

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR **PLANNING COMMISSION** MEETING OF THE CITY OF GROSSE POINTE WOODS HELD ON **OCTOBER 22, 2024**, 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 McNelis.

Roll Call: Chair McNelis  
Commission Members: Fenton, Gilezan, O’Keefe, Hamborsky, Vitale  
Absent: Fuller

Also Present: City Planner, Brigitte Wolf  
Recording Secretary, Gretchen Miotto  
Council Representative Kenneth Gafa  
Rose Kim, Giffels Webster  
Jill Bahm, Giffels Webster

**MOTION** by Gilezan, seconded by Vitale, to excuse Commission Member Fuller from attendance at tonight’s meeting.

Motion carried by the following vote:  
YES: Fenton, Gilezan, McNelis, O’Keefe, McNelis, Vitale  
NO: None  
ABSENT: Fuller

Chair McNelis recognized Council Representative Gafa.

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

**MOTION** by Fenton, seconded by Gilezan, to accept tonight’s agenda as presented.

Motion carried by the following vote:  
YES: Fenton, Gilezan, McNelis, O’Keefe, McNelis, Vitale  
NO: None  
ABSENT: Fuller

MOTION by Vitale, seconded by Gilezan, that the September 24, 2024, Planning Commission meeting minutes be approved as presented.

Motion carried by the following vote:

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

The first item on the agenda was to host a **Public Hearing to Consider the Draft Master Plan for Adoption.**

**MOTION** by O’Keefe, seconded by Gilezan, to open the **public hearing for the Consideration of the Draft Master Plan for Adoption.**

Motion carried by the following vote:

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

Chair McNelis opened the public hearing for the **Consideration of the Draft Master Plan for Adoption** at 7:03 pm.

No one wished to speak in support of the Master Plan.

No one wished to speak in opposition of the Master Plan.

There were no comments from the public.

**MOTION** by Vitale, seconded by Gilezan, to keep the public hearing for the Draft Master Plan open until the Special Planning Commission meeting on October 29, 2024.

Motion carried by the following vote:

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

The second item on the agenda was to host a **Public Hearing to Consider Special Land Use for a Class C, SDM licensed restaurant at 20710 Mack Avenue.**

**MOTION** by Gilezan, seconded by O’Keefe, to open the **public hearing to Consider Special Land Use for a Class C, SDM licensed restaurant at 20710 Mack Avenue.**

Motion carried by the following vote:

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

Chair McNelis opened the public hearing to **Consider Special Land Use for a Class C, SDM licensed restaurant at 20710 Mack Avenue** at 7:06 pm.

Victor Ansara provided an overview of their project, The Daily Jam. They are in discussions with Lola's Taco Bar about the liquor license and have offered to pay for half of the cost of a Class C license that would need to be purchased. Ansara discussed the criteria that City Council requested and that they meet all of them. Dan Curis' long-time relationship in the City of Grosse Pointe Woods (65 years), and surrounding communities was reviewed, along with the background of the other partners in this project. Support from the Planning Commission was requested.

No one wished to speak in opposition of the project.

**MOTION** by Fenton, seconded by O'Keefe, to close the public hearing to **Consider Special Land Use for a Class C, SDM licensed restaurant at 20710 Mack Avenue**

Motion carried by the following vote:

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

Chair McNelis closed the public hearing at 7:17 pm.

The third item on the agenda was to host a **Public Hearing to Consider Special Land Use for a Class C licensed restaurant at 20195 Mack Avenue.**

**MOTION** by Gilezan, seconded by Hamborsky, to open the **public hearing to Consider Special Land Use for a Class C licensed restaurant at 20195 Mack Avenue.**

Motion carried by the following vote:

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

Chair McNelis opened the public hearing to **Special Land Use for a Class C licensed restaurant at 20195 Mack Avenue** at 7:18 pm.

Branden McRill provided an overview of the project, Lola's Taco Bar, along with his background, experience and relationships with well-known chefs, restaurants, and hotels. He has opened restaurants in New York and won a Michelin Star within 3.5 months of opening, which is the fastest any restaurant has earned that award. McRill returned to Grosse Pointe Woods with his family and has a desire to open a local restaurant, Lola's. Support from the Planning Commission was requested.

No one wished to speak in opposition of the project.

**MOTION** by Gilezan, seconded by Hamborsky, to close the public hearing to **Consider Special Land Use for a Class C licensed restaurant at 20195 Mack Avenue.**

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Fenton, Gilezan, Hamborsky, McNelis, O'Keefe

NO: None

ABSTAIN: Vitale

ABSENT: Fuller

Chair McNelis closed the public hearing at 7:23 pm.

Chair McNelis stated that the Special Land Use Public Hearings were to gather comments from the Public and there will be no action taken this evening on those or the site plan reviews. These items will be discussed on October 29, 2024. Both Special Land Use requests will go before City Council on November 18, 2024.

The next topic under **New Business** was to **Consider Recommending the Master Plan for Adoption.**

Discussion ensued with Kim, of Giffels Webster, providing an overview of the plan to date. Bahm, of Giffels Webster, outlined the next steps, which are to lay out the implementation priorities. The Planning Commission has the authority to adopt the Master Plan, which does not require City Council adoption for it to go into effect. The Public Hearing will remain open for public review and feedback until October 29. Giffels Webster updated the plan to include public parking meters, and included that in the Transportation Goal Page and in the Mack Avenue Corridor Plan. They also added and short-term rentals and that the topic is considered for prioritization.

The Planning Commission reviewed the two public comments from residents on Ford Court. According to the deed restrictions on those properties that are on Ford Court and have secondary frontage on Mack Avenue, dental/medical businesses are allowed if the owner also lives on-site. Giffels Webster determined no action was required as the Master Plan is not changing anything related to that, and the city does not enforce deed restrictions. If there were to be development in the future, that is when this might be addressed. Upon review of the covenants, there are a few that are illegal and therefore unenforceable. The Master Plan does not include re-zoning.

Giffels Webster recommended that the Planning Commission determine which items should be

addressed first, some smaller items along with larger items. At the special meeting on October 29, the Planning Commission will consider adopting the Master Plan and forward it to City Council.

Council Member Gafa suggested that the Master Plan be discussed with Council at a Committee of the Whole, on a convenient date for City Council.

The Planning Commission expressed desire to discuss this at a Committee of the Whole as soon as possible. The Planning Commission will recommend the Master Plan to City Council, with a list of top priorities, and recommendations, both short term and long term, in order to gain administrative and financial planning support.

Planning Commission members will bring their top priorities to the October 29, 2024, meeting.

**MOTION** by Vitale, seconded by Hamborsky, that the Planning Commission postpone adoption of the Master Plan to October 29, 2024.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Fenton, Gilezan, Hamborsky, McNelis, O'Keefe, Vitale

NO: None

ABSENT: Fuller

The Planning Commission discussed who would be granting the Class C Liquor License and Planner Wolf confirmed that both projects are required to have a Special Land Use. The Planning Commission's recommendation on the Special Land Use does not impact the selection of the liquor license. The City Council will make the final determination of who will be granted the license. The City Administration has facilitated discussion between the petitioners on sharing the cost of the additional license, which is expected to be around \$70K.

There were no items under Old Business.

The next item on the agenda was the **Building Official's Monthly Report**.

Planner Wolf provided an overview of the Building Official's September and October 2024 reports.

The next item on the agenda was the **Council Report/s for August**. Commissioner McNelis reported on the October 7<sup>th</sup> & October 21<sup>st</sup> City Council meetings. The two new members of the Planning Commission were approved and their attendance is expected at the next meeting upon taking the oath.

Commissioner Vitale will cover the November City Council meetings.

Under **Public Comment**, the following were heard:

- Margaret Potter, 1934 Allard, spoke about the Sunningdale Park development and whether Giffels Webster may have any insight.

**MOTION** by Gilezan, seconded by Fenton, to adjourn at 8:15 p.m.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Fenton, Gilezan, Hamborsky, McNelis, O'Keefe, Vitale

NO: None

ABSENT: Fuller

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