



# Planning Commission Minutes

Tuesday, December 17, 2024 at 7:00 PM  
27400 Southfield Road, Lathrup Village, Michigan 48076

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1. **Call to Order** at 7:02pm

2. **Roll Call**

Present: Chair Stansbery, Commissioner Scussel, Commissioner Hillman, Commissioner Hammond, Commissioner Nordmoe, Commissioner Dizik.

Others Present: DDA Director Austin Colson, Planning Consultant Eric Pietsch of Giffels & Webster, Attorney LeAnn Kimberlin, City Clerk Alisa Emanuel.

Absent: Vice Chair Fobbs

3. **Approval of Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Hillman, seconded by Commissioner Hammond, to approve the agenda, and add a second time for public comments as item 8, change other matters for discussion to item 9, and move general communication to item 10.

Yes: Hillman

No: Scussel, Dizik, Stansbery, Hammond

Abstain: Nordmoe

Motion did not carry.

Motion by Commissioner Scussel, seconded by Commissioner Dizik, to approve the agenda as presented.

Yea: Nordmoe, Scussel, Dizik, Stansbury, Hammond

Nay: Hillman

Motion carried.

4. **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

A. November 2024 - Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Hammond, seconded by Commissioner Scussel, to approve November 19, 2024, Planning Commission meeting minutes, with necessary changes. Motion carried.

**5. Public Comment**

Robin Roberts, commented on the significance of the Annie Lathrup School building as a landmark in Lathrup Village, and that the presented site plan, will lose the identity of the building, and the ordinance that requires bringing the School up to the street, does not take into consideration that both the School and the neighboring Church are in the Historic district and have different standards than a normal land use, and would like it to be reconsidered, so the two ordinances work together and wanted to know if an environmental impact study has been done for this plan to see if the infrastructure can support the project as it is presented at this time.

Rick Wisz, on Lathrup Blvd., spoke of the infrastructure comparing a City block of Lathrup Blvd. and California between San Quentin and Sunset, having 18 houses on it, compared to the number of units in the site plan of approximately 60 units, and asked if the infrastructure is going to be able to handle sewage and water for these proposed units?

**6. Old Business and Tabled Items**

**A. 28317 Southfield Road – Parking Waiver**

Motion by Commissioner Dizik, seconded by Commissioner Scussel, to approve parking waiver. Motion carried.

**7. New Business**

**A. 2025 Meeting Dates**

Motion by Commissioner Scussel, seconded by Commissioner Dizik, to approve the 2025 meeting dates. motion carried.

**B. 26600 Southfield Road – Site Plan**

Planning Consultant Pietsch, explained that this is a reuse of existing square footage, from retail to retail, the primary concern for consideration by the Planning Commission, is the design of the exterior of the building. The design shows a significant amount of metal siding, covering approximately 37% of the front façade in metal, the ordinance limits metal to 10% and only as trim.

Max and Lawrence from Skyline Construction, shared that the owner wanted this store to look like a Tesla dealership and really wanted a metal modern look, so that it would stand out, since this is his Flagship store, and the first store that will carry new car parts.

Commissioner Hammond, explained the reason for the ordinances, and the importance of meeting

the 10% use of metal. Chair Stansbury, asked if there is any other material that would give the same look. Commissioner Dizik, mentioned cement board. Chair Stansbury, asked how can you achieve the 20% reduction and still have the same look. Commissioner Hillman, referenced the look of neighboring homes, and how the 20% reduction could be made, and the store could still have the same look and that he is not in agreeance with a variance. Commissioner Dizik, wanted it to go on record, that he agrees with Commissioner Hillman's statement, and the existing plan would make the store an anomaly that would stick out. Commissioner Scussel, prefers that they come back with a site plan that is in compliance with the ordinance.

DDA Colson, reiterated that they can continue the work on the interior of the building, but an exterior building permit could not be provided, unless there is approval from the Planning Commission.

Motioned to table this item by Commissioner Dizik, seconded by Commissioner Hammond, pending an update to current City ordinances, and that it is reviewed at the next Planning Commission meeting. Motion carried.

#### C. 27700 Southfield Road – Site Plan

Planning Consultant Pietsch, explained that the site plan for the preservation of the Annie Lathrup School, has ground floor multi-family units, which are not allowed in our ordinances. The Historic District Commission, did make a motion to approve the project, but not the plans, with concern that the new construction is not to scale as it relates to the school. DDA Director Colson, said the Historic District Commission, did not like the finishing materials proposed for the facade.

Motion by Commissioner Scussel, seconded by Commissioner Hillman, to set a public hearing in January for an ordinance change, to allow multi-family residential units, on the ground floor.

#### D. Proposed Ordinance Change - First Floor Residential Village Center (VC)

Attorney Kimberlin, in reference to 27700 Southfield Road's site plan at the Historic District Commission meeting on December 12, 2024, that the proposal to have a development there was approved, the motion of the site plan failed. A Certificate of rejection was given as required by the ordinance. Attorney Kimberlin read from it:

"the majority of the Historic District Commission members found that the plan submitted adversely affected certain criteria contained in the City's Historical preservation ordinance, to wit the relationship and compatibility of the exterior architectural features of the structure to the rest of the structure mainly related to the size, scale, and location of the proposed new construction"

Attorney Kimberlin, explained that the two new wings are required to be pushed up to the road per the City ordinance, but that is in contrast to the requirements of Historic District Commission ordinance.

Mr. Sam Surnow, of Surnow Company, explained that adaptive reuse is his company's specialty, and that he feels a connection to the School building, and that it would be a shame, if it were leveled. The proposed building use would be affordable housing for Doctors, Nurses, and fulfill, the demand for housing in the marketplace, and he is open to suggestions.

Architect Kevin Biddison, explained the design and the desire to preserve the original building, with a pocket park in the front, and tie in the layout to the community, as well as allowing the community to share in some of the spaces in the building, with mixed-use spaces including a community coffee lounge, pickleball/basketball court, community learning center, event space, and workspaces. The new design has gone down to 128 units.

Commissioner Hammond, asked if they have looked at infrastructure, and both Architect Biddison, and DDA Director Colson, said "yes."

Commissioner Dizik, likes the forward thinking of a mixed-use space, yet has concern regarding 128 more drains, and keeping cooking oil out of the City's drainage system. Architect Biddison, said that grease and sediment traps can be put into the design. Mr. Surnow, explained that the lender will be picking all of these details apart, because the lender has the property as collateral. Commissioner Nordmoe, inquired about power outages, and since it is supposed to be affordable housing for seniors, if the City would have to manage that situation.

Mr. Surnow, and Architect Biddison, responded, that there will be an emergency generator, operable windows to let in fresh air, and the building will have at least a bronze level Energy Star rating.

Commissioner Dizik, asked about the revenue for the City. Councilmember Hammond, said there will be a payment, to the City, but we do not know the exact amount. Commissioner Hillman, likes the renderings, and the time that was spent talking with the community about the plan, yet there are materials that need to be changed in the plan to bring this project into compliance with the ordinances.

Commissioner Hammond, spoke of the concerns of the Historic District Commission, and asked why the design is a four-story building instead of a three-story building.

Mr. Surnow, said he needs to make it viable.

Commissioner Hillman, expressed concern at how they came up with the parking design, of 1.5 spaces per dwelling unit, and asked if they have considered covered or garage parking. Mr. Surnow, responded that the ordinance says 2 spaces, but they have been granted 1.5 in the past, they may consider covered parking, and are considering renting some of the parking spots from the Church. Mr. Surnow, doesn't believe that every one-bedroom apartment, will have 2 cars. Commissioner Hillman, Commissioner Hammond, and DDA Director Colson discussed ordinances related to parking, for multi-family properties.

Commissioner Nordmoe, asked if there were any plans for charging stations? Mr. Surnow, thought it was a good point, and that they should incorporate that into the plans.

DDA Director Colson, said they were asking the Planning Commission for feedback, so Surnow can go back and resubmit updated site plans, for approval at the January Planning Commission meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Hammond, seconded by Commissioner Dizik, to table item 7C for site plan review for 27700 Southfield Road, until the January Planning Commission meeting. Motion carried.

## 8. **Other Matters for Discussion**

### A. Development Projects Update

DDA Director Colson, gave updates on the status of the projects, that are currently in the PZE process.

DDA Director Colson, thanked City Clerk Alisa Emanuel, for help with the DDA Project Status Board, located on the City Administration side of the City Hall.

Colson, the DDA project updates board

DDA Director Colson, mentioned that the grand opening of Jay Birds Bar and Grille, went well today.

## 9. **General Communication**

## 10. **Adjourn**

Motioned by Commissioner Dizik, seconded by Commissioner Scussel, to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 9:21pm.