

MINUTES  
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS  
CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MEETING  
CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM  
JUNE 26, 2017

The Study Session meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Massey at 6:00pm.

Council Members Present: Bridges (arrived at 6:15pm), Bruce, Knol, Lerner, Massey and Rich

Council Members Absent: Steckloff

Others Present: City Manager Boyer, City Clerk Smith, Assistant City Manager Mekjian, Director Gardiner, and City Attorney Joppich

MOTION by Bruce, support by Rich, to amend the agenda to hear the discussion on the proposed amendment to the consent judgment for MDT prior to the Update on the 2020 Vision Plan.

MOTION CARRIED 5-0 (Bridges and Steckloff absent)

**DISCUSSION ON PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO CONSENT JUDGMENT (MDT BUILDING)**

Director of Planning and Community Development Ed Gardiner mentioned that Council has received a memo of explanation on this matter from the City Attorney. Member Driven Technologies (MDT) purchased their building in Farmington Hills after moving from Warren and has completely renovated the building. He noted that MDT now wishes to build an outdoor patio area and because this property is part of a consent judgment, the addition would require an amendment to that consent judgment.

Mark Cohn, Attorney for MDT, explained that this building is the company headquarters in Michigan and MDT wants to install an outdoor patio to enhance employee morale and as an incentive to attract employees. He stated that they reviewed the city's zoning ordinance and also the consent judgment for the property and met with Director Gardiner and the City Attorney.

Chris Kowal, Chief Financial Officer, explained that MDT started in 2003 and provides for technology for credit unions. He stated that they were looking for an area to expand and found the building in Farmington Hills and have invested significantly in this building. He added that due to the nature of their business, they are highly competitive so the facility, environment and culture they create are all very important in attracting and maintaining employees. He mentioned that pictures were provided to Council in their packets. Mr. Kowal stated that their modern technology look has gone over well with employees and they are adding employees each year and see the outdoor space as part of the overall vision for the building.

Larry Nichols, CEO, added that the building has all been updated to a green building and they use reclaimed materials and all of the furniture is from Michigan. He commented that Council and staff will be invited to a kick-off opening.

Councilmember Knol thanked the representatives of MDT for choosing Farmington Hills. She stated that the building looks amazing and agrees that the outdoor space is important for this type of business that is competing for millennials with other companies. She supports the idea, but questioned the proposed closing time for the patio as there was a conflict in the information provided.

Attorney Joppich clarified that the request is for the patio to be open from 8am until 7pm.

Councilmember Rich stated that she appreciates MDT bringing this beautiful facility to Farmington Hills and suggested they consider including some public artwork.

Mr. Kowal commented that this is a great idea and mentioned that they had hired a graffiti artist to design current artwork.

(Councilmember Bridges arrived at 6:15pm)

Councilmember Bruce commented that this is a reasonable request and has no objections. He agreed that it is a very competitive market.

Councilmember Lerner also had no objections to the request. He asked that staff consider rules and regulations to allow for certain types of controlled, outdoor fire pits. Councilmember Rich concurred.

Attorney Joppich stated that language has been included in the consent judgment to address the surrounding neighborhood including additional screening and not allowing music. He added that because the consent judgment would run with the land, these terms will remain should the building be sold in the future. He added that the Fire Department should be included in on any discussion with regard to allowing for any type of barbeque or fire pit.

The general consensus of Council was that there were no objections to the request and to bring the consent judgment before Council at a regular meeting for consideration.

Mayor Massey agreed with reviewing the zoning ordinance in the future to allow for patio areas and controlled barbeque or fire pits.

Mr. Gardiner stated that this property is under a consent judgment and uses and terms could be negotiated; but cautioned that the city does receive complaints from surrounding neighbors when there is outdoor activity in commercial areas.

Attorney Joppich added that if there was no consent judgment for the property, this type of request would typically go before the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance. The consent judgment is brought before Council for consideration but if Council wanted to still have this go before the Zoning Board of Appeals, it could. He did not feel it was necessary. Council agreed that it was not necessary for this request to go before the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Mr. Nichols inquired when the consent judgment would be presented to council for consideration. Mayor Massey stated that they could most likely put it on the agenda for their next meeting on July 10<sup>th</sup>.

Attorney Joppich stated that he will prepare the consent judgment agreement based on the terms outlined and provide that to their attorney for review.

#### **UPDATE ON 20/20 VISION PLAN**

Assistant City Manager Mekjian explained that the 2020 Vision project was conducted years ago and various committees were formed that identified goals and objectives for their respective committees. Council reviewed this last month and asked for staff to indicate which goals have been met. He stated

that the bullets highlighted are objectives identified by staff as being complete and the red text includes the achievement by each department in that category to date.

It was determined that council would take some time to review the document and it would come back on a future study session agenda for further discussion or questions.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The study session meeting adjourned at 6:40pm

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela B. Smith, City Clerk