

**CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
31555 W ELEVEN MILE ROAD
FARMINGTON HILLS, MICHIGAN
JANUARY 15, 2026, 7:30 P.M.**

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Aspinall, Brickner, Countegan, Lindquist, Mantey, Stimson, Trafelet, Ware

Commissioners Absent: Grant

Others Present: City Planner Mulville-Friel, Staff Planner Mellem, Planning Consultant Tangari (Giffels Webster), Staff Engineer Alexander, City Attorney Schultz

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Aspinall, supported by Stimson, to approve the agenda as published.

Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

REGULAR MEETING

A. LOT SPLIT 3 AND 4, 2025 (FINAL)

LOCATION: 28500 Oak Crest Dr. and 0 Rockridge Lane
PARCEL I.D.: 22-23-01-177-025 & 027
PROPOSAL: Combining two parcels and then splitting them into four parcels within RA-1, One Family Residential District
ACTION REQUESTED: Lot split approval (final)
APPLICANT: Jason M. and Lauryn M. Curis
OWNER: Jason M. and Lauryn M. Curis

City Planner Mulville-Friel introduced this request for a lot split, explaining that the subject properties consist of two existing lots, which the applicants propose to combine and then split into four parcels within the RA-1, One Family Residential District. The proposal had previously been reviewed by the Planning Commission at the October 16, 2025 meeting and was denied, based on the proposed parcels not meeting the minimum lot width requirements of the zoning ordinance. Three of the four proposed parcels did not meet the required minimum width of 100 feet.

Referring to the September 23, 2025 Giffels Webster review memorandum, Planning Consultant Tangari explained that after being denied by the Planning Commission on October 16, the applicants sought and obtained the required variances from the Zoning Board of Appeals at its December 9, 2025 meeting. The variances addressed lot width only; there were no lot area deficiencies.

City Attorney Schultz explained that lot splits are governed by the Michigan Land Division Act rather than the zoning ordinance. Under the Act, the Planning Commission is required to approve land divisions that meet statutory and ordinance requirements. With the granted variances, the

requested parcels now conform to zoning standards. The remaining discretionary issue for the Planning Commission involves the depth-to-width ratio of the proposed parcels. While the parcels are narrow at the road frontage, they widen toward the rear and function more like standard lots rather than traditional flag lots. The Commission is permitted to exercise discretion in determining whether this configuration is acceptable.

Attorney Schultz further explained that issues discussed at the Zoning Board of Appeals related to a pedestrian pathway were not relevant to the Planning Commission's decision on the lot split. Matters concerning the pathway and any related easements fall under agreements between the City Council and the original landowner – the school district – and are not criteria for discussion under the Land Division Act or the City's land division ordinance.

Commissioner Mantey stated that from a planning perspective, the City Council should evaluate the current public use of the pathway before vacating any easement. He also asked how the continued existence of the footpath easement would affect the building envelope.

Planning Consultant Tangari explained that setbacks are measured from property lines, not easement boundaries. However, for the sake of privacy, a builder or property owner would most likely voluntarily choose to locate a home a distance from the pathway.

Planning Consultant Tangari noted that the building envelopes shown on the plan were incorrect. However, building envelope compliance would be reviewed during future zoning reviews when homes are proposed. Again, this did not affect the Planning Commission's authority to approve the lot split.

Referencing p. 4 of the Giffels Webster letter, Planning Consultant Tangari addressed compatibility with surrounding parcels, which is a required consideration for lot split approval. This proposal results in lots that exceed the 3:1 depth-to-width ratio and may only be approved if relief is granted by the Planning Commission. The configuration of the proposed wedge-shaped lots, located on a cul-de-sac, is typical for cul-de-sac frontage. The proposed parcel sizes range from approximately 2.53 acres to 3.97 acres, which is consistent with surrounding properties that range from approximately 2.65 acres to 11 acres. The relative closeness of proposed driveways is a consideration due to the narrow frontage, but each parcel has more than 50 feet of frontage, which provides adequate space for driveway placement despite being less than the standard 100-foot width.

Motion by Brickner, support by Countegan, that Lot Split 3 and 4, 2025 (Final), dated October 24, 2024, submitted by Jason M. and Lauryn M. Curis, BE APPROVED, because it appears to meet the applicable provisions of Chapter 34, "Zoning," and Chapter 27, "Subdivision of Land" of the City Code and will result in land parcels generally compatible with surrounding parcels in the vicinity; and that the City Assessor be so notified. The approval is SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS AND DETERMINATIONS:

- 1. A variance from the required minimum lot widths for parcels 1, 2, and 3 that was approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals at their meeting held December 9, 2025, and therefore the proposed lots conform to the Zoning Ordinance.**

2. The Planning Commission finds that the parcels are generally consistent with surrounding lots on the cul-de-sac as to area, width, and depth-to-width ratio.
3. Taking into account the nature of the proposed residential use of the land and the existing use of land in the vicinity, and the Commission's finding that the parcels are consistent with surrounding lots and the fact that the parcels front on a cul-de-sac but are otherwise of significant size and proportionate shape, the Commission grants relief from Section 27-59 of the General Code, which indicates a typical standard of a 3:1 depth-to-width ratio.
4. The Commission finds that since the properties will be used for single-family residential, traffic from these properties will be minimal, and that the potential for vehicular conflicts from the placement of the driveway is minimal.
5. Revisions to the proposed parcel split (Certificate of Survey, dated October 24, 2024), to address all outstanding issues identified in Giffels Webster's September 23, 2025 review, to the reasonable satisfaction of the City Planner, and all outstanding issues identified in the City Engineer's September 24, 2025 interoffice correspondence, to the reasonable satisfaction of the City Engineer.

Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

B. PLANNING COMMISSION 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

ACTION REQUESTED: Adoption of the report

After discussion, and to provide greater consistency with the summary narrative statement in the second paragraph on p. 6 that "*Parking amendments focused on reducing overall requirements for many uses while also providing additional mechanisms for reducing or waiving requirements as part of the plan approval process,*" the Commission reached consensus to add clarifying language to the description of ZTA 3, 2025, to describe the scope of the parking amendments contained within the text amendment, including reductions in parking for multifamily and office uses, greater flexibility to waive parking requirements based on demonstrated need, and other parking changes as adopted.

MOTION by Countegan, supported by Aspinall, that the draft 2025 Planning Commission Annual Report be adopted, with the following change:

- To add clarifying language to the description of ZTA 3, 2025 (p. 7), to more fully describe the scope of the parking amendments in the OS-4 District contained within the text amendment, as discussed above.

Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES December 18, 2025, Regular Meeting

MOTION by Stimson, supported by Ware, to approve the December 18, 2025 Regular Meeting minutes as submitted.

Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Eugene Greenstein, Olde Franklin Drive, spoke regarding pedestrian connectivity within the neighborhoods surrounding the land split discussed this evening. He described the long-standing ability

for residents to walk and bicycle through multiple adjoining subdivisions using internal pedestrian connections rather than main roads, due to the easements provided by the school through the subject parcel. Mr. Greenstein referenced Planning Commission discussion from the October 16 meeting in which the importance of maintaining or reconfiguring pedestrian connections between cul-de-sacs to enhance walkability and neighborhood connectivity was identified as a sound planning practice, and he identified two pedestrian easements affected by the current request: a partially obstructed pedestrian and bicycle easement between Oakcrest Court and Franklin Fairway, and a proposed pedestrian easement connecting the Rockridge Lane cul-de-sac to the existing pathway system.

Mr. Greenstein stated that the Franklin Fairway easement is obstructed by a large tree and brush, and that the Rockridge Lane easement has not been constructed and contains large mature trees. Removal of mature trees would be inappropriate, and rerouting a path around the trees would exceed the width of the recorded easement. Mr. Greenstein noted that the easement area is intended to remain wooded under prior agreements and suggested an alternative pedestrian route along the outer edge of the existing parking lot adjacent to the wooded area, which would be more visible, safer, and would avoid impacts to the wooded area. He also noted that the construction of any pedestrian connection would require City involvement.

Mr. Greenstein again referenced the prior planning discussion in 2024, identifying the importance of a functional pedestrian easement and stating that neighboring residents raised similar concerns at the December 9, 2025 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting.

He requested that neighborhood connectivity concerns be addressed and a workable pedestrian solution be identified in conjunction with consideration of the current request. He also requested clarification regarding the appropriate forum for residents to raise planning-related concerns involving pedestrian connectivity.

Commissioners discussed Mr. Greenstein's remarks:

- The existing pedestrian easement is a public easement held by the City across private property and has never been formally improved. There is no obligation for the City to improve or maintain it, and any decision to do so would be a City Council matter through the capital improvement process.
- Any decisions regarding modification, relocation, or vacation of the pedestrian easement would fall under the authority of City Council and City Administration, not the Planning Commission or Zoning Board of Appeals.
- Future development on the affected parcels must respect the recorded easement, and structures or improvements cannot encroach upon it.

COMMISSIONER/STAFF COMMENTS

- Commissioner Brickner wished Jeri Labelle well in her retirement. Jeri has been the Planning Commission's guide for many years, and she will be missed.
- City Planner Mulville-Friel introduced Staff Planner Kirsten Mellen.

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION by Stimson, supported by Mantey, to adjourn the meeting.
Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

The meeting ended at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen Aspinall,
Planning Commission Secretary

/cem