

**MINUTES  
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS  
PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING  
FARMINGTON HILLS CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM  
31555 W. ELEVEN MILE ROAD  
FARMINGTON HILLS MI 48336  
May 19, 2022, 6:00 P.M.**

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

The Planning Commission Special Meeting was called to order by Chair Countegan at 6:15 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Commissioners present:** Aspinall, Brickner, Countegan, Grant, Mantey, Stimson, Varga, Ware

**Commissioners Absent:** Trafelet

**Others Present:** City Attorney Schultz, City Planner Perdonik, Planning Consultants Arroyo, Bahm, and Tangari

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

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

**MOTION carried by voice vote.**

**NEW MASTER PLAN STUDY**

Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Planning Consultant Tangari led tonight's discussion, which focused on Existing Conditions: Land Use, Demographics, Housing, and the Economy.

**Land Use**

- City's land is dominated by residential use.
- The City gets a lot of value out of the relatively small amount of land devoted to commercial, office, and industrial uses.
- Existing land use map in process of being updated.

**Demographics**

- Population fairly stable over last 20 years.
- However, in 2017, the SEMCOG 2045 Regional Development Forecast projected modest growth of 1.5% from 2015 to 2020 (79,740 to 80,937), but the 2020 Decennial Census reported the City's population is 83,986, a growth rate of 5.3%.
- Based on the forecast and national trends, the City can anticipate:
  - Age groups over 65 will increase significantly
  - Age groups under 24 (young adults and children) will decrease
- Racial composition of Farmington Hills has remained fairly consistent between 2010 and 2020, with the biggest changes being:
  - A 9.2% loss in the percent share of white residents (68.3% to 59.1%)
  - A 5.2% gain in percent share of Asian residents (10.1% to 15.3%)
  - Strength: City is more diverse than many of its neighbors.

- Most households in the City (67.4%) do not include a senior (someone over the age of 65).
- 13.1% of the households are comprised of seniors that live alone.
- Almost half (42.6%) of households consist of two or more persons without children, while 24.2% of households are families with children; this reflects a national trend.
- The average household size is consistent with surrounding communities and has been consistent over the past decade, between two and three persons per household.
- 89.6% of households have internet access, a key indicator of the ability of residents to communicate and also be reached with important emergency and civic information. The City is exploring how to connect all residents to the internet.

### Economy

- In 2017, according to the Economic Census, there were 2,725 establishments in Farmington Hills, employing 63,383 people and generating sales or revenue of \$13 billion (in 2022 dollars).
- A number of international companies are located in Farmington Hills.
- SEMCOG (Southeast Michigan Council of Governments) expects the top employment sectors will continue to be professional and technical services, information and financial activities, and healthcare services.
- The three largest industries residents work in: 1) educational services, health care and social assistance; 2) manufacturing, and 3) professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services.
- 57.1% of residents work in management, business, science, and arts occupations.
- Trends in commuter-adjusted (day time) population compared to resident population supports the notion that businesses and industries are growing.
- Relatively high median household and per capita incomes and a low poverty rate compared to surrounding communities.
- Most residents travel to work by car (82.6%).
- Mean travel time to work is 25.5 minutes.
- Small number of residents both live and work in Farmington Hills, meaning the transportation network is used by people from the region outside the City limits.

### Housing

- Out of 35,968 living units, 62% are owner occupied, 38% are renter occupied.
- Median housing value is \$270,000.
- Median gross rent is \$1,211.
- Over 50% of householders moved into their homes between 2010 and later.
- Most housing (96.1%) in Farmington Hills was built before 1999. Construction of new homes since 2010 has been minimal (0.9%).
- Housing composition has been consistent. Single-family detached housing makes up 63% of all units.

### Commission discussion:

- How many senior living units are in the City, and how many have been recently approved but not yet constructed? How does this compare to surrounding communities?
  - Senior communities add taxable value, as they are taxed at commercial rates.
  - Senior communities are necessary to help seniors move out of their larger homes, while still living in the community.
- Where do people move who sell their Farmington Hills homes? Are they moving within the City or moving out of the City?

- Placemaking will mean different things in different parts of the community. Placemaking helps create a sense of local neighborhood identity, and a sense of the City's overall identity. Placemaking offers an attraction that helps people want to go to that place.
  - Land use and zoning regulations are an important component of building place identity.
  - Enforcing the blight ordinance can be a basic tool of protecting a sense of place.
- Redevelopment/re-occupancy is encouraged by more flexible zoning; this can be part of the master plan process.
- A walkable community deliberately reduces the time people spend in their cars. Transit facilities need population density.
- In many areas of the country, form-based zoning is becoming more important and allows more flexibility than traditional Euclidian zoning. Farmington Hills already has some areas where form-based zoning is being implemented.
- Legacy TX provides examples of form-based and other modern planning and zoning techniques.
- The community survey – recently completed – had 700 participants.
- More public input activities will be scheduled toward the end of the summer, including an open house, focus groups, etc.
- Outreach efforts will be made to include younger participants, including the Farmington Hills Youth Council and college students.

#### Master Plan building blocks

Master Plan Committee (3 Planning Commissioners, 3 City Council Members) are discussing nine categories of Master Plan building blocks: quality redevelopment, economic development, transportation, placemaking, keeping pace with innovation, community wellness, special planning areas, sustainability and resiliency, and housing. The Master Plan Committee will bring their ideas to the full Planning Commission.

#### Vision Statement

A vision statement is a compact, high-level statement that will guide the Master Planning process and inform the guiding principles as the plan is developed.

- Applies to the entire city.
- Should be brief, general, and comprehensive.
- Examples provided.

#### Implementation Strategies

- Strategies will include advocacy items that the City will advocate for, perhaps in cooperation with other municipalities, at the federal or state level.

#### Closing discussion

Chair Countegan spoke to the benefit of having the Master Plan Committee also working through goals simultaneously with the Planning Commission. This was an opportunity for everyone to work together, to think about what is best for the community long term, and to use Commission tools, experience, and imagination to look at such elements as height, establish special planning areas, developing place making, and so on.

Chair Countegan pointed out that the City had developed per the goals and guidelines set by the Master Plan 20+ years ago, and it was now time to use the master plan process to envision what the City should be in another 20 years. While it was true the community was aging and that needed to be respected and

planned for, the Commission should also look to the future in order to plan for a vibrant community with a diverse demographic, including younger residents.

In terms of Master Plan process schedule, Planning Consultant Arroyo said the Commission would be discussing existing conditions through most of summer 2022, with more public input engagement in the fall, ending up with an open house to gather opinions and suggestions on the data collected. After public input, through winter 2022 and spring 2023, the Commission will develop a vision statement, along with specific goals and objectives, and begin drafting the actual Master Plan document, which is scheduled to be complete summer 2023.

**Approval of minutes**

None

**Public Comment**

None

**Commissioner's Comments**

- Commissioner Brickner said the Friends of the Rouge was having a river clean-up day on Saturday, including weed and invasive species removal. Meet at Heritage Park between 9am-12pm.
- New Commissioners were welcomed generally, and Commissioner Ware introduced herself, as this was her first meeting.
- Commissioner Ware spoke to the need to draw young adults to the community.

**Adjournment**

**MOTION by Varga, support by Mantey, to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 pm**

**MOTION carried by voice vote.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Marisa Varga  
Planning Commission Secretary

/cem