

MINUTES OF THE **PLANNING COMMISSION** MEETING OF THE CITY OF GROSSE POINTE WOODS HELD ON **APRIL 22, 2025**, IN THE COUNCIL-COURT ROOM OF THE ROBERT E. NOVITKE MUNICIPAL CENTER, 20025 MACK PLAZA, GROSSE POINTE WOODS, MICHIGAN.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Fenton.

Roll Call: Chair Fenton

Commission Members: Fuller, Hamborsky, Mackinnon, Marx, McNelis, O'Keefe, Vitale

Absent: Gilezan

Also Present: City Planner, Ashley Jankowski
Recording Secretary, Gretchen Miotto
Council Representative Kenneth Gafa

MOTION by Hamborsky, seconded by Fuller, to excuse Commission Member Gilezan from attendance at tonight's meeting.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Fenton, Fuller, Hamborsky, Mackinnon, Marx, McNelis, O'Keefe, Vitale

NO: None

ABSENT: Gilezan

Chair Fenton recognized Council Representative Gafa.

The Planning Commission, staff, and the public, Pledged Allegiance to the U. S. Flag.

MOTION by Hamborsky, seconded by Vitale, to accept tonight's agenda as presented and place on file.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Fenton, Fuller, Hamborsky, Mackinnon, Marx, McNelis, O'Keefe, Vitale

NO: None

ABSENT: Gilezan

MOTION by Vitale, seconded by Fuller, that the March 25, 2025, Planning Commission meeting minutes be approved as presented.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Fenton, Fuller, Hamborsky, Mackinnon, Marx, McNelis, O'Keefe, Vitale

NO: None

ABSENT: Gilezan

The first item, under **Public Hearings**, was to **Host a Public Hearing on Rezoning 20160 Mack Avenue from RO-1 Restricted Office to C Commercial**.

MOTION by Hamborsky, seconded by O'Keefe, to open the **public hearing**.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Fenton, Fuller, Hamborsky, Mackinnon, Marx, O'Keefe

NO: None

ABSENT: Gilezan

ABSTAIN: McNelis, Vitale

Chair Fenton opened the public hearing at 7:05 pm.

Planner Jankowski provided an overview of the hearing purpose and the City Planner's review of the application to re-develop the site for commercial purposes. There is compatibility with the 2024 Master Plan Future Land Use Map which designates this area as Corridor Mixed Use, which includes retail, restaurant, personal service, and office establishments which are designed for the day-to-day needs of nearby residents. These facilities are intended to be located in close proximity to residential neighborhoods but with adequate buffering. Rezoning will create a desirable zoning trend which doesn't happen all at once, but incrementally.

No one wished to speak in support of the proposal.

The following spoke in opposition of the proposal:

1. Patricia & Jon Dougherty, 1665 S. Renaud – provided written statement
2. Gary Felts, 1680 Oxford
3. John McLellan, 1617 S. Renaud – provided written statement
4. James Francis, 1670 Oxford
5. Joanne Shenstone, 1692 N. Renaud
6. Roger Ulmer, 1151 S. Renaud
7. Beth Connolly, 1630 Oxford
8. Laura McEnery, 1451 Oxford
9. Bethann Bayus, 1415 Ford Ct.
10. Tim Leonard, 1415 S. Renaud
11. Christina Pitts, 1501 Oxford
12. Steve Lawrence, 1511 Oxford
13. Matthew McIver, 1653 S. Renaud
14. Lynne Aldrich, 1501 Oxford
15. Ralph Burnett, 1618 N. Renaud

MOTION by Hamborsky, seconded by O’Keefe, to **close the public hearing on Rezoning 20160 Mack Avenue from RO-1 Restricted Office to C Commercial.**

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Fenton, Fuller, Hamborsky, Mackinnon, Marx, O’Keefe
NO: None
ABSENT: Gilezan
ABSTAIN: McNelis, Vitale

Chair Fenton closed the public hearing at 8:21 pm.

The next item, under **New Business**, was to **Consider Recommending Approval to City Council of the Proposed Rezoning of 20160 Mack Avenue to C Commercial.**

Planner Jankowski clarified the rezoning process to address the comments raised by residents during the public hearing. Rezoning approval doesn’t mean automatic approval of the site plan. This request has been found to be in harmony with the Master Plan as this site is designated to be rezoned based on the 2024 Master Plan and Future Land Use Map, which was formed by the input from public opinion and local leadership. We are trying to translate public opinion into action and implement that plan.

Concerns raised in the public comments will be taken into consideration during the site plan review.

Discussion ensued around parking needs, plans for the site related to buffering options, traffic, lighting, rodent control, and green space. The commission stated that the city doesn’t determine what types of business goes into the site. There is a “use by rights” in place and we cannot direct the quantity of, or types of, businesses that a property owner wishes to pursue.

Related to public comments about Stuckey-Vitale’s involvement, along with sitting on the Planning Commission, Chair Fenton stressed the integrity of Mr. Vitale and Mr. McNelis while working on projects within the community and that there has never been any impropriety in their behavior. Mr. Vitale expressed his appreciation for the supportive comments.

Mr. Vitale, of Stuckey-Vitale, and representing the developer, explained the project and their willingness to listen to, and be open to, and make all efforts to address the resident’s suggestions and concerns.

Justin Buccalleteo, the developer, thanked the residents for appearing and voicing their concerns. He is a Grosse Pointe resident with 14 properties on the Mack Avenue corridor, with 8 of those being in Grosse Pointe Woods. He voiced his vision on developing the property to be something special to the community. He assured that funding, safety, quality contracting, and timeliness are high priorities on all of his development projects. Related to resident concerns about rodent issues if food-related businesses occupy the space, Mr. Buccalleteo stated that he has experience in the food service business and is well versed in rodent control and builds preventative measures into his leases.

Commissioner Hamborsky provided history on the RO-1 Restricted Office designation which dates back to the 1950's, and was created with the intent of having a property that is a business on one side with the owner living on the other. This business model doesn't really exist anymore and a significant portion of Mack Avenue is still zoned RO-1. Practically, these properties will ultimately be rezoned into Corridor Mixed Use designation according to the Future Land Use Map within the 2024 Master Plan. The site plan review is another topic altogether.

MOTION by Hamborsky, seconded by O'Keefe, that the Planning Commission Recommend Approval to City Council on the Proposed Rezoning of 20160 Mack Avenue to C Commercial based on the following facts:

- a) The proposed site is architecturally consistent with the neighboring residential neighborhood; and
- b) There is demand for more commercial retail along the Mack Avenue corridor in Grosse Pointe Woods, and to promote walkability, and
- c) The upzoning to support mixed use along Mack Avenue aligns with the newly adopted 2024 Master Plan and Future land Use Plan Map, which shows Corridor Mixed Use, aligning with the C Commercial Business District, for the subject site and sites up and down the same side of Mack Avenue.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Fenton, Fuller, Hamborsky, Mackinnon, Marx, O'Keefe
NO: None
ABSENT: Gilezan
ABSTAIN: McNelis, Vitale

MOTION by Fuller, seconded by Hamborsky, to immediately certify the minutes on the Planning Commission Recommending Approval to City Council on the Proposed Rezoning of 20160 Mack Avenue to C Commercial.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Fenton, Fuller, Hamborsky, Mackinnon, Marx, O'Keefe
NO: None
ABSENT: Gilezan
ABSTAIN: McNelis, Vitale

The next item, under **New Business**, is the **Consideration of the Site Plan for 20160 Mack Avenue for Approval, Pending Rezoning**.

Planner Jankowski provided an overview of the Building Department's review of the applicant's proposal to demolish the existing building and construct an 11,000 sq. ft. single-story multi-tenant retail space. Their review is based on the C Commercial standards pending the rezoning approval. The following revisions are requested:

1. Submit samples of the exterior materials (these were brought to this meeting);

2. Revise the parking plan, provide a shared parking agreement, or apply for a parking waiver to meet the required minimum number of off-street parking spaces;
3. Indicate traffic markings on the ingress/egress off of S. Renaud;
4. Provide lighting cut sheets, photometric plan, etc., (these were provided to the Building Department prior to this meeting);
5. Provide landscaping plans with species list, and bumper guards along the perimeter hedge.

John Vitale, Stuckey-Vitale, discussed the details of the project, including: lighting, the proposed exterior materials, screening options on the parking lot (and they are open to the resident's input), and options to control the traffic on the site. Mr. Vitale offered to meet with the residents.

A question of the maintenance responsibility of the barrier was asked, and Mr. Vitale said they could put it on the site's property and, therefore, the developer would be responsible for the maintenance.

There was a discussion about tenant usage related to parking requirements as those requirements differ based on the type of business that would occupy the space. If parking is different than what is currently being considered, the site plan would come back before the Planning Commission.

A question about the utilities was asked related to an existing transformer and overhead lines. There is a desire to bury the lines by the developer, if that is possible, based on a study they are conducting.

A question about lighting and elevation was asked and Mr. Vitale distributed renderings.

Samples of the exterior materials were distributed for Commission review.

Mr. Vitale stated that there is an environmental study underway and if any hazardous materials are discovered, those would be removed before demolition.

There is a request for a waiver on parking for the 10 additional on-site spaces, though there are adequate off-site spaces to meet the 55 required spaces.

Chair Fenton allowed additional questions from the public and the following were heard:

1. Gary Felts, 1680 Oxford, asked about assurances that all conditions on the property would be executed. Planner Jankowski stated that there are safeguards to ensure compliance.
2. Unidentified residents expressed the safety issues on all street corners while drivers pull onto Mack Avenue. While the ordinance allows building to the property line, that should not be allowed due to lack of visibility. The current setbacks are inadequate.
3. Mark Bacha, representing his son Ken Bacha, 1580 Oxford, recommends the Commission table the site plan until the architect and residents can meet and discuss the perimeter barrier.
4. Unidentified resident stated the City Planner's memo recommends tabling this, and Planner Jankowski stated that the items in the memo were addressed today. A question about the Colonial style requirement and it was clarified this is no longer a requirement.

5. Unidentified resident asked about proposed capital for the project. The developer stated it would be more than \$5 million.
6. Unidentified resident asked if there were any tenants in mind. The developer stated that there are, but he cannot discuss that at this point, other than saying they have interest from national retailers that would do well in this community.
7. Unidentified resident asked if there would be one or three tenants. The developer stated that it could be 1, 2, or 3.

Commissioner Mackinnon asked about the proposed outdoor seating and whether there would be screening. The architect stated that, yes, there would be both planters and a fence.

MOTION by O'Keefe, seconded by Mackinnon, that the Planning Commission table the Site Plan for 20160 Mack Avenue until the next Commission meeting and the applicant comes back with details on 1) the barrier wall, 2) the ingress/egress to parking, 3) dust containment, 4) asbestos report, and 5) a meeting with the neighbors.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Fenton, Fuller, Hamborsky, Mackinnon, Marx, O'Keefe
NO: None
ABSTAIN: McNelis, Vitale
ABSENT: Gilezan

The next item, under **New Business**, is the **Consideration of the Site Plan for 20507 Mack Avenue (Arthur Murray Dance Studio) for Approval.**

Planner Jankowski provided an overview of the application for interior renovations of an existing vacant 3,840 sq. ft. commercial building to support a dance studio. The Building Inspector has submitted a memo in support of this project.

George Bailey, architect and GPW resident, 1155 Hampton, provided additional information on the project including that the rear parking will accommodate an ADA parking space, and they will comply with all required ADA access. On-street parking is available, but if that is not compliant, they are requesting a waiver for the 1 additional required parking space. They have tried to get a shared parking agreement with neighboring businesses to no avail.

The most individuals that would be on site at any time would be 10-12 for a group lesson, but typically less than that

The applicant answered the question on hours of operation: 1- 10 pm, Monday through Thursday, 1- 9pm on Fridays, and Noon – 4pm on Saturdays. Lessons are typically 45 minutes.

Discussion ensued around the window glazing and exterior lighting. These are in compliance.

MOTION by Marx, seconded by Mackinnon, that the Planning Commission accept the site plan application and allow a waiver for the one additional parking space to accommodate the parking requirements.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Fenton, Fuller, Hamborsky, Mackinnon, Marx, McNelis, O’Keefe, Vitale
NO: None
ABSENT: Gilezan

The next item, under **New Business**, is the **Consideration of the Site Plan for 21003-21015 Mack Avenue and 1953 Roslyn Avenue (Little Nest Coffee Roasters) for Approval.**

Planner Jankowski provided an overview of the application for interior renovations and combination of an existing commercial building to support a coffee shop, office lease space, and associated parking. The design complies with approve design standards, elevation, and parking. The applicant must provide additional lighting information such as cut sheets, wattage, existing lighting, and a photometric plan to determine compliance with zoning ordinance standards.

The applicants, Taylor & Jason Spencer, and Lyndsey Spencer introduced themselves and provided information on the Little Next Coffee Roasters business and the various uses of the space. Two of the addresses will be combined for the community coffee shop/work space and a separate area for new parents, caregivers, mothers and their children, focusing on post-partum support for new parents. The third address will remain as is for a future tenant. Their architect is preparing the lighting plan and will send it to the city.

There will not be any rooftop ventilation that would require screening as they will vent out the side of the building. The Roslyn address is part of the parking area. There will be more than enough parking to accommodate any future tenants in the third space.

MOTION by O’Keefe, seconded by Vitale, that the Planning Commission approve the site plan contingent on the Building Department approval of the photometrics.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Fenton, Fuller, Hamborsky, Mackinnon, Marx, McNelis, O’Keefe, Vitale
NO: None
ABSENT: Gilezan

There were no items under **Old Business**.

The next item was the **Building Official’s Report, March 2025 to April 2025.**

Planner Jankowski provided an overview of current projects and permits. A question was asked on whether the Bank of America’s EV station screening should be reviewed against the

approved site plan.

The next item was the **City Council Report for April 7, 2025.**

Commissioner Mackinnon attended the April 7 meeting and reported that the requested \$20K for the Planning Commission's budget was approved, and the 2024 Master Plan was reviewed with City Council at the Committee-of-the-Whole with no changes. She will attend the April 28 meeting.

Commissioner Marx will attend the May meetings.

The next item was **Information Only on MSHDA Zoning Ordinance Kick-Off and PC Budget Update.**

Planner Jankowski updated the Commission on the \$50K MSHDA grant to align the zoning ordinance with the Master Plan. McKenna and city administration are working together on this 12-month project. Clearzoning will no longer be used and all ordinances will be housed in Municode.

We have the \$20K budget to begin working on the Master Plan.

No one wished to be heard under **Public Comment.**

MOTION by Marx, seconded by Vitale, to adjourn at 10:15p.m.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Fenton, Fuller, Hamborsky, Mackinnon, Marx, McNelis, O'Keefe, Vitale

NO: None

ABSENT: Gilezan

Respectfully Submitted,
Gretchen Miotto
Clerk's Confidential Administrative Assistant & Recording Secretary