a good design.

Member Roney relayed he has been on the Walkable Novi Committee for almost three years now, and there's a lot of good work that went into this and a lot of good discussion. Mr. Cox has done an excellent job. This is well thought out, it's certainly an expansion of what we have, little tweaks could be made here and there but there always is. Member Roney would really like to see this go forward to City Council.

Chair Pehrson added that this is not just a flash in the pan. It is not something that came out of nowhere. This has been in the works for years, maybe decades, and as we've noticed things like this that the address needs for the citizenry, or to improve the brand, it should be noted how Novi leads the way. It's also important to know if you pay attention to the CIP, what the City Council spends money on, and where they allocate the money from year to year, you'll see quite a change over the past decade or so relative to this entire topic. Just recently, many of the CIP items were added or bumped up to address some of these shortcomings, to make this kind of plan more realistic.

Chair Pehrson appreciates the work that went into the plan and noted that this is an actionable item that Novi will take, it's not just a report that is going to collect dust.

Motion to recommend the draft 2023 Active Mobility Plan to City Council moved by Member Roney and seconded by Member Lynch.

In the matter of the draft 2023 Active Mobility Plan, motion to recommend to the City Council approval of the update to the 2011 Non-Motorized Master Plan, titled the 2023 Active Mobility Plan, including the attached documents:

- a. Executive Summary.**
- b. 2023 Active Mobility Plan full report**
- c. Active Mobility Network Map**

This motion is made for the reasons stated in the Planning Memo, as well as the following:

- The AMP supports the City Council goal to "Work with neighboring communities to complete connections through Novi to local trail systems. Make Novi businesses an appealing rest stop for cyclists using the trails."**
- The AMP supports the City Council goal to "Pursue partnership with Northville for a Trail connection from Novi-Northville...."**
- Since 2011, significant advancements in non-motorized transportation have occurred at the national, regional and local levels prompting the need to adopt an updated plan.**
- The 2023 AMP builds on the success of the 2011 Non-Motorized Plan, and promotes opportunities to refine the system.**
- A safer, accessible and family-friendly network provides far-reaching benefits to the community, including in the areas of public health, environmental sustainability, reduced traffic congestion, economic activity, quality of life, cost savings, and community building.**

ROLL CALL VOTE ON MOTION TO RECOMMEND THE DRAFT 2023 ACTIVE MOBILITY PLAN TO CITY COUNCIL MADE BY MEMBER RONEY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER LYNCH. Motion carried 5-0.

2. JSP23-43 GRAND RIVER VETERINARY CLINIC SPECIAL LAND USE

Consideration of Grand River Veterinary Clinic for Special Land Use approval. The subject property is approximately 0.73 acres and is located at 40245 Grand River Avenue, on the south side of

Grand River Avenue and west of Olde Orchard Street in the NCC, Non-Center Commercial Zoning District. The applicant is proposing to use the existing building and site as a veterinary clinic.

Planner Hill relayed the Special Land Use consideration is for the Veterinary Clinic at 40425 Grand River Avenue, located on the south side of Grand River Avenue, west of Olde Orchard Street, in Section 24 of the City. The applicant is hoping to move into an existing building and make some interior renovations in addition to some changes to the striping of the parking lot to remove some extra barrier free parking spaces that were originally provided for the site when it was a physical rehabilitation facility.

The site is currently zoned NCC, Non-Center Commercial, which allows for the veterinary clinic use as a Special Land Use. The site is bordered by other NCC-zoned parcels to the west, south, and east, and the uses are composed of mainly dentist offices. Some RM-1 zoned parcels are located south of the site as part of the Applegate condominium community. Across Grand River Avenue to the north are parcels zoned for I-1 Light Industrial uses, mainly consisting of office buildings.

The Future Land Use plan contemplates the site for community commercial, along with the surrounding properties to the east, west, and south. To the north, the parcels are contemplated for industrial research, development, and technology. There are no natural features besides the existing landscaping, trees, and lawn area on this site.

As mentioned, the applicant is not seeking to make any major changes to the site, save for the interior renovations and changes to the parking lot striping. Recently, the current property owner received variances from the Zoning Board of Appeals for the dumpster enclosure that slightly encroaches onto the neighboring property, which he also owns. Currently, the subject property and the neighboring property to the west share the dumpster enclosure.

In its review, staff noted that some of the original landscaping had died off or never was installed in the first place. Staff is requesting that the original landscaping be restored as detailed in the original site plan, and language is included in the motion sheet to ensure that the landscaping is restored as part of the Special Land Use approval.

The applicant has provided in his narrative and noise impact statement that the services provided will strictly occur inside the building, with the occasional need to walk a dog on a leash outside. No formal site plan has been provided since no major changes are being proposed; the applicant is requesting a waiver of that requirement. The motion sheet indicates that the proposed changes to the parking lot striping, in addition to the restoration of original landscaping, shall be provided to staff in an Electronic Stamping Set submittal for review and approval.

The Planning Commission is asked tonight to hold the public hearing for JSP23-43 Grand River Veterinary Clinic and approve or deny the Special Land Use permit. Dr. Kuljit Lubana Singh, the veterinarian, his real estate broker Dave Green, and property owner John Colucci are here tonight if there are any questions. Staff is also available to answer any questions.

Chair Pehrson invited the applicant to address the Planning Commission.

Dr. Lubana relayed he has been a veterinarian for about 20 years and runs a veterinary practice in Northville, the Northville Animal Hospital. He would like to open a second location as there is a lot of need for veterinary services. Practices are booked for weeks or months, so if a pet is sick today, they cannot be seen within a reasonable time. Dr. Lubana's current practice is open long hours, but he needs another veterinarian and another location to better serve. The Grand River location is very good in terms of traffic. There is no major change needed, only replacing the parking striping because fewer handicap spaces are needed.

Chair Pehrson opened the Public Hearing and invited members of the audience who wished to participate to approach the podium. Seeing no one, Chair Pehrson asked Member Lynch to read

correspondence into the record. Member Lynch relayed one response in support was received from an adjacent property owner, who indicated the Special Land Use approval was okay by him.

Chair Pehrson closed the Public Hearing and turned the matter over to the Planning Commission for consideration.

Member Lynch relayed that he is and animal lover and is in agreement that more medical facilities for them are needed. He appreciates the work Dr. Lubana does. Member Lynch confirmed his understanding that Special Land Use approval is needed due to the zoning district. Planner Hill confirmed this is correct.

Member Lynch indicated he was fine with the waiver of the site plan requirement and felt that the expense saved there could be put towards restoring landscaping. Dave Green confirmed he and the applicant would be working with the City on landscaping requirements.

Member Lynch thinks this is an appropriate use of the building and property, his only outstanding issue was restoring landscaping.

Member Dismondy inquired to confirm his understanding that the only reason Planning Commission approval is needed is due to the former physical therapy is changing use to a veterinary clinic. Planner Hill confirmed that this is correct. Member Dismondy confirmed the approval is okay by him.

Member Verma inquired whether Dr. Lubana is purchasing or leasing the building. Dr. Lubana responded that he has a purchase agreement signed, it is under contingency and is getting the Special Land Use approval before closing.

Member Roney is in agreement with Member Dismondy that if the building is good for human medical care, it is good for animal medical care. Member Roney confirmed that the location where the landscaping was to be restored is the north part of the east parking lot. Landscape Architect Rick Meader confirmed that this is correct. Member Roney noted that the space designed for landscaping is not the same size as shown on the original drawing. Landscape Architect Meader indicated he would work with the applicant within the current space. Member Roney indicated he was satisfied with that.

Chair Pehrson indicated he is in support as well.

Motion to approve the JSP23-43 Grand River Veterinary Clinic Special Land Use Permit moved by Member Lynch and seconded by Member Roney.

In the matter of Grand River Veterinary Clinic, JSP23-43, motion to approve the Special Land Use Permit request, based on and subject to the following:

a. Relative to other feasible uses of the site:

- i. The proposed use will not cause any detrimental impact on existing thoroughfares in terms of overall volumes, capacity, safety, vehicular turning patterns, intersections, view obstructions, line of sight, ingress and egress, acceleration/deceleration lanes, off street parking, off-street loading/unloading, travel times, and thoroughfare level of service (as it does not generate additional traffic).**
- ii. The proposed use will not cause any detrimental impact on the capabilities of public services and facilities, including water service, sanitary sewer service, storm water disposal, and police and fire protection to serve existing and planned uses in the area (no impacts to utilities are anticipated).**
- iii. The proposed use is compatible with the natural features and characteristics of the land, including existing woodlands, wetlands, watercourses, and wildlife habitats (no impacts to existing natural features are proposed).**
- iv. The proposed use is compatible with adjacent uses of land in terms of location, size, character, and impact on adjacent property or the surrounding neighborhood (as**

noted in the applicant noise impact statement, all services are to be performed inside the building, with the occasional dog walking outside on a leash, and demonstrating compliance with the requirements of the landscape review letter).

- v. The proposed use is consistent with the goals, objectives, and recommendations of the City's Master Plan or Land Use (as it fulfills one of the Master plan objectives to attract new businesses to the City of Novi).
 - vi. 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 attract new businesses to the City of Novi).
 - vii. The proposed use is listed among the provision of uses requiring special land use review as set forth in the various zoning districts of this Ordinance and is in harmony with the purposes and conforms to the applicable site design regulations of the zoning district in which it is located.
- b. The applicant has provided a narrative, noise impact statement, exhibits, and a survey in lieu of a formal site plan drawing.
 - c. Existing landscaping should be restored to what was originally provided on the original landscape plan and as described in the Landscape review letter, with any final adjustments to the landscaping at the determination of the City's Landscape Architect.
 - d. 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 Electronic Stamping Set submittal.

This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Article 3, Article 4, and Article 5 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE JSP23-43 GRAND RIVER VETERINARY CLINIC SPECIAL LAND USE PERMIT MADE BY MEMBER LYNCH AND SECONDED BY MEMBER RONEY. Motion carried 5-0.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. JSP23-38 VARSITY LINCOLN AUTO SHOP ADDITION

Consideration of Varsity Lincoln Auto Shop Addition for Preliminary Site Plan and Stormwater Management Plan approval. The subject property contains 1.14 acres and is located south of Grand River Avenue, on the east side of Wixom Road, in Section 17. The applicant is proposing to add on to the front of an existing auto service shop to add a 1,130 square-foot display, office, and sales area. Parking lot and landscaping improvements are proposed in addition to a sidewalk along Grand River Avenue.

Planner Hill relayed the Preliminary Site Plan and Stormwater Management Plan is for an addition to an existing auto service shop, where Varsity Lincoln hopes to provide automobile services and repairs in addition to adding a showroom and some office space. The subject property is located on the south side of Grand River Avenue, east of Wixom Road in Section 17 of the City. The existing Varsity Lincoln dealership is located west down Grand River Avenue.

The current zoning of the site is B-3 General Business district, which allows for minor automobile repair service businesses and new and used car salesrooms, showrooms, or offices. Property to the west and north include other B-3 zoned properties including the Grand Promenade shopping center to the west and the Grand Diner to the north across Grand River. To the east, the property is zoned for I-2 General Industrial and I-1 Light Industrial and includes Hadley's Towing Services. Additional I-1 Light Industrial zoning lies to the south where 123.Net has a site for their operations.

The Future Land Use plan contemplates the site for Office, Research, Development, and Technology, along with the current industrial zoned properties to the east and south. To the west and north, the Future Land Use plan contemplates community commercial.

There are no natural features of note on the site.

The applicant is proposing to demolish a portion of the existing auto service center and add a 1,130 square foot display, office, and sales area to the existing building. Additionally, there are some parking lot improvements proposed and the construction of an 8-foot sidewalk at the front of the property along Grand River.

The proposed use would be a Special Land Use if any vehicles were proposed to be stored outside and intended for sale. However, the applicant has indicated in their response letter that vehicles stored outside will strictly be for service and repair. Parking will be for staff and customers. Cars will be displayed in the showroom, but no cars are meant to be on display outside like at a car dealership. Language is included in the motion sheet ensuring that no vehicles for sale will be stored outside the building on the lot.

The applicant is seeking one landscape waiver for the lack of street tree landscaping due to the existing conditions of the site and to provide room for a sidewalk along Grand River Avenue, which is supported by staff.

The façade of the addition is in full compliance with the façade ordinance and includes a majority composed of soldier course natural brick, with some stone veneer at the bottom and wood look flat metal panels above the canopy. Given the minor area of disturbance, our engineers did not have any comments regarding the stormwater management on the site.

The Planning Commission is asked to approve or deny the Preliminary Site Plan and Stormwater Management Plan for JSP23-38 Varsity Lincoln Auto Shop Addition. Kevin McDevitt, the applicant's engineer, is available for any questions. Staff is also available.

Chair Pehrson invited the applicant to address the Planning Commission.

Kevin McDevitt, with Monument Engineering Group Associates, relayed he is the Engineer on the project. Essentially, the reason Varsity Lincoln wanted to purchase this building is just to utilize it as an overflow service center for their main body shop and the service center at their main dealership.

In addition, due to their agreement with Lincoln, they cannot sell any other vehicles besides Lincoln, such as Ford or Mercury, out of their current dealership. If an existing customer wants to buy, for example a Mach-E or a Bronco, the customer would have to be sent to a different dealership. This allows Varsity to have front office space, by knocking off the 600 square foot existing office that's there, and pretty bad looking to be blunt, and to build a new 1000 square foot office. It will really beautify the building and make an office for vehicle closing at this location, just for existing Varsity customers.

Currently the existing pavement goes all the way up to the right of way. The applicant plans to remove about 25 feet of that pavement, add a 20-foot-wide landscape berm, sidewalks from property line to property line, and really beautify the front of the building. One landscape island will also be added within the parking lot to help screen the rear part of the parking lot from the front so service vehicles can be parked back there.

Chair Pehrson turned the matter over to the Planning Commission for consideration.

Member Lynch relayed from a planning standpoint this will look nice. Member Lynch clarified his understanding of the use of the office space. Mr. McDevitt responded that the office will be used for existing Lincoln customers to take delivery of a new Ford or Mercury vehicle since that is not permitted at the Varsity Lincoln dealership on Grand River and Wixom Road by the sales agreement with the manufacturer. It is not intended to be a showroom, just an office for vehicle closing.

Member Dismondy did not have any questions.

Member Verma confirmed his understanding that this project will be to the east of the existing Varsity Lincoln dealership and inquired whether the Varsity body shop north of Twelve Mile is still existing. Mr.

McDevitt responded that the purpose of this building will be purely for overflow from their main dealership on Grand River at Wixom Road, and will not be for vehicle sales, just for closing and delivery of non-Lincoln vehicles to existing Varsity Lincoln customers. The body shop at Twelve Mile will still be utilized as well.

Member Verma inquired whether the address of the new sales office addition will have a separate mailing address. Mr. McDevitt responded that it would have a separate mailing address.

Member Roney summarized that 600 square feet is being taken down, 500 square feet will be added to the building as a small addition, and landscaping and sidewalk will be added. He sees this as positive for the City and is in support.

Chair Pehrson indicated his support.

Motion to approve the Preliminary Site Plan for JSP 23-38 Varsity Lincoln Auto Shop Addition moved by Member Lynch and seconded by Member Roney.

In the matter of Varsity Lincoln Auto Shop Addition, JSP23-38, motion to approve the Preliminary Site Plan based on and subject to the following:

- a. The applicant has confirmed that no vehicles for sale will be stored outside the building on the lot, which is made as a condition of this site plan approval.
- b. Landscape waiver for the lack of street tree landscaping, due to the existing conditions of the site and to provide room for a sidewalk along Grand River Avenue.
- c. The findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters and the conditions and the items listed in those letters being addressed on the Final Site Plan.

This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Article 3, Article 4, and Article 5 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE JSP23-38 VARSITY LINCOLN AUTO SHOP ADDITION PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN MADE BY MEMBER LYNCH AND SECONDED BY MEMBER RONEY. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion to approve the Stormwater Management Plan for JSP 23-38 Varsity Lincoln Auto Shop Addition moved by Member Lynch and seconded by Member Roney.

In the matter of Varsity Lincoln Auto Shop Addition, JSP23-38, motion to approve the 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.

This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Chapter 11 of the Code of Ordinances and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE JSP23-38 VARSITY LINCOLN AUTO SHOP ADDITION STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN MADE BY MEMBER LYNCH AND SECONDED BY MEMBER RONEY. Motion carried 5-0.

2. APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 10, 2024 PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Motion to approve the January 10, 2024 Planning Commission minutes made by Member Lynch and seconded by Member Verma.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 10, 2024 PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES MADE BY MEMBER LYNCH AND SECONDED BY MEMBER VERMA. Motion carried 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS FOR COMMISSION ACTION

There were no consent agenda items.

SUPPLEMENTAL ISSUES/TRAINING UPDATES

City Planner McBeth relayed discussion for the date of the Joint Planning Commission and ZBA meeting is still underway, but a firm date has not yet been determined.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Chair Pehrson invited members of the audience who wished to address the Planning Commission during the final audience participation to come forward. Seeing no one, Chair Pehrson closed the final audience participation.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Member Lynch and seconded by Member Roney.

VOICE VOTE ON MOTION TO ADJOURN THE FEBRUARY 7, 2024 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MADE BY MEMBER LYNCH AND SECONDED BY MEMBER RONEY. *Motion carried 5-0.*

Meeting adjourned at 7:52 PM.

*Actual language of the motion sheet subject to review.