

**MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY HALL – COUNCIL CHAMBER
NOVEMBER 10, 2025 – 7:30 PM**

The regular session of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Rich at 7:32PM.

Councilmembers Present: Aldred, Boleware, Bridges, Dwyer, Knol, and Rich

Councilmembers Absent: Bruce

Others Present: City Manager Mekjian, City Clerk Lindahl; Directors Brockway, Kettler-Schmult, Rushlow and Skrobola; Police Chief Piggott; City Attorney Joppich

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Army veterans Julie and Barry McCowan.

APPROVAL OF REGULAR SESSION MEETING AGENDA

MOTION by Bridges, support by Knol, to approve the agenda as published.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING NOVEMBER 11, 2025 AS VETERANS DAY

The following proclamation was read by Councilmember Dwyer and accepted by Julie and Barry McCowan.

**PROCLAMATION
Veteran's Day
November 11, 2025**

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| WHEREAS, | throughout the course of history, courageous men and women have taken up arms to secure, defend and maintain the core principles upon which our nation's freedoms depend; and, |
| WHEREAS, | since our nation's founding, more than 41 million men and women have stepped forward to serve their country during times of peace and times of war and conflict; and, |
| WHEREAS, | the veterans who served in the military have protected the American way of life and have dedicated themselves to achieving lasting peace throughout the world; and, |
| WHEREAS, | the spirit of freedom remains strong with over 1.3 million men and women on active duty and roughly 800 thousand in the reserve forces, with many in harm's way fighting overseas; and, |

WHEREAS, as a nation, we are eternally grateful for the noble sacrifices made by our veterans, and we honor and respect them for their service.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Theresa Rich, Mayor of the City of Farmington Hills, on behalf of the City Council, do hereby recognize our esteemed veterans in acknowledgment of **Veterans Day 2025**, and urge all residents to pause and reflect, this November and throughout the year, on the sacrifices of those who have served their country.

Julie McCowan said that she and her husband Barry had served in the Army, National Guard, and Army Reserves, and gave details of their journey during their military service, during which time they had their children, and which service took them to places throughout the world for a variety of missions, including peacekeeping missions. She thanked all military families, and thanked the community leaders for recognizing military service and military families.

Mayor Rich noted that Ms. McCowan serves on the Committee on Aging.

PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING NOVEMBER 2025 AS LUNG CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

The following proclamation was read by Councilmember Knol and accepted by Bryan and Debbie Pickworth.

**PROCLAMATION
Lung Cancer Awareness Month
November 2025**

WHEREAS, lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among men and women in the United States and Farmington Hills, Michigan, accounting for more deaths than colon cancer, breast cancer, and prostate cancer combined; and,

WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control, there were over 4,000 new lung cancer cases from 2018 to 2022 and nearly 2,500 deaths due to lung cancer from 2019 to 2023; and,

WHEREAS, the five-year survival rate for localized lung cancer is approximately 60%, yet only about 24% of lung cancers are diagnosed at this stage; and,

WHEREAS, lung cancer research is leading to breakthroughs in the identification of genetic alterations associated with lung cancer and in the development of lung cancer treatments, including immunotherapies and targeted therapies; and,

WHEREAS, organizations working in Farmington Hills, such as the American Lung Cancer Screening Initiative and Women's Lung Cancer Forum, are committed to educating about lung cancer and lung cancer screening and working to increase lung cancer screening rates in Farmington Hills.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Theresa Rich, Mayor of the City of Farmington Hills, on behalf of the City Council, do hereby proclaim **November 2025** as Lung Cancer Awareness Month

in Farmington Hills and encourage all community members to learn about lung cancer and early detection through lung cancer screening.

Debbie Pickworth provided information on lung cancer, and relayed her own journey with adenocarcinoma lung cancer. She emphasized that the only thing you need to get lung cancer is lungs. Radon, pollution, air quality, work environment – all play roles in lung cancer. This year the federal research budget for lung cancer went from \$25 million to zero. Military, firefighters, and police are all at higher risk for lung cancer, and the budget cut is unacceptable. However, together we can fight lung cancer, one city and one state at a time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PRESENTATIONS FROM CITY BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS

There were no announcements/presentations.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION by Boleware, support by Aldred, to approve the consent agenda as read by Mayor Pro Tem Dwyer.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH
Nays: NONE
Absent: BRUCE
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

There were no consent agenda items for discussion.

COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilmember Aldred, following up on a comment from a resident at the last meeting, suggested revisiting the placement of public comment on meeting agendas. Having all public comment at the end of lengthy meetings can make it difficult for residents to participate. He recommended exploring an approach used by nearby communities, such as allocating 20–30 minutes for public comment near the beginning of the meeting with additional time at the end if needed.

City Manager Mekjian congratulated Mayor Rich, Councilmember Knol, and Councilmember Bridges on their re-elections, and new Councilmember Charles Starkman, who was in the audience this evening.

Mayor Rich thanked the community for her re-election, along with Councilmembers Knol and Bridges, and new member Starkman. She addressed comments on social media regarding her campaign fundraising, noting she raised approximately \$140,000 from about 500 contributors, with individual contributions capped at \$1,225, and 94% of donors residing in Michigan, with approximately 50% living or working in the City. She clarified that donations from developers were immaterial in amount and, after consultation with the City Attorney, she believes she can impartially consider the developments

before Council this evening. Her campaign finance records are publicly available on the Oakland County website under her legal name, Theresa Orlaske-Rich.

Mayor Rich provided an update on the Feeding Farmington Hills task force, formed to address growing food insecurity in the community. The first meeting was attended by 52 participants from various community sectors, and the city website now includes expanded information on available resources and ways residents may contribute. A second meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 17th, at Nardin Park Church at 2pm.

CITY MANAGER UPDATE

- Last yard waste pickup will be the week of December 8 through 12.
- Thanked all veterans for their service and commitment to the Country.
- Thanked Councilmember Bruce for his years of service on City Council and the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Councilmember Bridges also thanked Councilmember Bruce for his 20 years of service on City Council, and for his prior service on the Zoning Board of Appeals.

PUBLIC HEARING

PUBLIC HEARING AND CONSIDERATION OF CLUSTER SITE PLAN 54-4-2025, FOREST AT RIVERWALK; SOUTH SIDE OF FOLSOM ROAD BETWEEN PARKER AVENUE AND LUNDY DRIVE. CMR 11-25-158

Director of Planning and Community Development Kettler-Schmult introduced this agenda item, a request for approval of a proposed cluster site plan for 33 single-family homes on Folsom Road. The Planning Commission had reviewed the plan and recommended approval.

Planning consultant comments

Referencing the July 22, 2025 Giffels Webster memorandum, Planning Consultant Tangari outlined the proposal: the site contains 16.3 acres, with 13.8 net acres after right-of-way deductions. The clustering was qualified by the Planning Commission under the lower-density option, permitting up to 42 units; 33 are proposed. The resulting 2.38 units per acre is below the 3.48 units per acre permitted by right in the RA-3 district.

The proposed units generally meet district setback requirements, though the plan includes slight reductions—from 30 to 25 feet for front setbacks and from 8 to 5 feet for side setbacks. He noted that the smallest lot is 7,795 square feet, compared to the typical 12,500-square-foot minimum in the RA-3 district, and that lot widths of 55 feet are narrower than the usual 80 feet. Some figures in the tree-removal plan require updating. The landscape transition buffer around the edge of the site was reviewed by the Planning Commission and found to meet the spirit of the buffering requirement.

In response to Council questions, Planning Consultant Tangari clarified the difference between hydric soils (beneath the ground) and wetlands (above the ground at least part of the time) and confirmed the applicant has the required EGLE permit. There is no regulatory prohibition regarding hydric soils, but engineering challenges may exist.

Applicant presentation

Members of the applicant team present this evening included:
Stuart Michaelson, Forest at Riverwalk

George Major, Co-Manager, Forest at Riverwalk
Evan Priest, Civil Engineer, MLP & Associates

The development team provided the following information:

- The property was purchased in August 2023 as an assemblage of 16 parcels.
- Cluster zoning was pursued to reduce lot sizes and avoid extending a road through wetlands and across the river to Colfax, instead directing the secondary access to Parker.
- The Planning Commission determined twice—in November 2023 and January 2024—that the project qualified for cluster zoning, with the second determination conducted as a public hearing.
- Initial plans included 38 lots, but after EGLE review and public comment on the wetlands permit, two lots were removed due to wetland impacts, reducing the layout to 33 lots.
- The applicant agreed to a 4.02-acre conservation easement, wetland mitigation requirements, and use of a herpetologist for species relocation.
- Approximately 40% of the site will remain open space, exceeding the 15% requirement.
- Drainage will be fully contained on-site. Stormwater management features will include storm sewer lines along both property boundaries, catch basins positioned below property-grade lines, detention basin oversizing, and reduced outlet flow rates—approximately 60% of the normally allowed release rate. All stormwater measures will comply with Oakland County and City standards.

In response to questions from Councilmember Bridges, Mr. Priest reiterated that the project will not worsen existing conditions. The applicants explained that the home closest to the public access road is located approximately one foot from its property line, with the roadway proposed to be about 20 feet from the house. Street trees are already included in the landscape plan, and they could add additional screening, such as arborvitae, to enhance privacy. The roadway alignment was shifted south as much as possible, with further movement limited by onsite wetlands.

Public hearing

Mayor Rich opened the public hearing.

The following people spoke in opposition to CLUSTER SITE PLAN 54-4-2025, FOREST AT RIVERWALK:

Barbara Seabolt, Parker Street

Mark Wojtowicz, Robinson Street

Michael Williams, Parker Street

Margaret Caza, Parker Street

Tom Progar, Flanders Street

Michelle Gala, Parker Street (read comments made by Tom Seabolt at a Planning Commission meeting before he passed)

George Wright, Birchwood, City of Farmington

Joseph Tomczak, Robinson Street

Kimberly Korona, Flanders Street

Tammy Trinka, Lundy Street

Christine Tomlinson, Cadillac Street

Kirk Bowman, Folsom Road

Audrey Williams, Lundy Street

Margaret Williams, Parker Street

Olivia Ludnick, Parker Street

Eric Schmidt, Woodbrook Court

Paul Rusenowski, Lundy Street
Andrew Williams, W. Bloomfield
John Salmonsens, Parker Street
Michael Emmerling, Lundy Street
Roger Grove, Power Road
Robert Stallings, Lundy Street
Mark Williams, Gill Road
Cynthia Ludwick, Osmus Street

Public comments focused on the following concerns:

- Close proximity of the home at 21604 Parker to the public access road. The home would be 20' from the proposed road, with all three bedroom windows facing the road.
- Many residents had lived in their homes for decades; this proposal will change the character of the neighborhood. Two-story homes on smaller lots are not compatible with existing single story homes on large lots.
- Stormwater drainage and flooding, especially in the spring, but at various times year round.
 - Many residents have sump pumps that run constantly.
 - Request for a third-party inspection regarding the proposed drainage plan.
 - What recourse will the residents have if flooding is made worse?
 - Some homes are lower than this development. How will they be protected from stormwater runoff?
 - The plan will alter drainage patterns as it requires digging under the river.
- Loss of green space and environmentally valuable wetlands.
- Loss of very old hardwoods and loss of trees in general. 600 trees will be removed. Tree study is not current, evidenced by the tree tags buried in bark.
- Impact of tree removal on the water table.
- Loss of wildlife, including endangered species.
- Major geological and infrastructure risks.
- Roadway access should not be to Parker.
- Concern that the developer contributed to the Mayor's campaign, although he does not live in Farmington Hills.
- This land can still be saved. With conservation grants available and Lundy Woods being the City's largest remaining parcel of its type, the City should pursue funding to acquire and protect it.
- Traffic – already congested. Cars speed on Parker Road, a dirt road. Was a traffic study done? What is the street width of the proposed road?
- Emergency vehicle access.
- This company does not fulfill its promises.
- Stress on the electrical grid.
- Greenbelt insufficient in some areas.
- Density, with homes too close together compared with what is allowed in RA-3 districts.
- Incompatible with the City's goals regarding the environment, specifically trees, wetlands, wildlife habitat. Contradicts city priorities.
- Residents want something to fight for, not against.
- Pond will attract mosquitoes

Council deliberation

Councilmember Knol pointed out that the proposed secondary access road would be placed between two existing homes, would empty onto a dirt road that frequently floods, and would increase traffic on that roadway. The area is low and wet, with a nearby stream, making the location unsuitable for a roadway. While acknowledging that public safety officials often prefer two ingress/egress points, Councilmember Knol stated that such designs are more appropriate for larger or circular subdivisions and are not practical in this setting. She said that although development on vacant residentially zoned land cannot be prevented, residents may reasonably expect new development to be similar in character to the existing neighborhood. The proposed plan—with multiple lots situated behind large single-lot properties—does not reflect that character. For these reasons, she could not support the proposal.

Councilmember Aldred said that while he understood the purpose of cluster development in preserving open space, he shared concerns about the proposed road connection to Parker. He noted that the roadway would exit directly across from wetlands and marsh areas, and residents report that this portion of Parker Road floods regularly for extended periods. He further observed that the prevalence of hydric soils suggests natural susceptibility to flooding. Councilmember Aldred referenced ordinance provisions allowing denial if a proposal does not meet the letter and spirit of the cluster development chapter or would be detrimental to existing development. He stated that, similar to Councilmember Knol's comments, the proposed cluster layout would be out of keeping with the character of the surrounding neighborhood, which consists of older homes and significant green space. Councilmember Aldred also referenced the City's newly adopted vision statement, emphasizing preservation of green space and community character. This proposal does not align with that vision. He indicated he would vote against the project.

Councilmember Bridges shared concerns expressed by Councilmembers Knol and Aldred. He was not convinced the proposed development would adequately address existing drainage and water issues in the area and he could not support the project without clear evidence that it would not worsen current conditions. He also expressed concern about the proximity of the proposed roadway to the home on Parker, and the potential impacts on the character of the overall neighborhood. For these reasons—unresolved drainage concerns, neighborhood impact, and the roadway's closeness to adjacent homes on Parker—he would oppose the proposal.

Councilmember Boleware said that the key consideration for her was whether the proposed development would be detrimental to the surrounding residents. Based on the information presented, she believed the project would be detrimental in several ways. She was not convinced the developer's proposed water retention and runoff systems would adequately address flooding concerns, and no detailed information on the system had been provided in the Council packet. The project does not match the character of the surrounding neighborhood, and no renderings were provided to illustrate the appearance of the proposed homes. Councilmember Boleware further expressed concern regarding the proximity of the proposed new roadway to the longtime resident's home on Parker, and the impacts this would have for this resident after more than 50 years of occupancy. While acknowledging that the property owner has certain development rights, the City also has discretion when a proposal may be detrimental to adjacent property, and she would vote against the proposal.

Councilmember Dwyer said that although he generally supports development within the city, he had significant concerns about this proposal. He referenced issues raised by other Councilmembers, including potential detrimental impacts on neighboring properties and ongoing flooding concerns. He

emphasized the importance of protecting existing property owners and stated that, based on the information presented, he would not support the proposed development.

Mayor Rich raised several concerns regarding the proposal. No traffic study had been conducted on Parker Road, which is heavily used as a cut-through route and experiences fast-moving traffic. She requested that administration evaluate safety options for Parker. She expressed significant concern about the proximity of the proposed roadway to the nearby residence on Parker, stating that a road approximately 20 feet from a bedroom window would create a severe hardship for the homeowner. She questioned whether the connection to Parker was necessary or whether an alternative connection, such as to Lundy, should be considered. She was not convinced the proposed stormwater management measures would sufficiently protect nearby properties. She requested more information and analysis, noting that existing conditions already appear problematic and that the City must avoid worsening them. She asked whether financial protections, such as a bond, could be considered should future water issues arise. She also asked whether the undeveloped open-space portion of the site could be donated to the City as park land, providing a community benefit. She would prefer to postpone the item to allow time to gather additional information.

Mr. Major said that the development team would welcome a postponement to further address Council concerns. He noted two major issues raised in discussion: the proposed roadway connection to Parker and the adequacy of drainage plans. He explained that the road layout was designed based on City direction and ordinance requirements, but the applicant could revisit alternative configurations in consultation with the Engineering Division if the City were open to such revisions.

Regarding drainage, Mr. Major said the applicant could provide expanded engineering analysis to demonstrate that the project would not worsen existing conditions and would improve drainage within and adjacent to the site, although subsoil conditions on neighboring private properties could not be altered. They could prepare a detailed presentation addressing runoff management, detention basins, and outflow to the river.

Regarding neighborhood character, Mr. Major stated that the cluster design was chosen to preserve a large portion of the site as open space, rather than constructing a roadway through wetlands toward Colfax, which earlier plans had contemplated. They would explore alternatives if the City were willing to consider them. Mr. Major formally requested a postponement to allow time to prepare additional materials.

Councilmember Bridges said he was ready to make a motion in this case.

MOTION by Bridges, support by Boleware, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby denies the application for Cluster Site Plan 54-4-2025 dated revised June 12, 2025, because it does not meet all provisions set forth in Section 34-3.17 of the Zoning Ordinance for the following reasons:

1. The development is incompatible with the neighborhood
2. The drainage issue will not be sufficiently resolved
3. The proximity of the road to the private residence is unacceptable
4. The development will adversely impact the character of the neighborhood and be detrimental to the neighbors

Motion discussion:

Mayor Rich said she would oppose the motion as she supported a postponement as discussed; she did not support the plan as presented this evening.

MOTION CARRIED 5-1 (Rich Opposed).

Mayor Rich called a short recess at 9:40pm and reconvened the meeting approximately 9:50pm.

PUBLIC HEARING AND CONSIDERATION OF CLUSTER SITE PLAN 57-4-2025, WELLSRING OF FARMINGTON HILLS; NORTH SIDE OF 9 MILE ROAD BETWEEN MIDDLEBELT AND INKSTER ROADS. CMR 11-25-159

Director of Planning and Community Development Kettler-Schmult introduced this request for cluster site plan approval, a proposal for 52 attached ranch-style units in 13 four-unit buildings located on the southern portion of a 79.61-acre RA-1-zoned property (the old Sarah Fisher property). The applicant had provided supplemental information regarding their conservation easement, as well as materials related to discrepancies between earlier submission materials.

Planning consultant review

Referencing the detailed August 26, 2025 Giffels Webster memorandum, Planning Consultant Tangari reviewed the cluster proposal, noting that the Planning Commission qualified it under the lower-density option of 1.8 units per acre. The proposed 52 units represent a density of 0.67 units per acre over the full acreage of the site.

Planning Consultant Tangari highlighted the following:

- The development avoids most wetlands, maintains two access points to Nine Mile Road, and includes pedestrian walkways and a visitor parking area. A concept plan for a potential future phase north of the Rouge River shows how the site could ultimately accommodate up to 143 units, though only the 52-unit phase is under review this evening.
- Setbacks exceed RA-1 requirements, with a 76-foot front setback and substantial side and rear setbacks. The ranch units are 22 feet in height, below the district maximum, and the plan provides more than the required 15% open space.
- All standards are met except for a discrepancy in tree-replacement numbers, which will need to be finalized before permitting. No other noncompliant areas were identified, and all dimensional standards exceed ordinance requirements.
- The Planning Commission determined the proposed buffering to be adequate, including along the western property line adjacent to existing homes.

Councilmember Knol asked for clarification on density calculations for the full site, including a potential Phase Two. Planning Consultant Tangari explained that the density qualification of 1.8 units per acre applies to the entire 79.61-acre site and that the maximum number of units allowable under the approved cluster qualification is 143. Density calculations include land proposed for conservation easement designation.

Mayor Rich asked whether the County's proposed Nine Mile non-motorized pathway was intended for the north or south side of Nine Mile Road and whether the proposed development would conflict with it. City Manager Mekjian stated that the County had not determined final placement, but that the

frontage improvements required of the developer for this project should provide adequate sidewalk connectivity.

Mayor Rich also asked what assurances exist that access roads would sufficiently accommodate additional units should the developer pursue a future phase. Planning Consultant Tangari suggested the applicant address this question in their presentation.

Councilmember Knol asked whether trees included in the buffer adjacent to neighboring properties were counted as part of the total tree-replacement requirement. Planning Consultant Tangari confirmed that they were counted.

Applicant presentation

Members of the development team present this evening included:

- Jim Butler, PEA Group, Auburn Hills
- Erion Nicolla, Eureka Innovation Development, Troy MI
- Ren Nushaj, Troy Law Center, Troy MI
- Tim Kalbfleisch, Chief Financial Officer, Wellspring Lutheran Services

The applicants provided information regarding this proposed 52-unit Phase One plan consisting of 13 single-story, four-unit buildings with two access points to Nine Mile Road. They emphasized the use of high-quality materials, compliance with height limits, and the conceptual layout for a potential future phase of 88 additional units north of the Rouge River. Phase Two would require a redesigned boulevard bridge to meet current standards, and utilities were being sized in Phase One to support future expansion.

Wellspring Lutheran intends to preserve natural features and has voluntarily proposed a conservation easement. Seven acres would be dedicated as part of Phase One, with an additional seven acres planned if Phase Two proceeds, for a total of approximately fourteen acres. Oakland County Parks has expressed interest in managing the easement area.

Councilmember Knol questioned access routes and confirmed that only one vehicular bridge currently exists on the site, with an older pedestrian bridge having been removed several years ago. She also asked about the timing of demolishing existing buildings north of the river. The applicants stated demolition is expected to begin in the first quarter of next year, with utilities already being disconnected. Phase Two buildings will be demolished in 2027.

Councilmember Aldred acknowledged the strengths of the Phase One layout, while also addressing significant interest in woodland preservation. Citing references in both the 2009 and 2024 Master Plans that describe this site as containing high-quality trees and its potential for future public recreational space, he questioned why only seven acres of conservation easement were proposed in Phase One when more than twenty acres of undisturbed woodland appear suitable for permanent protection.

Mr. Nicolla explained that the Phase Two layout is conceptual only and has not yet been fully engineered for utilities, access, or drainage. Wellspring intends to dedicate a total of approximately 14 acres of conservation easement (7 acres with Phase One and an additional 7 acres with a potential Phase Two), but the development team is reluctant to commit a larger area now before the details of Phase Two are fully defined. Mr. Nushaj added that Wellspring's mission is to provide attainable, for-

sale housing for residents age 55 and older, and that Phase One will serve as a proof of concept; depending on market conditions, the second portion of the site might not be developed, in which case additional land could potentially be preserved. Public access to the initial 7-acre conservation easement would be provided via a pedestrian crossing and internal sidewalks once Phase One construction is complete. Ongoing discussions with Oakland County address long-term management and access to the conservation area.

City Attorney Joppich confirmed with Mr. Nushaj that if the project is approved, an open space and conservation agreement will be executed and that public pathway access would be activated after Phase One construction, with temporary closures during any future Phase Two construction.

Councilmember Aldred reiterated that he would prefer to see the full 14 acres placed into conservation at the outset.

In response to questions, Mr. Nicolla indicated that the anticipated price point for the units is in the low-to mid-\$300,000 range, that the homes are intended to be owner-occupied rather than rentals, and that the single-story design and materials are intended to blend with the wooded surroundings and complement the Rouge River corridor. The applicants were also willing to dedicate necessary frontage along Nine Mile Road as right-of-way and, if appropriate, to coordinate sidewalk and non-motorized facilities with the City's future Nine Mile corridor vision.

Public hearing

The Mayor opened the public hearing.

Noah Opasek, Spring Valley, was concerned that the proposed development does not fit the character of the surrounding natural environment. The project feels out of place, removes valued green space, and could make it harder for younger residents to see a future in Farmington Hills. He also raised concerns about worsening traffic on Nine Mile, the lack of detailed analysis for the project, and the number of uncertainties expressed by the applicant. He noted his home already experiences drainage problems near an existing Wellspring outflow pipe and he requested clearer, more definitive information on how stormwater impacts would be addressed.

Ray Matsen, Watt Drive, stated that his primary concerns relate to Phase Two of the project, particularly the need to extend the proposed conservation area further south, given the historically significant flooding in the woods west of the site. He noted that flood zones in the area extend closer to properties along Watt Drive. He also raised concerns about a past report of a partially collapsed sewer line that may be connected to the proposed Phase Two system, and questioned whether it had been properly repaired. He recalled that buried refuse exists northwest of the former track field.

Bonnie Hollander, Old Timber, and a naturalist with the Farmington Hills Nature Center, expressed concerns about the proposed reduction of the conservation area from 14 acres to 7 acres. She emphasized the ecological value of the river corridor and the need for strong conservation measures. She conveyed comments from Friends of the Rouge, who shared concerns about protecting this unique and sensitive natural area. She urged Council to view the site as a community asset worth preserving, comparing it to the history of Heritage Park.

Matthew Hollander, Old Timber, expressed appreciation for development that balances housing with preservation of green space. He emphasized that the northern 17 acres of this parcel contain exceptionally old and high-quality woodland not found even in city parks, and noted its identification as key habitat in multiple planning documents. He urged Council to consider long-term preservation and public access to this core habitat rather than limiting conservation to seven acres. While supportive of development generally, he asked the City to ensure an appropriate balance between growth and protection of natural infrastructure that benefits the community.

Paul Galor, Spring Valley, was concerned about significant tree loss, including more than 316 mature trees over 100 years old that contribute to neighborhood character and wildlife habitat. He also noted that increased traffic on Nine Mile would exacerbate existing congestion and safety issues. He raised concerns about impacts to wildlife that rely on the wooded and wetland areas of this site. He was also concerned regarding the noise, dust, and disruption to the residents from long-term construction. He requested that Council postpone approval until full environmental and traffic reviews are completed, in order to protect trees, wildlife, and neighborhood quality of life.

Rob Steele, Spring Valley, was concerned about the potential increases in traffic and pedestrian safety risks associated with the proposed new 52 residential units. The attached condominium design appears inconsistent with nearby mid-century neighborhoods and may affect community character and property values. He raised environmental and privacy concerns related to tree loss, future Phase Two impacts, and construction disruption. He asked for more information about the intended occupancy of the units.

Pea Gee, Farmington Hills taxpayer, asked for more information about whether the project would provide services such as rehabilitation, counseling, or care similar to existing Wellspring Lutheran facilities. She questioned whether the proposed housing would match the character of the surrounding neighborhood and sought clarity on what is meant by “affordable housing” and who the intended residents would be.

Eric Schmidt, Woodbrook Court, said that the project appears to chip away at natural resources, describing it as “death by a thousand cuts.” Even small losses of trees can accumulate into significant long-term environmental impacts. He questioned the affordability of the proposed 55-and-up units, suggesting that the estimated price point may not be attainable for many seniors. He urged Council to require complete details and stronger assurances before approving the project, and to consider the concerns raised by Friends of the Rouge.

Angela Hamoud, Spring Valley, was opposed to the proposed development. She believed the project would harm neighborhood character, create significant traffic congestion on Nine Mile and Inkster, and worsen already overburdened electrical, stormwater, and sewer infrastructure. Ms. Hamoud also raised concerns about the lack of transparency, including the absence of a traffic study and unclear details about the non-motorized pathway plans. She urged Council to reject the proposal.

Kevin Livingston, Spring Valley, questioned the adequacy of a single bridge for emergency access in future phases, and raised concerns about potential requirements to connect neighboring homes to city water and sewer systems. He detailed the vulnerability of local wells and the aquifer to infrastructure pressures; his well, for instance, was 88’ deep with low water pressure. He asked Council to investigate whether the developer would need to access or utilize the existing pump station infrastructure in the area.

Randall Cauffiel, Spring Valley, emphasized that once mature trees are removed, they cannot be replaced. He noted that Nine Mile Road may require a center turn lane to accommodate traffic from both phases of the development. He questioned whether outdated stormwater data had accounted for increasingly heavy rainfall events, particularly regarding bridge capacity and impacts to wetlands.

As no other public indicated they wished to speak, Mayor Rich closed the public hearing.

Applicant response

Mr. Butler clarified that a traffic study had been completed by Tetra Tech, and reviewed by the City's engineering and traffic consultants. They were in agreement that Phase One traffic does not warrant improvements to Nine Mile Road. Traffic mitigation measures will be required with Phase Two.

Mr. Nicolla indicated they were willing to increase the proposed conservation easement from 7 acres to the full 14 acres originally contemplated, should Council approval be granted this evening.

Mr. Kalbfleisch explained Wellspring Lutheran Services' long history on this site, beginning in 1891, and he emphasized their longstanding stewardship of the property as a nonprofit entity. He confirmed all former residential youth operations have ceased and that remaining buildings are in disrepair and slated for demolition. The proposed development is intended as a 55-plus owner-occupied community.

Councilmember Knol confirmed with Mr. Kalbfleisch that the site had previously had significant activity, including the children it served, approximately 50 employees, many of whom lived on site, and families and others continually driving in and off site.

MOTION by Aldred, support by Boleware, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the application for Cluster Site Plan 57-4-2025 revised July 30, 2025, subject to the following conditions:

- (1) All outstanding issues identified in Giffels Webster's review dated August 26, 2025, review shall be addressed to the reasonable satisfaction of the City Planner;
- (2) All outstanding issues identified in the City Engineer's August 22, 2025, interoffice correspondence shall be addressed to the reasonable satisfaction of the City Engineer; and
- (3) All outstanding issues identified in the Fire Marshal's August 19, 2025, interoffice correspondence shall be addressed to the reasonable satisfaction of the Fire Marshal.
- (4) An escrow deposit of 150% of the open space cost estimate be submitted to ensure completion of the landscape/open space improvements plan and
- (5) Adding at least 14 acres of conservation easement, and providing access to that land, after the completion of construction of Phase 1.

And further resolves that the City Attorney prepare the cluster agreement setting forth conditions of approval for City Council consideration and final approval.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

PUBLIC HEARING AND CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION OF A BROWNFIELD PLAN PROPOSED BY ROBERTSON BROTHERS HOMES FOR VILLAS AT PEBBLE CREEK AT 27400 W. 12 MILE ROAD. CMR 11-25-160

Director of Economic Development Brockway presented the proposed Brownfield Plan for the Villas at Pebble Creek at 27400 West 12 Mile Road. The plan includes removal of contaminated materials, groundwater treatment, asbestos mitigation, and demolition of over 115,000 square feet of existing building space, excluding the chapel, which will be historically preserved. The development will include 76 single-story detached condominiums, four single-story homes, pedestrian pathways, utilities, landscaping, and conservation of green space, representing an estimated \$46.8 million investment with a projected taxable value of over \$23 million. Eligible Brownfield activities total approximately \$3.9 million and include environmental assessment, due-care planning, demolition, abatement, plan preparation, contingency, and interest.

Tim Loughrin, Robertson Homes, and members of his team were available to answer questions.

Council noted that they had previously reviewed this proposal.

Mayor Rich clarified that the current agenda item was solely the public hearing on the Brownfield Plan, with formal Council action scheduled later on the agenda.

Public Hearing

Mayor Rich opened the public hearing. No public indicated they wished to speak, and Mayor Rich closed the public hearing.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

CONSIDERATION OF AMENDMENT TO PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN 4, 2000; CUTTING EDGE CUISINE KITCHEN AND STORAGE ADDITION. CMR 11-25-161

Director of Planning and Community Development Kettler-Schmult reported that this item had been postponed to a date certain at the prior meeting to allow the applicant additional time to meet with adjacent property owners regarding outstanding concerns. She had spoken with the applicant earlier in the week, and while he indicated he is still attempting to resolve issues, no formal correspondence, request for postponement, or withdrawal has been submitted.

City Attorney Joppich advised that, since the applicant has not resolved the issue and is not present, further postponement would be appropriate.

MOTION by Bridges, support by Knol, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby postpones the amendment to Planned Unit Development Plan 4, 2000; Cutting Edge Cuisine kitchen and storage addition to a date certain, that being December 8, 2025.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

NEW BUSINESS

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT 1, 2025 AGREEMENT FOR TOWNES OF WOODCREEK. CMR 11-25-162

Director of Planning and Community Development Kettler-Schmult presented the Planned Unit Development (PUD) Agreement for Townes of Woodcreek, explaining that it formalizes the PUD plan

previously reviewed and recommended for approval by the Planning Commission and approved by City Council after the public hearing held on July 14, 2025. The applicant is continuing to advance the project, and the agreement has been reviewed by both parties and is now ready for Council consideration.

MOTION by Dwyer, support by Bridges, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the Planned Unit Development 1, 2025 Agreement for Townes of Woodcreek and authorizes the City Manager to sign on behalf of the City.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL AND ADOPTION OF A BROWNFIELD PLAN PROPOSED BY ROBERTSON BROTHERS HOMES FOR VILLAS AT PEBBLE CREEK AT 27400 W. 12 MILE ROAD. CMR 11-25-163

As this public hearing for this item had been held earlier in the meeting, the following motion was offered.

MOTION by Boleware, support by Knol, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves and adopts the Brownfield Plan proposed by Robertson Brothers Homes for Villas at Pebble Creek at 27400 W 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills, Michigan 48334.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF CONSENT JUDGMENT #129 – SHEETZ V FARMINGTON HILLS. CMR 11-25-164

Community Planning Director Kettler-Schmult explained that the consent judgment before Council was intended to resolve ongoing disputes involving two separate properties where Sheetz had proposed gas station developments. The first proposed site, located at 12 Mile Road and Middlebelt Road and including a drive-through restaurant, had undergone full PUD review but was ultimately denied by the City Council. The second proposed location, at Middlebelt Road and Grand River Avenue, did not include a drive-through component and had received preliminary site plan approval from the Planning Commission. However, that project did not advance further because the applicant missed certain deadlines and because the City's subsequent zoning text amendments (ZTA-2) altered the regulatory landscape for gas stations. Staff provided formal notice to the applicant regarding the zoning changes, after which the applicant initiated litigation regarding the 12 Mile Road and Middlebelt Road location, and asserted additional claims related to the Grand River site, though that has not yet reached the level of a circuit court challenge. The consent judgment addresses both disputes.

City Attorney Joppich reviewed the terms of the consent judgment. A lawsuit had been filed by Sheetz concerning the 12 Mile and Middlebelt property and under the proposed judgment, that case would be dismissed with prejudice (meaning the claims cannot be brought again) and without any liability or obligation on the part of the City.

Regarding the Middlebelt and Grand River site, the consent judgment would allow the formerly approved site plan to proceed despite the intervening zoning changes, resolving the anticipated litigation over that issue. The Grand River site plan attached to the consent judgment will govern development on that parcel, even where its provisions differ from requirements in Zoning Text Amendment 2, which now applies to gas station uses citywide.

Mayor Rich acknowledged Pea Gee, who had submitted a request to speak on this item.

Pea Gee, Farmington Hills taxpayer, was concerned that the consent judgement would allow Sheetz to move forward with a development at 12 Mile and Middlebelt.

Mayor Rich clarified that the consent judgment does not authorize a Sheetz at 12 Mile and Middlebelt and instead formalizes that such a development will not occur, and that the matter cannot be brought forward again.

Mayor Rich disclosed receiving a combined total of \$2,225 in campaign contributions from two of the owners of the Grand River property, which was .015% of the total raised for her campaign. She believed she could offer a dispassionate vote, but if this gave pause to any member of council, she would abstain from voting. No member of Council asked the Mayor to abstain.

MOTION by Dwyer, support by Knol, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the Consent Judgment #129 and accompanying exhibits; and the City Manager is authorized to finalize the document and exhibits for filing with the court and to sign on behalf of the City.

Motion discussion

Councilmember Knol pointed out that the Grand River location was a commercial area with no adjacent single-family homes. The agreement had been publicly posted in Council's agenda packet, and the timing of the agreement was related to when the agreement was finalized in court, and was not related to the timing of the election.

Councilmember Dwyer noted that the Council vote denying the Sheetz development at Middlebelt and 12 Mile had been unanimous.

Councilmember Boleware said that the Grand River/Middlebelt property had been eligible to redevelop as a gas station under earlier zoning. A later zoning amendment pausing new gas station approvals halted the project mid-process, contributing to the dispute. She supported the consent judgment allowing that location to proceed.

City Attorney Joppich reiterated that the lawsuit relating to the 12 Mile and Middlebelt case is being dismissed with prejudice which means it cannot be brought back again.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

CONSIDERATION OF REAPPOINTMENT TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM.

MOTION by Bridges, support by Knol, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby confirms the Mayor's recommendation to appoint the following individual to the Board of Trustees of the Employees' Retirement System:

Board of Trustees - Employees' Retirement System

	Length of Term:	Term ending:
Lauri Siskind	3 years	December 1, 2028

Lauri will be reappointed to the seat she currently holds on the Board.

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF AWARD OF PROPOSAL FOR OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES, INCLUDING DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING, TO WELLSTREET URGENT CARE OF MICHIGAN P.C. DBA COREWELL HEALTH URGENT CARE FOR A ONE (1) YEAR TERM WITH APPROVED EXTENSIONS. CMR 11-25-165

MOTION by Boleware, support by Aldred, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to enter into an agreement with Wellstreet Urgent Care of Michigan P.C. dba Corewell Health Urgent Care for a one (1) year term with an option to renew with one or more administration-approved extension not to exceed a total of five (5) additional one year extensions under the same terms and conditions upon mutual consent by the City and firm.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH

Nays: NONE

Absent: BRUCE

Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF PURCHASE OF MOBILE DATA COMPUTERS FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT TO DELL TECHNOLOGIES INC. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$33,469.34. CMR 11-25-166

MOTION by Boleware, support by Aldred, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to issue a purchase order to Dell Technologies Inc. for the purchase of Mobile Data Computers for the Police Department in the amount of \$33,469.34.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH

Nays: NONE

Absent: BRUCE

Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF AWARD FOR AS-NEEDED DATA NETWORK CABLING FOR CITY BUILDINGS TO AMCOMM INCORPORATED IN AN ESTIMATED AMOUNT OF \$25,000 FOR A ONE (1) YEAR TERM WITH EXTENSIONS. CMR 11-25-167

MOTION by Boleware, support by Aldred, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to approve all budgeted purchase orders to AMcomm Incorporated for As needed Data Network Cabling for all City buildings in an estimated amount of \$25,000 for a one (1) year term and for four (4) additional one (1) year terms at a 5% increase per year (beginning at year 2) under the same terms and conditions upon mutual consent of the City and vendor.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH

Nays: NONE
Absent: BRUCE
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF PURCHASE OF A REPLACEMENT VEHICLE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO LAFONTAINE CHRYSLER JEEP OF LANSING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$40,496.00. CMR 11-25-168

MOTION by Boleware, support by Aldred, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to issue a purchase order to LaFontaine Chrysler Jeep of Lansing, Michigan for a 2026 Chrysler Pacifica Van in the amount of \$40,496.00.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH
Nays: NONE
Absent: BRUCE
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MINUTES OF OCTOBER 27, 2025.

MOTION by Boleware support by Aldred, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the City Council study session minutes of October 27, 2025.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH
Nays: NONE
Absent: BRUCE
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION MINUTES OF OCTOBER 27, 2025.

MOTION by Boleware support by Aldred, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the regular session minutes of October 27, 2025.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH
Nays: NONE
Absent: BRUCE
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Eric Schmidt, Woodbrook Court, continued to request that City Council acknowledge and disavow disparaging remarks made by Mobi and the Chaldean Council about residents near the 13 Mile PUD who were engaging in the democratic process regarding the proposed development. He invited Councilmembers to visit the site to better understand residents' concerns.

Pea Gee, Farmington Hills taxpayer, offered comments regarding the November 4 election, and asked the City to establish clear and enforceable rules for campaign conduct and signage.

ADJOURNMENT

The regular session of City Council meeting adjourned at 11:44pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carly Lindahl, City Clerk