

APPROVED
APRIL 1, 2024

**CITY OF WIXOM
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 18, 2024**

This meeting was called to order by Chairman Day of the Planning Commission at 7:00 p.m. at which time allegiance was pledged to the American flag.

PRESENT: William Day (Chairman), Commissioners: Ray Cousineau, Sandro Grossi, Mark Helsom, Mark Lada, Anthony Lawrence

ABSENT: Excused: Cheryl Tacy

OTHERS: Matteo Passalaqua (Carlisle Wortman Associates), Drew Benson, Assistant City Manager; and Mona Freiburger (Recording Secretary)

Determination of a Quorum:

A quorum of the Planning Commission was present for this meeting.

Changes or Additions to the Agenda:

None

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION made and seconded by Commissioner Lawrence and Commissioner Cousineau to approve the February 5, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes, as submitted.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence:

March 12, 2024, City Manager Update

Call to the Public: (Limited to 5 minutes per speakers, addressing Agenda items on Agenda only)

No public comments.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

1. **PUBLIC HEARING FOR TEMPORARY LAND USE – TLU 24-001: 29330 S. Wixom Road, Wixom, MI. 48393:** The applicant is seeking a one-year temporary land use approval under Section 18.12.180 Temporary Uses to permit a food trailer at 29330 S. Wixom Road. The property is zoned Light Industrial, M-1. The parcel identification number is 22-08-100-048.

Discussion:

The applicant has applied for a temporary use of a food trailer to be in the parking lot of the Marathon Gas Station located at 29330 S. Wixom Road. The subject site is zoned M-1, Light Industrial and functions as a gasoline service station. Food sale operations are proposed to commence in March of 2024 for the duration of one (1) year. Parcel ID's): 22-08-100-048 & 22-08-100-047.

The hours of operation will be between 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Up to three (3) employees will be working at the trailer during business hours. The applicant has stated that the trailer will be moved off-site when not operating. The applicant has obtained permission from the owner, Eddie Osman, to operate the food trailer on the site. The applicant has also stated that they understand that operations must cease, and the trailer must be permanently removed when the original permit or approved extension expires.

Mr. Passalacqua gave a summary for the above application in reference to the food trailer at 29330 S. Wixom Road. He noted that in the absence of a formal food truck ordinance, they are generally handled as Special Events or Temporary Land Uses.

Based on the information presented, Carlisle Wortman Associates recommended approval of the temporary use with the 11 conditions listed in the Carlisle Wortman Associates memo to Planning Commission dated February 28, 2024.

Chairman Day noted that the applicant indicated they were going to get water and/or electricity from the gas station. He asked Mr. Passalacqua if he had the specifics if the water was supplied by a hose or if it would be disposed in another manner. Mr. Passalacqua stated the applicant would speak to this further, but he did not foresee a

system that would require major modifications to infrastructure thus allowing either bringing in fresh water or dispelling of gray water.

Mr. Allen Rizk, applicant, indicated they would not be doing dishes or cleaning anything in the trailer; they would take it to the kitchen. They would use the water in the sink to wash their hands and sanitize with the hose. The food prep would not take place in the trailer.

MOTION made and seconded by Commissioner Lawrence and Commissioner Cousineau to approve **TEMPORARY LAND USE – TLU 24-001: 29330 S. Wixom Road, Wixom, MI. 48393**: The applicant is seeking a one-year temporary land use approval under Section 18.12.180 Temporary Uses to permit a food trailer at 29330 S. Wixom Road. The property is zoned Light Industrial, M-1. The parcel identification number is 22-08-100-048; with the following conditions:

1. That the temporary use be for a period of one (1) year commencing from the date of the Planning Commission meeting that granted approval; and
2. The hours of operation are limited to between 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday; and
3. That up to three (3) employees be permitted; and
4. That the trailer will be removed when not in operation; and
5. That the trailer be removed upon the expiration of this temporary use permit; and
6. That parking on the plot plan be revised to meet existing conditions and the plot plan be submitted to the City prior to the start of operation; and
7. All current City of Wixom parking standards must be maintained; and
8. Obtain all local, county, and state permits for the operation of a food service facility; and
9. Obtain a building permit, specifically, for the provision for electricity to the food service facility; and
10. Add any proposed lighting to the plot plan and submit a revised plan to the City offices prior to the start of operations; and

11. Any proposed modifications to operations of the food trailer including but not limited to trailer placement, power generation, and hours of operation will require a revised plot plan which will be submit to Planning Commission approval.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

2. **CONCEPTUAL REVIEW DISCUSSION: DRAFTING TABLE BREWING COMPANY – 49438 PONTIAC TRAIL, WIXOM, MI. 49393:** The applicant is seeking feedback prior to a formal application for maintaining the previously approved temporary outdoor seating area on a permanent basis at their multi-tenant facility at 49438 Pontiac Trail. The property is zoned Village Center Area – Core, VCA-C. The parcel identification number is 17-31-478-007.

Discussion:

Mr. Benson introduced the topic, noting that Drafting Table Brewing Company (DTBC) has been operating an outdoor seating area in the rear parking lot outside of their facility at 49438 Pontiac Trail, in the Country Corners Plaza since 2020. This outdoor seating area originally began as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic and emergency ordinance allowances by resolution of the Wixom City Council that simplified the permitting requirements for outdoor dining areas. After the expiration of those emergency allowances in late 2021, DTBC opted to seek temporary land use (TLU) approval from the Planning Commission to continue the use in 2022 and 2023 while DBTC evaluated multiple options for expanded outdoor dining areas besides just the parking lot version. The seating area has been very well received by customers.

According to Section 18.12.180 – Temporary Uses, “Temporary uses may be approved for a period of up to twelve months, with the granting of one-twelve-month extension being permissible by the Planning Commission”. After receiving TLU approvals in 2022 and 2023, DTBC now must seek a more permanent approval in order to continue their outdoor seating arrangements in the parking lot area.

49438 Pontiac Trail is zoned VCA-Core, where restaurants and taverns with outdoor seating are permitted as a Special Land Use, subject to specific standards listed in Subsections 18.07-050(c) and (d). Therefore, staff has recommended DBTC seek special land use approval from the Planning Commission. The specific standards for this special land use are attached to the report submitted in the packet.

Staff has recommended that the applicant propose a more permanent separation of the seating from vehicle traffic compared to the temporary nature of the current arrangement.

These arrangements did receive approval in the past with the understanding the setup was temporary. A more permanent installation could complement the existing aesthetics of the structure as well as provide better separation and protection of patron from vehicular traffic, especially with the proximity to the Manistee Street curb cut to the west. As an example, we have seen similar installations in other communities where they install platforms, bollards, and/or concrete pads to more clearly define the seating area from the parking area. Examples shown in the packet.

Assistant City Manager Benson stated the context behind this conceptual discussion is to get a better understanding from the Planning Commission of what their expectations may be as part of their future formal application for that use on a permanent basis; given that the original setup had been temporary in nature and approved as much.

Mr. Aaron Rzeknik, Drafting Table Brewing Company, indicated this outdoor dining setup has been widely popular with all their patrons especially having the trail going through the downtown. The extra space for outdoor seating has been nice for cyclists, people walking on the trail, runners, and allows for dogs and room for strollers. In the past, they have looked at developing something on the west side but because of space constraints, they are not able to do anything feasible that would allow for enough seating to make it worth the cost.

Chairman Day stated the consultants suggested making something more permanent, a more permanent barrier. Chairman Day asked what their plans would be for a more permanent barrier. Mr. Rzeknik indicated as of right now, they were going to keep it as is, maybe make some aesthetic updates. They have not had any incidents at all. The planters have a nice weight to them and install reflectors on the outside so vehicles can see it. They are exploring this further to see if the Commission has any requirements.

Assistant City Manager Benson stated that if/when the Special Land use were approved, this would be a permanent installation that would not come back before the Planning Commission. Originally, the layout is on top of the existing parking spaces. From a safety perspective, it is important for the Planning Commission to look at pedestrian and vehicular circulation given the proximity to the curb cut to Manistee Street to the west. Staff does recognize that this is the most practical location to expand for outdoor dining given the site constraints. The landlord would likely have some concerns about a raised concrete bed, etc., that would be expensive, and difficult to remove.

Commissioner Cousineau asked if the loss of parking was an issue since it has been dealt with for three years now. Assistant City Manager Benson indicated in CIB's original review of the temporary land use; it was noted there is sufficient parking onsite absent the seven parking spots. In this instance, it would not create a parking issue. In the long run, if multiple restaurants wanted to do something similar, it could become an issue and would have to be dealt with at that time. If all the parking spaces along the back of the building were eventually replaced with outdoor dining, the Commission may have to grant

a waiver for parking minimum, which they can do, but could ultimately impact the functionality of the entire strip center. In the short run though, parking is not an immediate concern.

Commissioner Cousineau inquired if Drafting Table left and a new user came in, would they be entitled to the outdoor dining use. Assistant City Manager Benson indicated that would depend on a few factors, such as the new use and how they propose to use the space but broadly speaking, yes. Currently, the tables are setup, and the area is still marked off as parking spaces. Chairman Day indicated, at the very least, he would like to see the parking lot painted somehow to make it not look like parking spaces anymore, to make it look more permanent. Chairman Day also indicated he liked the idea that was in the packet of having a more built out space, such as a raised wood platform or something, but he acknowledges that would present a more expensive maintenance issue as well. Commissioner Cousineau commented Plymouth and Northville have plenty of outdoor dining and have a sitting area that is cordoned off by a small fence.

Commissioner Helsom stated the photo included in the packet shows the barrels and stainless tubs that are protruding outward past the marked parking. It clearly identifies that it is an extension of the dining area. Mr. Rzeznik stated the land that is owned by the landlord is about 7 feet out from the sidewalk. There is a grading issue.

Commissioner Lada inquired about the minimum number of parking spaces they need versus what they have for the area. Assistant City Manager Benson commented based on the CIB report from 2021, there are 132 existing parking spaces and 118 are required for the entire Country Corners Plaza; removing seven parking spaces would take it down to 125, which is above the minimum number. Assistant City Manager Benson indicated he had not done the specific math on the parking spaces if all the restaurants at Country Corner Plaza were to seek outdoor dining in the same way that Drafting Table does, but the VCA ordinance does allow for waivers of parking minimum and there could be flexibility that the Planning Commission could grant for that, but at a certain point, we would start to worry about that as well.

Chairman Day indicated the consensus is that the Commission did not object to the concept. The question is whether there needs to be any further improvement to the space and demarcation than they have had for the last couple of years.

Mr. Rzeznik added that they have five units total at Country Square Plaza; not all of them are in a row.

Chairman Day stated his only issue is with the fact that this layout of outside seating looks temporary. He would like to see something more like fencing between the barrels rather than just the rope across or the chain across the area. Chairman Day indicated he received an email from Commissioner Tacy who could not be present at tonight's

meeting; she indicated she felt the same way, that she would like to see something more permanent looking installed such as a wooden platform, at least in terms of the boundary. Commissioner Lawrence stated he shared Commissioner Tacy's comment, as well. He indicated if it saw this setup for the first time, it looks like a setup for the weekend; he did not think the City would want that type of appearance.

3. **CONCEPTUAL REVIEW DISCUSSION: 31201 OLD WIXOM ROAD, WIXOM, MI. 49393.** The applicant is seeking to present and seek feedback for a potential residential housing development at 31201 Old Wixom Road. The property is zoned Village Center Area – Core, VCA-C. The parcel identification number is 22006-200-035.

Discussion:

Mr. Benson introduced the topic, noting that 31201 Old Wixom is an undeveloped 10.38-acre parcel zoned VCA-Core located at the corner of Pontiac Trail and Old Wixom Road that has been owned by the Poota family for decades. This property surrounds the BP Gas Station, and both parcels are subject to a consent judgement from the early 2000's, although the consent judgement primarily relates to the gas station. The 10 acres is minimally impacted by the consent judgement and simply requires that "the property be developed in full compliance with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance governing the development of land in the VCA, Village Center Area District, unless otherwise rezoned by the City in its legislative discretion.

In early 2024, the Poota family met with City Staff to discuss the potential development options for this parcel, specifically, related to opportunities for higher-density residential to provide more housing options and a new customer base on the western side of Downtown Wixom. Given the large size of the parcel, staff recognizes that commercial or mixed-use structures may not make sense for the entire 10 acres, but staff did recommend maintaining space along both the Old Wixom and Pontiac Trail frontages for future commercial/mixed use development. Ownership has expressed disinterest with developing new commercial space citing the struggle of current retail assets and the low ceiling for current rental rates.

Overview & Process, Thoughts and Discussion included in the packet, staff report to the Planning Commission dated March 18, 2024.

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated there is a fair amount of background context in the agenda packet to the Commissioners. Given the size of the parcel, there are a lot of things that can happen there. Being zoned VCA-Core generally calls for commercial uses and only allows for residential on the upper floors of a mixed-use building, and therefore does not have many allowances for other types of residential uses such as the proposal

before the Commission, which would be a stacked condominium project. The applicant would need to rezone the portion of the property that they seek to do for the residential townhouse project, likely to VCA Transitional.

Mr. Al Valentine, GAV & Associates, architects, stated they are seeking rezoning to VCA-Transitional to pursue the multi-family, stacked condo units. It would be a phased project where the largest part of the property would be for the housing. The other piece along Old Wixom Road to be used for, potentially, commercial development. Mr. Valentine stated they are looking for some feedback for the rezoning and the actual design development. It is not a final design, but currently, it is the best way to portray it. At this time, civil engineering is not involved, landscaping or things like that. Mr. Valentine commented these are not row townhomes, they are stacked condos that could be leased or sold, individually. They all have their own entrance, no common hallways, and they would all have their own address. There has been no determination yet as to whether they would be leased or sold.

Assistant City Manager Benson clarified the intent would be to go through the condominium/subdivision process so that they would become individual units, but whether they are sold or leased is a different question.

Chairman Day stated he is, personally, reluctant to see residential along Pontiac Trail. He would like to see that reserved for future commercial or mixed-use development. Chairman Day indicated it may not seem practical right now but if we are looking at Wixom ten or twenty years down the road, he thought this should be an area that really is a build out of the downtown and not residential. Mr. Valentine commented even though it is industrial across the street, they are hesitant with retail especially with the market, and the cost. It is not very profitable. Chairman Day stated he understood but he was not sure that this is the time to go ahead and build residential there that would preclude keeping that VCA Core for the future.

Chairman Day expressed concern that there were less garages than units, and they are detached from the units. Mr. Valentine indicated that would be an upgrade for a unit that wanted a garage; they are included in the parking count. Chairman Day indicated his concern is that the garage would become storage units and not garages given that they are detached and across the parking lot. In terms of aesthetics, the buildings are nice looking, but he did not think it fits with the downtown, more classic/retro downtown townhouse look. Chairman Day stated the buildings looked like a 2024 apartment building.

Commissioner Lawrence commented the rendering did not show circulation for fire trucks, garbage truck access, snow storage, etc.; he indicated he knew this was preliminary, but if they had gotten any studies. Mr. Valentine commented this allows ten units per acre in the ordinance. No circulation studies have been taken.

Chairman Day addressed Vice Chair Tacy's email with her feedback and concerns. She would like to maintain the space along Pontiac Trail frontage for future commercial or mixed-use development with residential behind them, and she is not ready to give up the opportunity at this time by building residential. In terms of the stacked condo concept, Vice Chair Tacy liked the concept, the exteriors of the buildings were nice, that the internal dimensions of the main living area seemed small, feeling more like an apartment. Vice Chair Tacy noted in her email that both the Crossing luxury apartments in New Hudson and the Shearwater Apartments in Commerce meet her definition of luxury even though they are only apartments. Shearwater has attached garages. Mr. Valentine stated the concept of these units were approximately 1,200 square feet, two-bedroom units; they are not small. There is not a price point at this time.

Commissioner Cousineau commented his first reaction was, even though it was called a condominium development, he knows too well that condominiums can be leased, just like apartments. This is a plan to maximize density, a grid layout. There is not a lot of creativity, but this is a parcel that may not lend itself to creativity. If there is more creativity in terms of turning some buildings, you would lose units. Commissioner Cousineau's second reaction, he asked if they intended to offer other floor plans. Mr. Valentine indicated yes, they are going to have a few single bedrooms and, potentially, three-bedroom units.

Commissioner Cousineau indicated he always maintained that he did not want to see any more rentals in Wixom. In the past, Commissioner Cousineau indicated he has softened that stance, and he would consider higher end rentals like Shearwater. This layout, the floor plan, looks like a rental project, it does not look like a condominium or traditional townhome project. He would consider something more marketable for sale. Commissioner Cousineau is also concerned about storage; there is no storage in the units and there are no basements. To pursue this concept, he thought every unit should have a garage. Commissioner Cousineau does like the look of the buildings, the offsetting of the units, which has a lot of character and interest to the building. The building architecture could be enhanced to give a more traditional VCA look. Mr. Valentine commented there are no plans for the future phase on Old Wixom Road; it could be retail use, maybe mixed retail with office; no design work has been done.

Commissioner Cousineau stated he liked the idea of honed rooftops in the VCA area. Commissioner Cousineau indicated he would like to have more information with respect to the price range for rentals and sales. He asked if there has been a market analysis on the property. Mr. Valentine answered he did not believe so. Chairman Day noted that he would be against rezoning anything except for precisely what is going to be used for residential, and would prefer to see the frontage along Pontiac Trail split off and remain as VCA-Core.

Assistant City Manager Benson commented they talked about the process of rezoning to VCA-Transition in the memo. Staff agrees with the premise that any rezoning should be

conditional and/or specifically tied to a land division and only rezones the portions intended for residential, not the whole site. There are a variety of ways to do that, but their understanding is the intent would be to keep future phase two area as VCA core because that would allow mixed use. This would be up to the applicant, but if they split off the section for phase two of the residential part, that would be part of their request either to rezone it to VCA transitional at the same time or to keep it as VCA Core if they were to have a separate parcel up at the street. That was one thought when this conversation, originally, started, that a ten-acre parcel is difficult to zone in the downtown because it is so big and there might be a variety of uses that could make sense. Assistant City Manager Benson asked if the zoning looks different or does the Planning Commission have different thoughts about the zoning portions, if it were subdivided?

Commissioner Cousineau indicated Assistant City Manager Benson's comments will have the greatest impact on this layout because of something is done along Pontiac Trail within a commercial/retail aspect, that could change that entire configuration, dramatically, and impact the balance of the site. For example, if there are a couple of commercial buildings fronting on Pontiac Trail, where would the parking go, and how much space would it take up? What are the offsets for Pontiac Trail for commercial retail? What are the setbacks, how far would it push it back in and what impact would it have on the balance of the site? Commissioner Cousineau stated it would be very significant and that's a key component of considering this site plan, is addressing the Pontiac Trail parking. Mr. Passalaqua indicated the Commission does have mechanisms in place to modify VCA dimensional requirements, if needed, and if there is a purpose for it. The points that Commissioner Cousineau made are valid, and the Commission does have tools available to be creative in that zone. Assistant City Manager Benson believed the setback off Pontiac Trail for commercial is 60 feet from center line. The setbacks are different for residential. Residential would need to be setback an additional 15 feet. Therefore, a commercial development along Pontiac Trail

The Commissioners agreed that this plan looks like an apartment complex with the garages being storage buildings. Commissioner Cousineau commented if the applicant came to the Commission with a plan with a more traditional townhouse layout, stack them with a garage underneath, that would be a slam dunk, in his mind, for residential in this location. Again, this looks like a rental project. Mr. Valentine stated today's market for buying a home is tough for young kids. Commissioner Cousineau stated that's why he had softened his position on rental because he realized that a big part of the market today, Gen X, doesn't want to buy homes; they want to rent.

Mr. Passalaqua wanted to clarify Chairman Day's intent for his comment about retaining the retail along Pontiac Trail more or less an openness to parceling off from a dimensional standpoint, could be developed as core in the future, but that portion behind that down to Gibson could, potentially, be rezoned to the transition. Chairman Day stated yes; in favor of the rezoning the southwestern corner of the property to transitional but maintaining the core on the Old Wixom and Pontiac Trail frontages.

Commissioner Helsom concurred with the Commissioners regarding the renderings considering the competition that is in and around the greater market around here. There is new development going in over in Milford and Pontiac Trail, four miles to the west. Those are townhomes with 2,300 to 2,400 square feet with attached garages, walkout basements. Commissioner Helsom asked if there is going to be a retaining wall separating the development from the gas station area. Mr. Valentine stated he hasn't gotten that far; there could be buffers.

Commissioner Helsom indicated that as Wixom starts to expand more, there would be more emphasis on the retail/commercial aspect rather than the rental type of housing. The conceptual pieces especially with the carriage style houses, it is a little more than 1,200 square feet and they usually do have some type of attached garage associated with it.

Commissioner Grossi commented he liked the concept of the rezoning the southwestern corner to Transitional and preferred to leave the Pontiac Trail frontage as core. He sees storage as being a problem for the proposed units; he lived in a condo before, Maple Crossing, and there was no storage inside.

Assistant City Manager Benson asked if there were any specific thoughts about the proposed courtyard area. He thought the courtyard looked nice and he was curious if the Planning Commission had any thoughts on that. Chairman Day stated he thought it looked nice, but it is hard to tell, ultimately, what it would look like from the rendering. Chairman Day liked the idea of the curved walkway and the landscaping.

Mr. Valentine stated he appreciated the Commission's comments, and their concern is Pontiac Trail frontage. He indicated both the owner and the builder have retail property and in today's world, it is a loser unless you have corporate tenants.

Mr. Marvin Poota, 31331 Old Wixom Road, Wixom, indicated they felt that the Old Wixom Road section is more feasible for commercial use. Pontiac Trail is a little more industrial there, there are businesses down the street which are mostly industrial where Old Wixom Road is less traffic, much slower, plus they could install angular parking which is more favorable. He indicated most customers want to park near the front of the building or close to the building, not way in the back. Pontiac Trail is most likely not going to have any parallel or angular parking. He agreed that nobody wants apartments; they are the ones that must deal with the clientele at the apartments.

Mr. Poota commented the main purpose of this project is to bring rooftops to the VCA. He has been dealing with this since 2004. The main reason why national tenants don't want to come to Wixom or downtown Wixom is because there are not enough rooftops. Mr. Poota indicated they are following the rules of the Transitional VCA, ten units per

acre, approximately. These condos will be first class; they are not going to be cookie cutter garbage. There will be granite, and nice features. Mr. Poota stated their ultimate goal is to sell out of them. The condos will be individually parceled; each one is going to have their tax id number.

Mr. Bill Clark, 49140 Wixom Tech Drive, indicated he also own commercial properties within the City of Wixom and other surrounding communities. He stated having retail on that section of Pontiac Trail is not in anybody's best interest. Right now, they have had trouble getting businesses coming up Wixom Road from the south. They keep tenants in the little strip center because the rates are low; they can't command the rent that they need there for new construction. They have tried to market the piece of property on Wixom Road at the traffic light near Old Wixom Road, in front of Total Sports since 1996 and no one is interested. Mr. Clark stated he does not want to put retail on Pontiac Trail where they would be renting to just any tenant, regardless of quality, just to make payments. They would like to build a quality product with a good mix of tenants, and do not feel confident in that business case right now.

Chairman Day commented if he were to be convinced to allow the residential on Pontiac Trail, he would want a much more traditional looking build that echoes the west retail across the street and what Country Corners looks like; much more traditional, not apartment looking buildings. Mr. Clark indicated they have the ability to do that. They came before the Commission tonight to seek the Commissioners' comments, but they were more interested in the Commission's feeling about rezoning to Transitional. Chairman Day stated he believes that the Commission is open to see rezoning to VCA-Transitional for the southwestern corner of the property.

Mr. Poota commented they are not interested in adding more Village apartments; that's the last thing they want, especially right behind them.

Commissioner Cousineau indicated he appreciated Mr. Clark's comments regarding retail, commercial and the market today.

Commissioner Cousineau commented the density is clear, the architecture is important. Storage is important. Commissioner Cousineau stated to give the Commission a better-looking product and try to deal with the storage issue and evaluate the garage situation.

Call to the Public:

No public comments.

Staff Comments:

Assistant City Manager Benson commented the City has been awarded congressionally directed spending through Haley Stevens' office as a part of the most recent federal budget approvals for building the west end commons area which is a project that the Downtown Development Authority has been working on. The idea is to take the section of the property at the corner of Old Wixom and Pontiac Trail, across the street from the BP station and also across the street from Drafting Table, to build out as a commons area. It is not developable because of 18-inch sewer main and various other utilities that run underneath the property. Final designs have not been completed but more information will be coming over the next couple of months.

Assistant City Manager Benson stated he had mentioned in an email, he thanked the Commission for their survey responses in reference to the master plan update. The responses were all very coordinated and there is no other discussion needed. He will follow up with the Commission within the next month or two with Carlisle Wortman with a recommendation and a budget.

Commission Comments:

Chairman Day commented Vice Chair Tacy wrote an email to him regarding the signage for 11 11 Burgers and Chicken, and the Wixom Dental. Assistant City Manager Benson was going to investigate how the signage got approved enough though they are in violation of the ordinance, and what can be done about them. Assistant City Manager Benson apologized, and he will have something to distribute after the meeting.

Chairman Day commented Vice Chair Tacy also brought up the property at 49250 West Road behind the Star Moon massage building at Beck and West Roads, there is now a sold sign there. Vice Chair Tacy inquired several meetings ago as to why the property had not been required to finish installing the parking lot lights even though the pedestals are in place, or the landscaping. Day inquired if the new owner would be required to finish the installations now that it has been sold. Assistant City Manager Benson stated yes the new owners will need to complete the site per the approved site plan. They are excited about that project. It was announced last week, Quantum Fuel Systems purchased the property. Quantum Fuel Systems will be bringing 87 jobs along with an investment of approximately \$22.5 million that included their purchase as well as the final buildout. They are aware of the various conditions that still need to be met for that property to receive the final site plan approval, and a certificate of occupancy for the internal buildout.

Chairman Day also indicated Vice Chair Tacy's comments in the email regarding the signage for Dough and whether that is their permanent sign because if it is, the sign does not meet the design standards for the VCA. She said all signs should be designed in character that is of traditional, intended downtown design. Mr. Day referred to Section E of the sign ordinance for the VCA. Mr. Passalaqua stated he will visit the sign ordinance; he knew that the signage met the dimension standards, but he will look at the material

requirements, as well. Chairman Day stated that he does not feel this meets the standard, traditional downtown design but that seems to have been a problem of late, in general.

Chairman Day stated it was his understanding, in terms of code violations, that code enforcement is done on a complaint basis and given priority based on complaints. He would like to see that not be the case and that code enforcement be undertaken at the City's instigation because a lot of times, a neighbor does not want to be the neighbor who complains but that doesn't mean that they are not unhappy. You can have blight that encourages blight. Chairman Day brought this to Mr. Pike's attention with issues in his subdivision; Mr. Pike stated the concerns were in the process of being dealt with and would take time, but it has been six or eight months now and the issues are still present. Chairman Day stated the city code enforcement should be proactive instead of acting based on complaints.

Commissioner Lawrence asked what is being installed at Mack Park. Assistant City Manager Benson indicated the replacement for the gazebo/shade shelter that used to be there is being installed. There will also be a bike repair station, seating area and a new clock, as well.

Commissioner Lada commented he has had several people complain regarding the Meijer parking lot after the buildout was done of the tire shop at the one end of the parking lot. The tractor trailers that used to park on the drive behind Arby's all park in the Meijer parking lot now. There is no clear lighting or lines that delineate east/west traffic in the parking lot at the south side. There are arbitrary stop signs which get moved; two of the signs are less than a car length apart, currently.

Commissioner Lada responded in referenced to the buildout of the West End Commons area; he inquired if there would be some place where a public restroom might some day exist. Assistant City Manager Benson indicated a restroom was originally part of the grant application, so, theoretically, there are funds available to do so. There are some logistical challenges especially after they started diving into what the underground infrastructure is and where it is located. It may prove to be unfeasible; also, there is some debate between different boards, commissions and Council about the desire, the pros, and cons of having a public restroom. He could not guarantee how that would play out. Commissioner Lada stated it would be a mistake if we don't do a public restroom in the downtown area. All Commissioners agreed.

Commissioner Lada asked if there are yearly inspections for rental properties in the City. Assistant City Manager Benson stated the City does have a rental licensing program. Single family homes and single units are handled differently than larger apartment complexes, but everyone is required to have a license. For the apartment units, the City only inspects a portion of them every year and it is on a rotation. For single family homes, it may be every couple of years.

Assistant City Manager Benson stated, technically, the City cannot regulate whether someone has the right to lease their property or not. Condo By-laws and other things can have some impact on that from a general governmental perspective, but he does understand the concerns.

ADJOURNMENT:

This meeting of the Planning Commission was motioned and adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Mona Freiburger
Recording Secretary