

# HARTLAND TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

MAY 22, 2025– 7:00 PM

---

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Fox called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance:**

3. **Roll Call and Recognition of Visitors:**

Present – Commissioners Eckman, Fox, Grissim, McMullen, Mitchell, & Murphy

Absent – Commissioner Mayer

Director Langer stated that Commissioner Mayer is present but has recused himself from this meeting as he has a conflict of interest with the application being presented.

4. **Approval of the Meeting Agenda:**

**A Motion to approve the May 22, 2025, Planning Commission Meeting Agenda was made by Commissioner Grissim and seconded by Commissioner Mitchell. Motion carried unanimously.**

5. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

a. Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of April 24, 2025.

**A Motion to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of April 24, 2025, was made by Commissioner Mitchell and seconded by Commissioner Eckman. Motion carried unanimously.**

6. **Call to the Public:**

None

7. **Public Hearing**

a. Site Plan/PD Application #24-005 Square One Planned Development (PD) –Preliminary PD Site Plan.

**Chair Fox explained the process and opened the Public Hearing at 7:03 PM stating all public notice requirements have been met.**

Director Langer stated the following:

- Gave an overview of the location of the project.
- Proposed Mixed Use development.
- Placeholders for future commercial uses are shown along M-59 and Old US 23.
- In the center is a 168-unit apartment complex in five (5) buildings with an additional building for the clubhouse.
- Proceeding using the Planned Development process, a three-step approval process that includes a Conceptual Review, a Preliminary Review and a Final Review before both the Planning Commission and the Township Board. The Applicant is at the Preliminary Review phase where

the Planning Commission offers a recommendation, and the Township Board makes the decision. The Final approval constitutes a rezoning to PD Planned Development.

Jack Knowles representing the Applicant, M-59 Property Ventures, the owner and developer of the proposed Mixed Use development, introduced himself. He also introduced the following:

- Joe and Francis Boji, Boji Development, partners in the project.
- Mark Abanatha, Architect and Senior Vice-President of Alexander V. Bogaerts + Associates, P.C.
- Scott Tousignant, Civil Engineer, Boss Engineering.
- Joe Pascual, Landscape Architect, Felino Pascual and Associates.
- Steve Russo, Traffic Engineer, Colliers Engineering & Design.

Mr. Knowles stated the following:

- The Conceptual Review was two years ago where the team was given comments they took to heart.
- Since that time, they have been gathering information; performing studies and reports; met with various Township, County and State authorities; performed many internal reviews; and further refining and improving the project.
- Approximately one year ago, they submitted the Preliminary Planned Development Application which resulted in more reviews from the staff, more refining and improving the plan.
- It has taken some time but that is what it takes to bring a good product to the community.
- Stated the acreage is 30.9 according to their survey, which may lead to some minor adjustments in density and open space.
- Intend to dedicate a small portion in the northwest corner to Michigan Department of Transportation MDOT for some work on M-59.
- Described the topography stating there is a drainage divide in the middle of the property. The site includes a creek or drain and some regulated wetland areas, which are environmentally sensitive areas they intend to leave intact except for one area of parking.
- Gave an overview of the areas of land use indicating the commercial uses would be along the M-59 and Old US 23 road frontages with the apartments located in the interior of the site.
- Main entrance will be on M-59 with the secondary entrance on Old US 23. The M-59 entrance is directly across from the Target entrance to the north by design as suggested by MDOT.
- The internal road with a roundabout will connect with the Charyl Stockwell and LaFontaine properties to the west. This connector is intended as a community benefit to alleviate some of the congestion that occurs during drop off and pick up times at the Charyl Stockwell Academy.
- The number and size of the commercial sites will be driven by those interested in developing there. The north-south drive adds interest by breaking up the line of commercial site along M-59.
- There have been some conversations with MDOT about a traffic signal at M-59 for Square One but there is no commitment from MDOT at this time.
- The traffic circle will be the focal point of the development with enhanced landscaping and three flags in the center.
- The Applicant shared a plan for pedestrian circulation indicating walkability.

Mr. Tousignant stated the following regarding Engineering:

- Shared a graphic indicating the road improvements and site access including:
  - Square One Boulevard to the north
  - Right in, right out access for the northeast commercial site(s).
  - Planned extension of the M-59 right turn lane.
  - Cornerstone Lane will access Old US 23 to the east.
  - Access to Old US 23 is planned for the southernmost commercial lot. The drain and wetland area separate it from the main development as they intend to leave those areas as undisturbed as possible.
  - Also intend to extend the Old US 23 southbound through lane approximately 800 feet as another community benefit.
- Shared a graphic of the stormwater management, regulated and non-regulated wetland areas.
  - Intend to minimize any impacts to the regulated wetland areas using a series of retaining walls planned for the south side of the apartment component of the development.
  - There is a small area impacted by a drive aisle for the southernmost apartment building, and another area near Old US 23 where the existing culvert will be extended to allow for the construction of the sidewalk on the west side of the Old US 23.
  - Two stormwater detention basins are planned; the central basin is in the midst of the apartments, and the other will service the four (4) lots in the east-northeast portion of the site near the intersection of Cornerstone Lane and Old US 23. Apartment detention basin is planned as a water feature with a fountain.
- Shared a graphic of the water and sewer design. Public water and sewer are planned.
  - Another community benefit in the northwest corner of the site is an easement for a Water Pressure Reducing Valve (PRV).

Mr. Pascual stated the following regarding Landscaping and Signage:

- Landscaping Plan went beyond the standard requirements for Perimeter, Greenbelt, Street Trees, Parking Lot, Detention/Retention Pond, and Screening as follows:
  - Plan hinges on the roundabout as a focal point for the development with extra attention to the streetscapes as gateways.
    - Requesting a third flagpole for balance with a 60-foot American flag.
    - Roundabout will feature a low wall to emphasize this focal point.
  - Plantings around the multi-family apartment building foundations.
  - Extensive plantings around the drive entrance of the multi-family apartment buildings.
  - Columnar trees planned to accentuate the roundabout.
- Proposed residential entrance feature includes large stone piers with brick and stone walls, up lit signage, and a wrought iron fence component.
- Development signage is proposed for the northeast corner of the site at the intersection of M-59 and Old US 23 and again in the southeast corner along Old US 23 using similar materials.
- Multi-tenant monument signs are proposed for the retail and commercial components at each entrance.
- Asking for the anticipated fueling station signage at the northeast corner and south entrance size to be 40 feet rather than 20 feet.
- The enhanced landscaping, low wall, piers, brick, and fencing create visual impact tying the development together as a cohesive unit.

Mr. Boji shared a video of a development recently constructed in Auburn Hills, Michigan and stated the following:

- Residential portion will be a gated community, but anyone can proceed through the gate.
- Shared some of the amenities and materials in the apartment complex.
- Each building will have twelve (12) garages, 60 in total.
- EV charging stations public and roughed into the garages if needed for later installation.
- Top of the line apartments, they expect to get top of the market rental rates for them, \$1,600.00 to \$2,900.00.
- Residential portion is a \$30,000,000.00 investment in the community; with all of the commercial components, approximately \$50,000,000.00 investment.

Mr. Abanatha stated the following regarding the Architecture of the buildings:

- They were the architects for the previously viewed Auburn Hills development.
- Excited about the project in Hartland Township.
- Each apartment building has a mix of one, two and three-bedroom units, predominantly two-bedroom. Ground level units have a patio; the upper units have a balcony.
- Units accessed via an interior central corridor in each building.
- Took great care in detailing the building to create interest in the façade both horizontally and vertically to break up the mass of the structure, using not only the repeated U pattern but also different earthtone colors and materials. The U feature allows for the patios and balconies to be recessed and covered.
- No rooftop units, just mechanical vents.
- Requesting a waiver for building height to accommodate the slightly higher parapet wall three to four feet above the roofline which not only accentuates the architecture but allows for proper pitch for the roof drainage system.
- Community Building is a focal point and the first building most will see. Some of the same elements are reflected in the architecture of this single-story building as are shown on the three-story apartment buildings but vary slightly to set it apart.
- Described the areas of use and amenities in the clubhouse.

Mr. Knowles also stated the nine-foot ceilings also contribute to needing the height waiver.

Mr. Knowles stated as vacant land, it generates approximately \$57,000.00 in tax revenue: upon completion of the project, it will be over \$1,000,000.00 in tax revenue.

In closing, Mr. Knowles stated the following:

- Planned a thoughtfully designed, multi-use project that provides better land use than a single-use, dense, commercial alternative, which is permitted under the current zoning ordinance.
- Provided a concept of what a big box retail store with small retail uses on the perimeter would be like at this location and the traffic that could be generated.
- This project is less dense, generates less traffic, is of higher quality, visually pleasing and a better use of the property.
- Residential uses will symbiotically feed the commercial uses.
- Improved traffic circulation for Charyl Stockwell Academy and the LaFontaine property, and potential signalization provide a significant community benefit.
- Greater tax revenue..
- Will generate significantly less traffic particularly during the PM Peak hours.

- Planned road improvements on M-59 and Old US 23 and are dedicating a small portion in the northwest corner to Michigan Department of Transportation MDOT for some work on M-59.
- Preserving natural features.
- Planned Development process offers greater control of development.
- Additional commercial and retail options for residents.
- The opportunity to have an upscale housing development in Hartland for those seeking that type of rental community.

**Call to the Public**

None

**Chair Fox closed the Public Hearing at 8:09 PM.**

Chair Fox referred to the staff memorandum dated May 15, 2025.

**PLANNED DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS (Section 3.1.18.C.)**

**Permitted Uses**

Director Langer stated for the proposed commercial outlots, the Applicant has used the Permitted Uses in the General Commercial GC Zoning District as a guide for their Permitted Uses.

Commissioner Eckman asked about the process for one of those commercial sites. Director Langer stated it would require a Site Plan Review before the Planning Commission as would any other new commercial construction project.

**Residential Density**

Director Langer stated the following:

- Must refer to the Comprehensive Plan.
- In this case, the category is Special Planning Area. SPA designation for this site envisions a base density of up to four (4) dwellings per acre for 120 units.
- Requesting the forty percent (40%) density bonus which equals 168 units; the 169<sup>th</sup> unit will be a model unit for display.
- Density was calculated using the Assessing records; the survey shows the property slightly larger which could permit another unit or two.

**Design Details**

Chair Fox stated a Pattern Book has been provided and most of slides shown were from the Pattern Book.

**Minimum Yard Requirements**

Chair Fox stated where pertinent, they are complying with all requirements.

**Distances Between Buildings**

Chair Fox stated focusing on the side setbacks, they far exceed the required ten-foot separation.

### **Building Height**

Director Langer stated the following:

- Height limit of 35 feet has been part of the Ordinance for a long time and may have been linked to the maximum height reach of the Fire Department equipment at the time.
- Each apartment building is approximately 39'-2" in height to the top of the parapet wall.
- Waivers have been granted for several projects such as the Climate Controlled Self Storage Building, Lockwood Senior Living, Emagine Hartland, and Walmart/Rural King.
- Fire Authority now has different equipment and waivers have been granted in the past.

### **Parking and Loading**

Chair Fox stated 336 parking spaces are required, they are planning 384.

### **Landscaping**

Chair Fox stated this will be discussed later in the meeting.

### **Open Space**

Director Langer stated the following:

- Open space requirement is 25 percent; they are proposing 28.7 percent.
- Usable Open Space requirement is 10 percent or 2.99 acres; they are proposing 6.4 percent.
- Site is 30 acres; the apartment complex is approximately 13.5 acres.

The Applicant clarified they may have misunderstood the definition of Usable Open Space and neglected to count some of the areas, such as the open lawn area around the dog run. Their recalculation is 3.1 acres which exceeds the required 10 percent.

### **Natural Features**

Director Langer stated the following:

- Identified the wetland areas.
- Northern three are not regulated wetland areas; wetland in the southeast corner is a regulated wetland.
- Intend to preserve the woodland area in the southern portion of the site.
- Two areas of fill mentioned earlier that require a permit from the State of Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) are the small portion near the parking drive aisle, and an area of fill with a culvert to accommodate the sidewalk along Old US 23.

### **Sidewalks and Pedestrian Access**

Director Langer referred to the plan shared earlier showing pedestrian sidewalks planned along the external roadways, internal roadways connecting the commercial sites, around the residential buildings, and on both sides of Cornerstone Lane.

Commissioner Murphy expressed concern that there is no sidewalk planned along the west side of Square One Boulevard, and on the east side of Avenue Circle to Cornerstone Lane. He inquired since the plan is so symmetrical, was there consideration given to sidewalks in those areas? The Applicant stated the boulevard takes up a great deal of room and the portion on the east side of Square One is partially in an easement for the outlot, they were trying to avoid the same situation on the west side. Commissioner Murphy commented with the grand drive as you enter the site and

the symmetry, a sidewalk on the west side would be good for the walkers. The Applicant stated they would have to check the Landscape Plan, but they will look at it again.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR PRELIMINARY REVIEW (Section 3.1.18.E.ii)**

**Sewer and Water**

Chair Fox stated the Public Works Director has provided a review letter dated January 16, 2025, stating water and sewer are available.

**Stormwater and Drainage Systems**

Chair Fox stated there are two detention basins on the plan.

**Traffic Impacts**

Director Langer stated the following:

- Applicant submitted a Traffic Study; the Executive Summary was provided in the packet as the study is approximately 700 pages.
- Part of the delay in this project is working with MDOT.
- Two requested access points onto Old US 23 have been approved by the Livingston County Road Commission (LCRC).
- Applicant is requesting access to M-59 on the north side of the property.
- When proposing a development on a site that was previously vacant land, MDOT requires the level of service at intersections such as the M-59 and Old US 23 intersection located at the northeast corner of the property, remain the same, which is either a level D, E or F currently.
- The developer must propose improvements to the roads such as improved signal timing, turn lanes, deceleration lanes, or adding a signal at the entrance. MDOT puts those changes through their model and comes back with a “yes” or “no” but no further insight into what did or did not work or suggestions for meeting the requirement.
- This is the problem for the developer as this development will increase traffic; they must continue to work with MDOT in order to obtain their approval.
- If the north access onto M-59 has to be relocated, the Applicant will have to come back to the Township to amend their approval.

Chair Fox stated this is no different than any of the other approvals that are conditioned upon receiving approvals from all applicable agencies. If they gain all of the other approvals, the site plan is set. If one of those agencies requires a change, they will have to come back. Director Langer confirmed stating even though LCRC accepted the proposed access points the Applicant will still need to obtain a permit to work in the road right-of-way and add the 800 feet of merging lane. LCRC recently made improvements to Old US 23 and the Director’s understanding is two left turns lanes are needed to turn onto M-59 at that underperforming intersection; however, LCRC did not make that improvement at that time.

Commissioner Mitchell questioned whether the access to M-59 shown on the plan is guaranteed at this location. Chair Fox stated they will have an access; it is the exact location that is in question. The Applicant added the location of the access onto M-59 was suggested by MDOT as it is directly across from the access to Target. MDOT is concerned about left turn conflicts, so it makes sense to have it where it is. Part of the issue of the new traffic light at that entrance location is the proximity of the Old US 23 intersection; they feel it is too close. The other options moving it east or west are not viable.

The Planning Commission discussed other options and the flaws in the approval process at the State level.

Commissioner Mitchell asked about the right in, right out access proposed near the corner on M-59 and why the entrance lane looks larger than the exit lane? The Applicant stated they are anticipating that there will be a fuel station; the extra space is to allow a fuel truck to make the turn. It is wider but will not be two lanes.

### **Vehicular Circulation**

Chair Fox stated this was covered earlier.

### **Fiscal Impacts**

Chair Fox stated this information was provided earlier and in the packet.

### **SITE REQUIREMENTS – for Apartment Portion of Planned Development only** **Dumpster Enclosure (Sec. 5.7)**

Chair Fox stated they will match the buildings, and they will meet the requirement.

### **Off-Street Parking (Sec. 5.8.4.H)**

Chair Fox stated they are the desired 10 by 20 spaces and are providing more than required.

### **Barrier-Free Parking**

Chair Fox stated there are eight required, two an accessible, and they are providing fifteen and three are van accessible.

### **Landscaping (Sec. 5.11 – Updated Landscape Ordinance version)**

Commissioner Grissim highlighted the following:

- This Applicant has gone above and beyond; Hartland is lucky to have this project. The design, walls and fencing really pull it together.
- There are some discrepancies in the count and variety on plantings that could be corrected on the Construction Set of plans.
- Along Old US 23 request to use evergreen trees rather than canopy trees is fine for that location.
- Canopy trees on the side and the narrow trees in the boulevard make sense as the area is narrow.
- Had a question about the three evergreen trees on the west side of the entry that seem to interrupt the flow. The Applicant stated they anticipate a drive-through and were hoping to deflect light from cars using a drive-through. It could be converted to canopy trees consistent with the approach. Commissioner Grissim stated we will have to wait and see how that evolves, she feels it is an interruption in the formal entry landscaping style.
- Perimeter landscaping for parking lots along public roadways requires an evergreen hedge three feet or higher. The Applicant stated they did that along Highland Road, feels they can go either way, proposed a mixture of deciduous trees that seemed more appropriate. They were focusing on height. Along Highland Road there are wall features, behind that is the privet. Where the fence ends, they created a hedgerow of evergreen trees to screen the parked cars. The intent is to deflect light with higher planting and the hedgerow ties it all together. In between are ornamental grasses and flowers to provide some interest. With some of the street trees, it is a



challenge to maintain the spacing due to the utilities, which is why they are requesting to plant those required trees elsewhere on the site.

- Expressed concern about the elevation for the center of the roundabout with the three flagpoles; two are 30 feet and one is 35 feet; they may not be drawn to scale. Requested the Applicant study that element to be sure the proportions are correct.
- Eighteen parking stalls in a row near the Clubhouse, Planning requested another island. The Applicant suggested they could incorporate a walkway into the island.
- Once the size of the generator is known, requested it to be screened accordingly.

### **Lighting (Sec. 5.13)**

Chair Fox stated the lighting standards have not been strictly applied to light fixtures that are mounted on residential buildings or lighting in carports, it is more for an office situation but the items that were reviewed comply.

### **Sign Program**

Director Langer stated the following:

- Proposing decorative wall features along M-59, at the corner and at the entrance on Old US 23 .
- There are some monument signs.
- Normal monument signs are limited to seven feet; they are proposing 10 feet 6 inches.
- Other PDs have proposed taller monument signs of 10 feet and some up to 16 feet.
- A service station sign is proposed but there is no guarantee that space will contain a service station; encouraged the Planning Commission to view it as a sign.

Chair Fox stated there is flexibility for signs within a PD. Commissioner Grissim stated she is aware of the other taller signs previously approved, but it is not her preference. Chair Fox stated this one is for the PD and a multi-tenant sign that needs some size for readability.

### **Architecture/Building Materials (Sec. 5.24.14)**

Chair Fox suggested, since this is PD, the Planning Commission simply look at the buildings and determine whether they like the way they look or not.

The Planning Commission emphatically stated they like the way the buildings look, the design and the proposed materials. Commissioner Eckman stated he likes the extra height and the profile of the buildings.

### **Other**

Chair Fox asked if the Planning Commission likes the design for the roundabout with three flags rather than two, and if they approved of the height for the one flagpole.

The Planning Commission agreed.

Commissioner Mitchell stated one of them is required to be taller. The Applicant confirmed the error on the conceptual drawing of the flags and flagpoles and requested that the center flag be 45 feet tall.

The Planning Commission agreed.

Commissioner Grissim asked they share the details with the staff when it is decided.

Commissioner Murphy asked about the EV charging stations. The Applicant replied in the Auburn Hills property, there are two ports per building, and every garage is prepped so one can be added later. Commissioner Murphy asked if they found that number sufficient. The Applicant stated yes they are underutilized. Director Langer inquired if a non-EV vehicle parked in that spot, does the complex have a process in place for removing that vehicle. The Applicant stated they are signed for EVs only and hope the other residents would respect that as a courtesy, there is plenty of parking. Commissioner Mitchell asked if there was any concern having EV charging ports inside the garages. The Applicant stated no. Chair Fox pointed out they are not installing them, just prepping the wiring for them to be added later if desired.

The Planning Commission briefly discussed EV charging, vehicles and fire risk.

Commissioner Eckman stated it is a beautiful project, he is impressed with it, likes the Mixed Use over a big box store, the high-end rental balances out some of the other projects in the area. Thinks it looks really good.

Commissioner Murphy stated when they looked at the Concept Plan, he was surprised something like this would come to Hartland, but he thinks it is stunning with great curb appeal, the design, the walls, the entrance, the landscaping, it is an amazing project.

Commissioner Grissim stated they really did their due diligence and wow. She hopes MDOT comes around.

Chair Fox stated he was really impressed with the packet. He has been doing this a long time and this packet reflects their effort and was truly appreciated. The presentation was very good and made going through the staff review much quicker because the items had already been covered. He thanked the Applicant for coming and making the presentation.

**Commissioner Grissim offered the following Motion:**

**Move to recommend approval of Site Plan/PD #24-005, the Preliminary Planned Development Site Plan for Square One Planned Development, as outlined in the staff memorandum dated May 15, 2025.**

**Approval is subject to the following conditions:**

- 1. The Preliminary Planned Development Site Plan for Square One Planned Development, SP/PD #24-005, is subject to the approval of the Township Board.**
- 2. Waiver request on the building height, being greater than 35 feet, is approved.**
- 3. The applicant shall adequately address the outstanding items noted in the Planning Department's memorandum, dated May 15, 2025, on the Construction Plan set, subject to an administrative review by Planning staff prior to the issuance of a land use permit.**

4. As part of the Final Plan Review, the applicant shall provide a Planned Development (PD) Agreement that includes any applicable ingress-egress access easements and agreements. The documents shall be in a recordable format and shall comply with the requirements of the Township Attorney.
5. Applicant complies with any requirements of the Township Engineering Consultant, Department of Public Works Director, Hartland Deerfield Fire Authority, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), and all other government agencies, as applicable.
6. Applicant shall secure all applicable approvals and permits from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and Livingston County Road Commission (LCRC). Any changes to the site plans shall be reviewed by the Planning Commission.

Seconded by Commissioner McMullen. Motion carried unanimously.

8. **Call to the Public:**

None

9. **Planner Report:**

None

10. **Committee Reports:**

Commissioner Eckman asked if there would be further discussion on chickens since the Township received a communication from a resident.

The Planning Commission briefly discussed the process.

Commissioner Eckman offered a Motion to bring the topic of chickens and the keeping of animals to the Ordinance Review Committee. It was not seconded; however, the Planning Commission agreed the Ordinance Review Committee should explore the issue.

11. **Adjournment:**

A Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Mitchell and seconded by Commissioner Murphy. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:09 PM.

Submitted by.



Tom Murphy  
Planning Commission Secretary