

**MINUTES  
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
31555 W ELEVEN MILE ROAD  
FARMINGTON HILLS, MICHIGAN  
FEBRUARY 16, 2023, 7:30 P.M.**

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

The Planning Commission Regular Meeting was called to order by Chair Countegan at 7:30 p.m.

Chair Countegan led a moment of silence in memory of the victims of the MSU shooting that occurred this past week.

**ROLL CALL**

Commissioners present:           Aspinall, Countegan, Grant, Stimson, Ware

Commissioners Absent:         Brickner, Mantey, Trafelet, Varga

Others Present:                 City Planner Perdonik, City Attorney Schultz, Planning Consultant  
Tangari, Historic District Commission Vice Chair Klemmer and  
incoming Chair Tulas

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**MOTION by Stimson, support by Grant, to amend and approve the agenda as follows:**

- **Postpone E. Election of Officers until more Commissioners are present.**

**MOTION passed by voice vote.**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**A.     PRESENTATION OF HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION 2022 ANNUAL REPORT**

Historic District Commission Vice Chair Klemmer presented the Historic District Commission 2022 Annual Report.

The 7-member City of Farmington Hills Historic District Commission is charged with preserving historic districts within the City that reflect elements of the architectural, cultural, economic, political, or social history of the community. City Council Liaison is Valerie Knoll, and City Staff Liaison is Staff Planner Canty.

The Report reviewed the 2022 Goals and Objectives, and listed the Goals, Objectives, and Initiatives for 2023, which are:

- Assist the City's Special Services Department with upcoming restoration work on the fieldstone wall at the Sherman-Goodenough House (Historic District Site No. 312).
- Assist the City's Special Services Department with the upcoming work on the Spicer House (Historic District Site No. 508) and implement a comprehensive restoration plan for the site.
- Continue collaboration between the Historic District Commission and City's Department of Public Works in implementing the cemetery preservation plan, including additional monument cleaning and resetting.

- Continue to update the “Blue Book,” the City’s official guide to its Historic Districts, for accuracy and comprehensiveness.
- Complete study of properties identified in the 2019 reconnaissance survey by contacting property owners and informing them of benefits of local historic designation and continue to identify new sites for potential historic designation.

2022 included the following activities and accomplishments:

- The HDC held 10 regular meetings. Ten Certificates of Appropriateness were issued for projects which met the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.
- Also throughout 2022, the Commission continued implementation of its Cemetery Master Plan. Historic District Commissioners, with the assistance of the City’s Department of Public Works, Fenton Memorials, and volunteers, cleaned and reset monuments in East Farmington (Utley) Cemetery, including the resetting of larger, heavier monuments.
- In October 2022, on two separate occasions, Boy Scouts assisted Historic District Commissioners and volunteers with re-leveling smaller tombstones and touchup cleaning at East Farmington (Utley) and West Farmington Cemeteries.
- An HDC subcommittee identified 5 midcentury modern homes in the Holly Hills area for further study and contacted each of the homeowners. The subcommittee is currently in communication with 3 of the homeowners regarding their interest in potentially being added to the District.
- HDC and city officials continued to work closely with the owners of the Botsford Inn regarding finding a use for the structure and a restoration of several aspects of the exterior that have fallen into disrepair.
- Working with the Parks Commission, a compromise was found for the replacement of the Spicer House Roof. The roof is planned to be replaced with synthetic shakes, but the distinctive copper gutters and potentially the terracotta ridge caps are to be re-used to maintain the distinct character of the roof to the extent possible.

Planning Commissioners thanked Vice Chair Klemmer and the Historic District Commission for the work they were doing in the City to preserve historic structures and also for the preservation work they were doing in the City’s historic cemeteries. They also welcomed incoming HDC Chair Marleen Tulas.

**MOTION by Stimson, support by Aspinall, that the Planning Commission accepts the 2022 Historic District Commission Annual Report.**

**Motion passed by voice vote.**

**B. AMEND PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD) 6, 1993 (Timbercrest)**

LOCATION:	27614 Middlebelt Road
PARCEL I.D.:	22-23-13-101-003
PROPOSAL:	Amend PUD to permit drive-in restaurant use
ACTION REQUIRED:	Set for public hearing
APPLICANT:	Masroor Ahmed
OWNER:	Merchants Marketplace, LLC

Referencing his February 8, 2023 memorandum, Planning Consultant Tangari gave the background and review for this request to amend the PUD for 27614 Middlebelt Road, in order to permit drive-in restaurant use. Tonight’s requested action was to set a public hearing for this request.

Planning Consultant Tangari made the following points:

- The site was at the southeast corner of Middlebelt and 12 Mile Roads. The shopping center portion of the PUD was 7.53 acres.
- The site is accessed from 12 Mile and Middlebelt Roads. The proposed amendment to the PUD would permit drive-thru uses, and would by necessity lead to changes in the site's internal circulation.
- If the Planning Commission makes a determination that this is a major amendment to the PUD, the Planning Commission will set a public hearing on the amendment and make a recommendation to City Council.
- No site plan has been submitted with this request; site plan approval would follow amendment of the PUD agreement. A concept plan was included in the submission showing that the drive-thru would be in the southernmost of the two buildings closest to Middlebelt Road. A parking calculation was also provided showing that ordinance standards for parking would still be met on the site with the new drive-thru.
- Questions for discussion included:
  1. The applicant's letter explaining the request does not specify which use area from the original PUD exhibit is being modified to permit a drive-thru. Use areas A and B are both commercial. Would this amendment permit a drive-thru in each area or just one area?
  2. Item 3.(a)(i) of the PUD agreement lists prohibited uses. One of the prohibited uses is an "assembly hall... .. or similar place of assembly," but a review of the site indicates that there appears to be an assembly use (the event studio) occupying the northernmost space in the primary shopping center building; this amendment request may present an opportunity to look at whether other modifications to the list of prohibited uses are warranted at this time.

Chair Countegan invited the applicant to make his presentation.

Masroor Ahmed was a franchise owner of Biggby Coffee, and had applied for the drive-thru at this location. Mr. Ahmed made the following points:

- The drive-thru location/use would be for just one building.
- Mr. Ahmed had talked with the Merchants Marketplace owners regarding the question relative to the assembly hall, and the owners had indicated they could talk about this issue. However, Mr. Ahmed was only asking for the drive-thru use in the single building. He noted that drive-thru restaurant uses became more essential during the COVID pandemic.

In response to questions, City Planner Perdonik showed the location of the single building in question, which was located on the southern commercial portion of the PUD, in Area B.

- Mr. Ahmed described the traffic circulation as it would potentially be modified to adapt to this change.

In response to questions regarding how the PUD would be amended with this use, Planning Consultant Tangari said that the question of assembly uses could also be resolved at this time, by eliminating that use from the list of prohibited uses. For the drive-thru use, the drive-thru restaurant use would be added to the list of permitted uses.

Chair Countegan noted that introducing a new use in a PUD agreement would constitute a major change.

**MOTION by Aspinall, support by Grant, that the proposed Amendment to PUD 6, 1993, submitted by Masroor Ahmed, dated January 17, 2023, BE SET FOR PUBLIC HEARING for the Planning Commission's next available regular meeting agenda.**

**Motion passed by voice vote.**

**C. ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT 1, 2023**

CHAPTER OF CODE: 34, Zoning Ordinance  
PROPOSED AMENDMENT: Amend permitted use within the RA-2 zoning district to permit economic development activities  
ACTION REQUESTED: Set for public hearing  
SECTION: 34-3.1.5.B.v.f

City Planner Perdonik gave the background to this request to set for public hearing Zoning Text Amendment 1, 2023, to amend permitted uses within the RA-2 zoning district to permit economic development activities.

The requested uses would be permitted for municipally owned and operated community facilities within the RA-2 District. There are only a few such facilities in the City that are both (a) municipally owned and operated and (b) zoned RA-2, including The HAWK Community Center, Farmington Hills Golf Club, and City Hall.

This request stemmed in part from City Council's June 2022 authorization of the potential use of space on the third floor of the HAWK Community Center for an innovation and economic development incubator, as well as Council's August 25, 2021 endorsement of plans for the buildout of space on the third floor of the HAWK as part of the incubator.

Commission discussion:

In response to questions, City Planner Perdonik gave the following further information:

- This Zoning Text Amendment will enable the third floor space of the HAWK to be used for business incubator type activities, such as classroom space, laboratory space, research and development, etc. The space will be used by private sector entrepreneurial entities.
- The proposed use was different than the makerspace in the HAWK, in that the makerspace was used on an as-needed basis, without a contract or agreement. The third floor space could be used by startup companies or an educational entity who would enter into a contractual agreement with the City for a defined period of time for a certain type of use.
- Commissioner Ware pointed out that the HAWK currently offered classroom spaces for rent. Entrepreneurs and creatives could use the makerspace to create their products. The only thing the HAWK doesn't currently have is lab space to test products. The makerspace/classroom space already available was already supposed to be an incubator space for small businesses.
- Commissioner Stimson said the difference was that the third floor classrooms and incubator space would be dedicated space limited to a single user who was paying for that use for a specific period of time. Chair Countegan further clarified that the third floor space would be third party business-related operations as opposed to community services facilitated through the Parks and Rec Department.
- City Attorney Schultz explained that the idea was a portion of the HAWK would not necessarily be fully public, and therefore not permitted unless the use of the HAWK was expanded to include third party agreements for use of some of the space. The ability to contract the space would be in addition to what was already going on in the building.
- Chair Countegan suggested that allowable uses could be discussed at the public hearing. City Planner Perdonik added that staff could provide more information about what the use would actually entail prior to the public hearing.

- Chair Countegan said that from his standpoint, this change which had been suggested by City Council and staff constituted good planning, and correct steps were being followed to provide zoning language which would allow potential uses in the future.
- In answer to further questions, City Planner Perdonik explained:
  - This zoning change would not apply to the Costick Center because that building was in a different zoning district. There were only 2 other city properties besides the HAWK that might be affected – the golf course and City Hall.
  - The Master Plan update would be looking at whether other municipal facilities that were zoned Special Purpose District would remain as zoned, or perhaps be combined under one unified public use district that would outline what could be done across all city facilities, city-owned properties. Tonight’s question was tailored to a specific use as envisioned by City Council, the EDC (Economic Development Corporation), and other stakeholders specifically as related to the third floor of the HAWK.

Chair Countegan indicated he was ready to entertain a motion.

**MOTION by Ware, support by Stimson, that Zoning Text Amendment 1, 2023, be set for public hearing for the Planning Commission’s next available regular meeting agenda.**

**Motion passed by voice vote.**

**D. PLANNING COMMISSION 2022 ANNUAL REPORT**

Chair Countegan explained that the Annual Report documents and records the work of the Planning Commission for the past year.

It came out in discussion that Commission member(s) who had left the Commission during the year should be identified in the Report.

**MOTION by Grant, support by Ware, to adopt the 2022 Planning Commission Annual Report as presented and to convey the Report to City Council.**

**Motion passed by voice vote.**

**E. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

As noted during agenda approval, this item had been postponed to a future meeting when more Commissioners would be present.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence was received from Steve Schimpke representing Coseo Properties, regarding redeveloping an OS-3 office property to a multi-family use.

Chair Countegan discussed process when developers wanted to request a land use change.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES January 19, 20223, Special and January 26, 2023 Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) Regular Meeting**

**MOTION by Grant, support by Stimson, to approve the January 19, 2024 Special Meeting minutes and the January 26, 2023 Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) Regular Meeting minutes.**

- **Correct spelling of Commissioner Stimson's name in the January 26, 2023 minutes, page 6, Motion to set the Capital Improvements Plan for Public Hearing.**

**Motion passed by voice vote.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

Special and regular meetings in March will be March 15, 2023.

Since it appeared that a joint meeting with City Council regarding the Master Plan Update was proving difficult to schedule, in the interest of keeping the Master Plan Update moving forward Chair Countegan suggested the subcommittee previously appointed for Master Plan review meet again. That subcommittee included members of the Planning Commission and City Council.

Commissioner Ware pointed out that since the subcommittee was formed some time ago, prior to herself and Commissioner Grant being on the Planning Commission, Commission representation on the subcommittee lacked diversity of voice and people. The Commission pointed out that the current members of the subcommittee are Commissioners Brickner, Stimson, and Varga.

After discussion, and as a fourth member of the Planning Commission could be on the subcommittee without constituting a quorum, the following motion was made:

**MOTION by Aspinall, support by Grant, to add Commissioner Ware as a fourth member of the Planning Commission on the subcommittee to discuss the Master Plan Update.**

**Motion passed by voice vote.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION by Ware, support by Stimson, to adjourn the meeting at 8:04pm.**

**MOTION carried unanimously by voice vote.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Marisa Varga  
Planning Commission Secretary

/cem