

**MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING/REGULAR MEETING
FARMINGTON HILLS CITY HALL – COUNCIL CHAMBERS
February 18, 2016, 7:30 P.M.**

Chair Topper called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. on February 18, 2016.

Commissioners Present: Blizman, Fleischhacker, Mantey, Rae-O'Donnell, Stimson, Topper

Commissioners Absent: Orr, Fleischhacker, Schwartz

Others Present: Staff Planner Stec, Staff Engineer Darnall, City Attorney Gillam,
Planning Consultant Arroyo

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by McRae, support by Stimson, to approve the agenda as published.

Motion carried unanimously 6-0.

PUBLIC HEARING:

A. SPECIAL APPROVAL 53-1-2016

LOCATION:	32905 Northwestern Highway
PARCEL I.D.:	22-23-02-102-002 thru 005, and 013
PROPOSAL:	Open air retail garden center and nursery in B-3 General Business, RA-4 One-Family Residential, and P-1 Vehicular Parking Districts
ACTION REQUESTED:	Extension of special approval use
APPLICANT:	Raymond Hesano, Ray's Plants and Flowers
OWNER:	Thomas J. Langan, Nor-West Lanes & Michigan State Highway Department

Raymond Hesano, 9249 Tanby Street, Commerce Township, MI was present on behalf of this application. He asked for a 5-year extension of a special approval use for an open-air retail garden center and nursery at 32905 Northwestern Highway. He had been operating at this location for 29 years.

Commissioner Rae-O'Donnell asked if there had been any changes to this operation. Mr. Hesano said there had not been any changes. His primary use was to sell bedding plants, hanging baskets, mums and pumpkins in the fall, etc. The operation was open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. 7 days a week.

Commissioner McRae asked about approval from MDOT for right-of-way use. This had been submitted in the past. Staff Planner Stec said that an approving motion could be conditioned upon receipt of MDOT approvals as in the past, to be reviewed administratively. There was also a City-owned portion of land being utilized. As in the past, the applicant should submit a letter of indemnification protecting the City against liabilities.

Commissioner McRae referred to the Fire Marshal's letter of February 3, 2016, which limited the tent installation to not more than 180 days. Mr. Hesano said he had conformed to this in the past and would continue to do so.

Commissioner Blizman asked if the previous MDOT approval had a time limit. Staff Planner Stec said he would follow up on this issue; if further MDOT documentation was needed, this could be addressed administratively.

Referring to his memo of February 10, 2016 and utilizing overhead slides, Staff Planner Stec reviewed the layout of the application, and pointed out the portions of land owned by MDOT and the City. He affirmed that this was the same use and layout as had been at this location in previous years.

Chair Topper opened the public hearing. Seeing that no one came forward to speak, and that there was no correspondence in this matter, Chair Topper closed the public hearing.

MOTION by Rae-O'Donnell, support by Blizman, that the request for Special Approval No. 53-1-2016, submitted by Raymond Hesano, be approved because the proponent has demonstrated that the use meets the minimum criteria for approval as outlined in Section 34-4.20.4B(i through vii) of Chapter 34 of the Zoning Ordinance. This approval is subject to all applicable provisions of the Zoning Chapter, any other applicable city codes, and the following conditions:

- 1. The proponent provide approval from MDOT in order to operate within the MDOT right-of-way.**
- 2. The proponent provide a letter of indemnification for the use of the City-owned right-of-way.**
- 3. The hours of operation be 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.**
- 4. The approval is valid for a term of 5 years.**
- 5. The period of sales is from May 5 to October 31.**
- 6. Approval by the City Fire Marshal.**

Motion carried 6-0.

B. PUD PLAN 3, 2015

LOCATION:	27400 Twelve Mile Road
PARCEL I.D.:	22-23-12-476-008
PROPOSAL:	Planned Unit Development for assisted senior living in RA-1B, One-Family Residential District
ACTION REQUESTED:	Recommendation to City Council
APPLICANT:	Sarah Fisher Holding, LLC
OWNER:	St. John Health, DBA St. John Providence Health Systems

James T. Pappas, Fusco, Schaffer & Pappas Architects, 550 E. Nine Mile Rd, Ferndale, MI was present on behalf of this application, as well as other members of the PUD team. Utilizing overhead slides showing the proposed site plan, Mr. Pappas gave a general overview of the site, which contained 31.5 acres. They were proposing a combination of independent living, assisted living and memory care as well as senior villas and senior apartments, for a total of 354 units. The concept for the design was a connector road that would access via Inkster Road and then exit via 12 Mile Road. The purpose of this was to have as much of the building as contiguous as possible so that there was easy interior movement for the residents and access to the buildings and parking. Several of the requirements of the site had to do with saving the historic buildings at the center. They were saving 3 of the buildings and had received approval from the Historic District Commission. This requirement had led to the overall design being contiguous at that location. The project had been discussed with the Road Commission and the Southfield Engineering Department. Discussions had also been held with the neighbors to the west, so that an overall stepping design provided buildings closest to the residential neighborhood to the west being one-story with walkouts, and with the 3 story buildings being on the eastern portion of the site closest to Inkster Road, with a small portion of one of those buildings being a 4-story walkout simply because of the topography. There was no entrance on Cheswick Drive.

Mr. Pappas concluded his presentation.

Utilizing overhead slides and referring to the January 14, 2016 review letter, Planning Consultant Arroyo reviewed this request, which was make a recommendation to City Council for this PUD request. City Council would make the final determination for this request. If City Council approved the PUD, the project would return to the Planning Commission for final site plan and landscape plan approval.

Planning Consultant Arroyo reviewed the location of this request and noted that the property was zoned RA-1B. The Planning Commission had previously reviewed this application on October 15, 2015 and January 21, 2016.

Planning Consultant Arroyo noted the current configuration of the site, which had 5 access driveways to Inkster Road. The proposal would reduce this number to 2 driveways, one of which would be used as a service driveway only. A new driveway was proposed on 12 Mile Road. Planning Consultant Arroyo pointed out the 3 historic buildings that were being preserved (former administration building and 2 cottages). The historic entryway at the corner of 12 Mile and Inkster would also be preserved, though it would no longer function as an entryway. The applicant had received a Notice to Proceed from the Farmington Hills Historic District Commission. One of the advantages the HDC noted was that with the entry off of 12 Mile Road and the way the buildings were sited, the historic buildings would actually be more prominent on the site.

The applicant was proposing a total of 354 units: 222 assisted living and 132 independent living residential units. The breakdown of the development phases was outlined on pages 1 and 2 of the review letter.

The only dimensional deviation requested involved building height: a maximum building height of 45 feet was proposed for several buildings not adjacent to the single family district to the west. The RA-1B District had a maximum building height of 30 feet.

A use deviation was also requested, in order to construct an elderly care and services facility on the site, including multiple-family housing.

Planning Consultant Arroyo reviewed Request for Final Determination Process as outlined on page 3 of the review letter. The Summary of Findings began on page 4. The applicant was granted preliminary PUD qualification approval on October 15, 2015.

The applicant had proposed this project to address the growing demands of the aging population. Planning Consultant Arroyo said that there had been shown to be a need in the City for additional senior housing, both independent and assisted living. The property was following a similar campus configuration and concept as previously used on the site. This preservation of historic features was one of the benefits of the PUD.

The applicant had indicated that considerable improvements to the infrastructure would be required to handle the anticipated load on the sanitary sewer. A newly constructed detention area for storm water management was also proposed and would drain to Pebble Creek of the Rouge River.

The applicant had indicated that the property would be developed with a great emphasis on the preservation of significant open space and offer a permanent transition and natural vegetative barrier between the new community and the neighboring residential community. The project would have pedestrian walkways and trails traversing the property with connection to the public sidewalks along Inkster and 12 Mile Roads. The site design incorporated many interior and exterior courtyards, which would receive special attention with respect to landscape gardens, walkways, and pavilions. The applicant's plan indicated that the proposed development would cover 14% of the lot, which was below the maximum of 35%.

Planning Consultant Arroyo reviewed the goals and objectives of the Master Plan. Page 6 of the review letter noted that the property was identified in the Master Plan as Special Planning Area 3, with the narrative regarding this area in the Master Plan quoted on page 7. Especially the Master Plan stated that *it is ideal for the PUD option that could provide flexibility to accomplish the objectives of preserving the historic buildings, establishing residential use of most of the property and protecting some of the open space and the flood plain.*

Planning Consultant Arroyo reviewed the goals of the Special Planning Area (p. 7), including preserving some of the historic character of the site, compatibility with the abutting residential uses by planning one-story villas and two-story brownstones adjacent to the single family residential units to the west, and traffic control because of the intersection, topography of the roads and the proximity of the bridge on 12 Mile Road. The applicant had provided a traffic impact study with modified curb cuts, location of drives, and reconfiguration and design of all drives. Acceleration/deceleration and passing lanes would be required. The applicant continued to meet with the City's Engineering Department and had made contact with the City of Southfield and the Road Commission as well.

Planning Consultant Arroyo briefly reviewed the policies as outlined in the Special Planning Area (p. 8), including using the PUD option as a means to accommodate the complexities of the site, with specific components of the site outlined.

Under the tree removal permit (p. 9) , Planning Consultant Arroyo said that 25 regulated and 37 landmark trees would be removed. Total required replacement would be 86 trees (25 regulated and 61 for the landmark trees).

Planning Consultant Arroyo concluded his review by reminding the Commission that this request was for a recommendation to City Council. If Council acted affirmatively on this proposal, the Planning Commission would later review the site plan and landscape plan.

In response to questions from Commissioners McRae and Rae-O'Donnell, Planning Consultant Arroyo said the 3-story buildings were all the buildings that fronted on Inkster Road.

Chair Topper opened the public hearing.

Jeff Dawkins, 29116 Bradmoor Court, president of the Hickory Oaks Homeowners' Association, said that their subdivision was in favor of this proposed PUD. The developer had met with the Association and had been responsive to their concerns. They were relieved to see that there would be no access off Cheswick Drive.

Scott Griffin, 27775 Cheswick Drive, said he had been the Homeowners' Association liaison with the developer. He reiterated that they were in favor of this PUD plan. This seemed like an appropriate way to move forward, and they appreciated the way the development was now massed. The developer had shown them some beautiful past projects and had been responsive and understanding of their concerns. For instance, the developer had modified the plan so that car lights would not shine in their windows. The residents also had requested a landscape buffer along the creek. If by any chance the plan changed to require an access on Cheswick the neighbors would be back, but as the plan stood tonight, it had their full support.

Thomas Morris, Weymouth Street, said he represented the Woodcreek Civic Association. They also did not oppose this PUD application. Their concerns were addressed when the southwest corner of the site was dedicated to permanent green space. They now supported this development.

Scott Elliott, 29741 Fox Club Drive, Farmington Hills, MI, said that he was the current owner's real estate agent. He spoke to the professionalism and experience of the applicant. The present owner had done due diligence on the applicant's background, and both he and the owner were in full support of this application.

George Crippin, 29225 Bradmoor Court, said that this was the first time for him hearing this proposal. He was concerned about the effect of this development on the neighboring property values, and he was concerned about the additional traffic on Inkster Road affecting the general safety of the area, especially bus safety. He was also concerned about the impact on the Costick Center.

Seeing that there was no further comment, Chair Topper closed the public hearing and invited Mr. Pappas to speak.

Mr. Pappas said that all the contiguous buildings along Inkster that were labeled as Assisted and Independent Living as well as the one outbuilding along Inkster were 3 stories high. The topography created the need for this height. The bigger reason for the height, however, was the ability "going up" gave to save green space. They were only at 14% lot coverage for the site. Regarding traffic issues, a traffic study had been conducted, and they were working with all the involved government entities, including Farmington Hills, Southfield, and the Road Commission. Regarding safety issues and property values, while he could not speak to school bus routes, his experience had been that a project like this would raise property values in the area.

In response to a question from Commissioner Stimson, Mr. Pappas confirmed that the westernmost building was 2 stories to the west and one story to the east.

Commissioner Blizman asked about the December 29, 2015 Engineering review, which expressed concern about the access at 12 Mile Road.

Mike Labadie, 27725 Stansbury, Farmington Hills, said that they had met several times with the Road Commission regarding the 12 Mile Road access. It would be right-in, right-out and would include a raised traffic island. There was adequate site distance. The access would be consistent with Road Commission standards.

In response to a question from Chair Topper, Staff Engineer Darnell said that the access would require appropriate approvals at the time of engineering review.

Commissioner McRae suggested, for site plan review, internal signage as drivers entered the property warning them that the 12 Mile exit was a right out.

Commissioner McRae asked Mr. Pappas to provide screening of the service entrance on Inkster at the time of site plan review.

Commissioner Rae-O'Donnell asked how many residents would live at this facility. Mr. Pappas said 10-15% of the 354 units might have couples. He could not give a number of staff.

Commissioner McRae said that residents who drove typically did not follow the same driving pattern as non-retired individuals. Mr. Pappas concurred, and said traffic numbers were typically far lower than typical subdivisions would generate.

Commissioner Blizman asked about changing the access on Inkster to offset from Apple Blossom Lane, as suggested in the Engineering Department review. Mr. Pappas said they had had conversations about this; shifting the access did not lend itself to their overall site design and they were planning on leaving the access

where it was shown on the plan. The City of Southfield found the current location acceptable; it was currently one of the existing access locations.

Commissioner Stimson confirmed with Mr. Pappas that the current historic district structures to be preserved were approved by the Historic District Commission.

MOTION by McRae, support by Blizman, that the Planning Commission recommend to City Council that PUD Plan No. 3, 2015 dated February 5, 2016, submitted by John Shekerjian of Sarah Fisher Holding, LLC be approved because the plan is in accordance with the objectives, goals and policies of the Master Plan for Future Land Use and is consistent with the objectives and applicable provisions of the Planned Unit Development Option as outlined in Section 34-3.20 of Chapter 34, Zoning Ordinance.

Motion carried 6-0.

At 8:20 p.m. Chair Topper called a brief recess. At 8:26 p.m. Chair Topper reconvened the meeting.

REGULAR MEETING:

A. SITE AND LANDSCAPE PLAN 51-1-2016

LOCATION:	29301 Grand River Ave.
PARCEL I.D.:	22-23-36-306-016
PROPOSAL:	Addition of new building and parking lot improvements for vehicle sales and rental in B-3 General Business District
ACTION REQUESTED:	Approval of Site and Landscape Plan
APPLICANT:	AR Brouwer Company, LLC
OWNER:	Enterprise Leasing Company of Detroit, LLC

Utilizing overhead slides and referring to his February 12, 2016 review letter, Planning Consultant Arroyo gave the review for this application, which was a request for approval for a Site Plan and Landscape Plan for a new 3,590 square foot building located on the eastern half of the lot, to be used for sales operations. The parking lot would be reconfigured; some spaces would accommodate employees and customers while others would store rental vehicles. The property was on the south side of Grand River Avenue between Middlebelt Road and Rockwell Street. The 3.4 acre property was zoned B-3, General Business District with Grand River Overlay-One. There was access onto Middlebelt as well as Grand River Avenue.

This project was a permitted use in the District. All dimensional requirements were met. The proposed building façade would have a culture stone and sill base below glass windows. Above the windows, the façade would be EIFS topped with metal coping. Portions of the side walls and all of the rear wall would be finished with split face block. This was compatible with the principal structure and surrounding businesses, and was also aligned with the building elements guidelines for the Grand River Overlay District.

Other standards were being met as listed on pages 2-3 of the review letter. Questions remained regarding:

- *Screening between uses.* A 6-foot high masonry wall was required to screen this establishment from the residential district located to the south of the site. However, as the bird's eye aerial showed, this site abutted the Upper Branch of the Rouge River and was heavily wooded along the southern boundary adjacent to residential. The Planning Commission could choose to accept this existing natural screening in lieu of a wall.

- *Exterior lighting levels of illumination.* The submitted photometric plan showed light levels slightly higher than the 0.3 foot candles along a roughly 80-foot stretch of the southern property line. While the neighboring property was zoned RA-3, it was also heavily wooded and consisted of a thin strip of land between the Upper Rouge River and the subject property line. The Planning Commission should determine whether illumination levels here should be adjusted or whether the proposed lighting was acceptable given the physical conditions on the ground.
- *Pedestrian connections.* The applicant had not provided a walkway from the public sidewalk to the front entrance of the principal building.

Regarding the landscape plan, the only items requiring discussion were the two planting beds behind the new building. While Planning Consultant Arroyo had no objection to this, would these beds not be more logically located in front of the building, where they would be more visible to more people? The location of the building could essentially be swapped with the beds without affecting any other site elements.

Planning Consultant Arroyo concluded his review.

Commissioner McRae noted that his firm had done the lighting layout for this project; he did not feel this affected his objectivity for the case.

Commissioner McRae thought it would be counter-intuitive to ask for a wall on the southern property line. The Grand River Overlay District called for as much interaction with the river as possible.

Commissioner Blizman asked if the lighting that exceeded the required foot-candles was new or existing. Was it down lit and shielded? Planning Consultant Arroyo said the applicant should be able to answer these questions.

Steve Brouwer, AR Brouwer Co., LLC, 7444 Dexter, Ann Arbor Road, Dexter, MI was present on behalf of this application. Regarding the lighting, lighting was new and all lighting would be down lit and shielded. Regarding the screening on the southern property line, they would prefer not to build a wall.

In response to a question from Commissioner McRae, Mr. Brouwer said they would provide pedestrian striping from the public sidewalk to the front entrance of the principal building.

MOTION by Rae-O'Donnell, support by Stimson, that Site Plan No. 51-1-2016, dated January 19, 2016 submitted by Allison Bishop of AR Brouwer Co., LLC be approved because it appears to meet all applicable requirements of the Zoning Chapter. This approval is subject to the following conditions:

- **A revised site plan be submitted for administrative review showing a pedestrian connection from the public sidewalk to the new building.**

This motion also acknowledges the determination by the Planning Commission that the existing vegetation along the southern property line adjacent to the residential zoning district may remain without the requirement of any new screening, and that the proposed lighting is acceptable.

Motion carried 6-0.

MOTION by Rae-O'Donnell, support by Stimson, that Landscape Plan No. 51-1-2016, dated January 19, 2016, submitted by Allison Bishop of AR Brouwer Co., LLC be approved because it appears to meet all applicable Zoning Chapter requirements and applicable Designs Principles as adopted by the Planning Commission. This approval shall be subject to the following conditions:

- **A revised plan be submitted for administrative review showing that the landscape island on the south side of the proposed new building is relocated to the north side (front) of the building.**

Motion carried 6-0.

B. SITE AND LANDSCAPE PLAN 52-1-2016

LOCATION:	24800 Haggerty
PARCEL I.D.:	22-23-19-326-056
PROPOSAL:	Addition and renovation to existing building and parking lot for motorcycle sales, restaurant, and retail in B-3 General Business District
ACTION REQUESTED:	Approval of Site and Landscape Plan
APPLICANT:	Cunningham Limp Company, Barton D. Roeser
OWNER:	Sam's Wholesale Club

Utilizing overhead slides and referring to the February 12, 2016 review letter, Planning Consultant Arroyo gave the background for this request, which was to remodel the building at 24800 Haggerty to accommodate Harley Davidson, a restaurant, and an additional future retail space. The property was located on the east side of Haggerty Road, north of Grand River Avenue and bordering I-272. The property was zoned B-3, General Business and was also within the FRW-1 Freeway Redevelopment Overlay District 1.

Planning Consultant Arroyo described the existing building and site characteristics. The applicant planned to reconfigure the current structure into three separate uses. This included Motor City Harley Davidson, which would occupy 65,000 square feet of the southern half of the structure. A restaurant was located between the dealership and the future retail space, occupying 5,000 square feet of space along the west side of the structure. A future hardscape area would be located in front of the restaurant.

The applicant should clarify the intended function of the future hardscaped area and the timing for construction. Depending on the timing, this might need to be removed from the plan and resubmitted at a later date. Also, the indoor and outdoor uses that were proposed should be identified as uses that were principal permitted uses in the B-3 District.

Regarding dimensional requirements, front yard open space calculations had not been provided. Since this was an existing site, the Planning Commission might choose to accept the existing front yard open space percentage as non-conforming since this site plan was not changing the front yard landscaped area.

Other outstanding issues included:

- Rooftop screening needed to be verified.
- The applicant should outline any lighting changes on the site.
- Pedestrian access needed to be indicated from the sidewalk.

Regarding the tree removal permit, 7 replacement trees were required. The plans incorrectly provided calculations for landmark trees. The applicant should provide correct calculations, as well as a fully tabled tree survey, indicating all trees on site with size, common and scientific names, and condition.

Regarding the landscape plan, the applicant should confirm the height of the berm by dimensioning the elevation of the berm on the plans. Also, the tree protection detail needed to be revised to reflect ordinance requirements.

Planning Consultant Arroyo concluded his review.

Sam Ashley, 39300 West 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills, MI, was present on behalf of this application, as well as other members of the Harley-Davidson team. Mr. Ashley showed a hardboard rendering of the building to the Commission.

Mr. Ashley said that the building's footprint would remain the same. They were going to remove 8 pre-cast panels, which would create a common entrance area. They would provide the pedestrian crossing. The element on the drawings referred to as *future hardscape area* was actually grass. This would be planted right away. There would be a *riders' academy area*, and would be used in warm weather for training. Hours for the training were Saturday and Sunday mornings starting at 7:45 a.m. and Wednesday and Thursday evenings at 5:30 p.m.

Commissioner McRae asked if the academy area would be striped for parking. Mr. Ashley said that parking stripes would not be needed in that area.

Commissioner McRae noted that the green space shown in the rendering close to the building did not apply to the front yard open space requirement. Planning Consultant Arroyo explained that the front yard open space had to be within the 25-foot setback. For instance, the applicant could add end islands in the parking lot to help meet this requirement. They could also add a strip from the building to Haggerty, making it half sidewalk and half green space.

Commissioner Mantey asked what the front yard open space requirement was trying to achieve. Planning Consultant Arroyo explained that the requirement was trying to offer green space along streets in the City. Commissioner Mantey thought the large area of grass in front of the building as shown in the rendering met the spirit of this requirement. The Planning Commission could accept the existing conditions on the site. Trees were already being added.

Mr. Ashley said the grass in front of the building was almost 8,000 square feet. Planning Consultant Arroyo said that this amount of green space would meet the area requirements of the ordinance; however it was not technically in the right location.

In response to a question from Commissioner Rae-O'Donnell, Planning Consultant Arroyo said wood chips constituted open space.

In response to a question from Commissioner Blizman, Mr. Ashley said they did not have a tenant for the restaurant space.

MOTION by McRae, support by Blizman, that Site Plan No. 52-1-2016, dated January 19, 2016, submitted by Barton Roeser of Cunningham – Limp Co. be approved because it appears to meet all applicable requirements of the Zoning Chapter. This approval shall be subject to the following conditions:

- **The area in front of the building identified as future hardscape area be revised to show it as a grass area.**
- **Additional front yard open space be added where reasonably possible to bring the existing condition into greater compliance with the minimum front yard open space requirement.**
- **The parking lot striping in the area dedicated to rider training be removed from the plan.**
- **A pedestrian connection from the public sidewalk along Haggerty to the front of the building be added.**
- **Details on the lighting plan per the February 11, 2016 Clearzoning review letter be added.**

Motion carried 6-0.

MOTION by McRae, support by Blizman, that Landscape Plan No. 52-1-2016, dated January 19, 2016, submitted by Barton Roeser of Cunningham – Limp Co. be approved because it appears to meet all applicable Zoning Chapter requirements and applicable Design Principles as adopted by the Planning Commission. This approval shall be subject to the following conditions:

- **7 additional replacement trees be added.**
- **Inaccuracies in the tree survey summary table be corrected.**
- **The topography of the existing front yard berm along Haggerty Road be indicated.**

Motion carried 6-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: January 21, 2016 and January 28, 2016

Motion by Stimson, support by Rae-O'Donnell, to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2016 and January 28, 2016 meetings as submitted.

Motion carried unanimously 6-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS:

Commissioner Blizman greeted the Commission on behalf of Commissioner Orr.

ADJOURNMENT:

Seeing that there was no further discussion, Chair Topper adjourned the meeting at 9:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Schwartz
Planning Commission Secretary

/cem