



Planning Commission Minutes

Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at 7:00 PM
27400 Southfield Road, Lathrup Village, Michigan 48076

1. **Call to Order** Chair Hillman at 7:00pm

2. **Roll Call**

Present: Hillman, Robinson, Grewer, Clarke, Abraham, Nordmoe

Absent: Hammond

Also Present: DDA Director Colson, CED/DDA Project Coordinator Kennedy, City Clerk Emanuel, City Attorney Baker

Moved by Commissioner Nordmoe, seconded by Commissioner Robinson to excuse Commissioner Hammond's absence.

Yes: Hillman, Robinson, Grewer, Clarke, Abraham, Nordmoe

No: n/a

Absent: Hammond

Motion Carried

3. **Pledge of Allegiance**

4. **Approval of Agenda**

Moved by Commissioner Robinson, seconded by Commissioner Nordmoe to approve the agenda with the amendment of Public Comment item 6., allowing comments on items not included on the agenda.

Yes: Hillman, Robinson, Grewer, Clarke, Abraham, Nordmoe

No: n/a

Absent: Hammond

Motion Carried

5. **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

A. April Meeting Minutes

Moved by Commissioner Nordmoe, seconded by Commissioner Clarke to table the approval of the April minutes until the June meeting.

Yes: Hillman, Robinson, Grewer, Clarke, Abraham, Nordmoe

No: n/a

Absent: Hammond

Motion Carried

6. Public Comment

John Sousanis, expressed in part: that the two floor (office) buildings cannot be adapted to other uses, and looking at height requirements in our City can help property owners look at bulldozing and building new ones, and to look at having it in the budget to have a Parks and Recreation Director again.

7. New Business

A. Master Plan Update – Parks & Recreation Discussion

Jill Bahm, Hannah Prins, and Eric Pietsch of Giffels Webster, reviewed the Comprehensive Plan/Parks & Recreation plan and DDA Director Colson also spoke on:

- The 2021 and 2015 were with the perspective of limited money, what can we do
- Adding in long-term strategies,
- Writing it in to research funding structures to support the Parks & Recreation Committee
- In the SE quadrant there are no Parks, what can we do – example residents allow us to close the street and do a connecting community event
- How do Parks enhance property values
- All the items are connected together in the Master Plan along with the Parks & Recreation Plan
- Sustainability and Tree Cover
- Parks & Recreation are the advisory Committee who will approve the plan to go to Council
- Comprehensive Plan Timeline – Visioning, Workshops & Data Collection, Goals & Objectives, Plan Drafting & Adoption
- There are Lawn signs to promote the surveys
- The Survey are open until May 31st at 11:59pm
- The Housing survey has the most numbers
- The Open House will allow more feedback and feedback on the next steps
- The Michigan DNR requires the Parks & Recreation Plan review every 5 years to remain grant eligible
- Elements of the Parks & Recreation Plan review are: Inventory and Analysis, Public Input, Goals and Objectives, and Action Implementation Strategy
- Existing Park conditions at the 5 Parks: Annie Lathrup Park, Municipal Park, Dorothy Warren Park, Sarrackwood Park, and Goldengate Park
- Hard to change a Park back into something else
- The City will have an Arboretum, City Council approved it last night
- Sarrackwood Park is not able to get grants because it is not ADA Accessible, and because of that we also can't get other Grants, because the organizations are looking for full ADA compliance
- Take care of existing Parks and Recreation facilities
- Provide a Variety of New and Improved Recreation Facilities for Public Use
- Volunteering and staff capacity

- Limited funding
- Maintaining and updating current spaces
- Grant projects may require fund matching
- New projects will largely be dependent on Grant or other outside funding sources
- Surveys ask:
 - How and when do people use the Parks?
 - What could be improved about the Parks
 - What recreation opportunities should the Recreation Committee explore?
 - Interest in Volunteering
- Sustainability and Resiliency – a separate document but related to other things in the Master Plan, in the 2021 Plan it did not have a singular goal associated with it
- Climate change and the environment
- Things that the Planning Commission can include in the Master Plan to help the Environment: Tree cover and canopies – preserving existing green spaces – supporting biodiversity in plant species, standards and incentives for energy alternatives, EV infrastructure
- Asked the Commission members, in person audience, and those online to please send the Survey links to 10 people you know and ask them to complete the surveys

Commission members, DDA Director Colson, CED/DDA Project Coordinator Kennedy, and Attorney Baker discussed in part:

- If Parks & Recreation members do not agree with items, then what will we do next
- Are all 4 of the surveys receiving input or just the most recent one?
- The Open House is on July 21st from 4:30pm to 7:30pm
- Is there any benefit to committing Parcels or Vacant land as Parks
- Open space to lay out a blanket and sit on the grass
- Signage to make sure people know the Parks have names
- Swings sizes for children as they grow
- Area to play frisbee or frisbee golf
- Marketing the Parks and what can be done at the Parks
- Toddler Splash pads, Bocce Ball or Shuffleboard, Chess with big pieces
- Focus on the Potential use of the upcoming Community Center in the old Mc Intyre School
- Thinking about how we might create relationships or partnerships with bordering communities to use their facilities that we do not have
- Tire swing that swings and spins as an option
- Specific language about the replacement of equipment/removal of unsafe equipment
- Dates of the last update of all Parks
- Park Maintenance is done by the Department of Public Works
- Emergency preparedness plan
- Containment of storm water
- Urban heat island effect
- Regional Climate action plans as a reference
- Reducing the Carbon footprint the importance of Trees cleaning the air
- Trees are natural catch basins that absorb the water
- Rain barrel for storm water collection

- Using berms – wide berms

8. General Communication

A. Site Development Update

DDA Director Colson shared the status of site developments.

9. Public Comment

John Sousanis, commented in part: the Parks and Recreation topic led to a thoughtful and insightful conversation, with one idea being that the Parks are a network of potentially different things/destinations and educational places, not all parks need to be a play place (the example of a Bocce ball area), and to value the triangles, he doesn't agree that it is hard to turn a Park into something else, but it is harder to get a Park back if it becomes something else.

Bruce Kantor, commented in part: various age groups for the Parks, and he did not hear a mention of exercise stations, there was a grant submitted for revamping of the Park, Sarrackwood Park was named after the three streets: Saratoga, Rackham, and Woodworth Way, and he encouraged the Planning Commission to look at the old proposed impermeable surface ordinance and bring it back before Council.

10. Commissioner Comments

Hillman commented in part:

- Eight pieces of Art around and near City Hall, and an emphasis on Seasonal attractions that could draw people to the Parks
- Acknowledged and shared his appreciation for: Parks & Recreation, Tree Committee, Nature Committee, and LV Women's Group for the good work that they have and are doing, and events that they have hosted and will be hosting and asked Giffels Webster to reach out to them for meetings and feedback
- IF we could put research into height restrictions for building along Southfield, Atty Baker 2 and 3 stores based on the area currently
- To Kantor agree to revisit impervious and pervious discussions

Commissioner Nordmoe commented in part:

- He reviewed the City's Five Parks and went over items like:
 - Narrow walking trail that would make it hard to walk together
 - The length of the trail being posted so people know how long they have walked
 - Signage
 - Play features
 - Where the trees are planted on the perimeter but not in the Parks for shade
 - Park fencing
 - Sidewalks or paved street access
 - Overgrown trails, broken or missing Park items
 - No adult gathering features
- They might have been made by leftover land after the houses were developed

- Suggestions of trails and gardening features (Butterfly Garden) along with benches near the play features

11. **Adjourn**

Moved by Commissioner Robinson, seconded by Commissioner Abraham to adjourn the meeting at 9:19pm.