

CITY OF NORTHVILLE  
Planning Commission  
May 20, 2014  
Northville City Hall – City Council Chambers

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Wendt called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

Present: Chair Jay Wendt  
Chris Gazlay  
Carol Maise  
Dave Mielock  
Matthew Mowers  
Marc Russell  
Anne Smith  
Jeff Snyder

Absent: Steve Kirk (excused)

Also present: Patrick Sullivan, City Manager  
Don Wortman, Planning Consultant  
Sally Elmiger, Planning Consultant

**3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: January 21, 2014  
April 15, 2014**

**Motion by Mowers, support by Snyder, to approve the January 21, 2014 minutes as submitted.**  
*Voice vote: Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion unanimously carried.*

**Motion by Mielock, support by Smith, to approve the April 15, 2014 minutes as submitted.**  
*Voice vote: Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion unanimously carried.*

**4. AUDIENCE COMMENTS: None**

**5. REPORTS:**

- A. CITY ADMINISTRATION:** City Manager Sullivan noted that the shared parking agreements for 410 N. Center Street were presented to City Council May 19, 2014. The Council tabled action on these agreements in order to address concerns regarding future changes of ownership and future changes in hours of operation.
- B. CITY COUNCIL:** None
- C. PLANNING COMMISSION:** None
- D. OTHER COMMUNITY/GOVERNMENTAL LIAISONS:** None

**6. DISCUSSION: MASTER PLAN**

Note: Greg Presley, Presley Architecture, 412 W. Dunlap, Northville, MI, and David Merrill, 443 Grace Street, Northville, MI were present and participated in the discussion.

Planning Consultant Don Wortman led a Master Plan work session. He described what was presented tonight as a “partial preliminary draft.” Specifically, tonight the Planning Commission needed to review the Introduction, Background Studies, the Goals and Objectives, and Land Use components of the various sub areas. He noted that DDA Director Lorie Ward, who could not be present this evening, was also giving input in this process, especially regarding Goals and Objectives.

Tonight’s discussion would be organized as follows:

- 1) Review Background Studies/Draft Goals
- 2) Discussion on Master Plan Sub-Areas
- 3) Local Commercial/Corridor Commercial (Drive-thru facilities, gas stations, car wash)
- 4) Residential Densities
- 5) Building Height Overlay

### **Introduction/Background Studies/Draft Goals**

Regarding the Introduction, proofing errors and stylistic corrections were discussed and noted by the consultants.

Regarding Background Studies, the following items were discussed:

- The two main sources of information were 2010 U.S. Census and the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG).
- Regarding *Table – Population Comparison* (page 5), City Manager Sullivan noted that the 2000 Census had actually double counted some of the houses between Baseline and 8 Mile Road; this had resulted in an artificially high population count, making the drop in the more accurate 2010 Census seem more pronounced than it was. It was suggested that this explanation be referenced in the Background Studies section.
- Under the subhead *Transportation*, it was suggested that the Non-motorized Plan be included in its entirety, perhaps as an addendum, though it was noted that tonight’s document had a good summary of that larger document. Figure X – *City of Northville Non-Motorized Plan* should be enlarged to foldout size.
- There were several comments regarding Table X – *Average Daily Traffic Counts* (page 17) and this chart was reviewed in depth. Several corrections/clarifications were suggested in terms of which roads were City and which were Township, and accuracy of descriptors and labels (once Baseline had been confused with 8 Mile). It was also noted that Center Street was not included. The figures shown spanned over a decade, with some counts from 2001, and others as recent as 2013.
- The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) could also be attached as an addendum, or at least clearly referenced.
- The Downtown Strategic Plan might be referenced in this section.

Regarding Goals, Objectives & Strategies, the following items were discussed:

- This section established the framework for public and private decision-making. It provided guidance when the Land Use Plan was unable to address a specific request or circumstance that arose in the City.
- Again, proofing errors, word changes and stylistic corrections were discussed and noted by the consultants.

- It was noted that any development that provided an entrance to the City should be attractive, not just the Cady Street/South Center Street/Northville Downs area, as addressed on page 30. Discussion was held regarding whether this area should be called out specifically. All entrances to the City should be continually improved.

*Major Road Corridors:*

- Regarding Objective 1, strategy 5 (page 35), the sub-area plans could be referenced.
- Regarding Objective 1, strategy 6 (page 35), should the associated parking be referenced? That is, this strategy could read: "...in order to prevent encroachment of commercial uses *and associated parking* in neighborhood areas. Discussion was held regarding enforcement and definition of such limitations.
- It appeared that strategies may have been dropped from Objective II (page 35).

*Traffic and Roads*

- Include a reference to "transit" in the Goal header for this section. Include a further discussion of "transit" as a potential need and future option in the body of the text.
- Include a reference to electronic (battery charging) parking stations and Zipcar type alternatives.
- Regarding Objective 1, strategy 8 (page 36) *Discourage development which increases neighborhood traffic*, was there a way to reword this using more positive language? Was this language unnecessarily limiting? Was the language too subjective?
- Regarding Strategy 4, mention should be made of links to Maybury State Park and the Fish Hatchery.
- Strategy 7, *Provide alternative transportation for special events* should be removed.

**Master Plan Sub-Areas**

*Cider Mill Sub Area*

- The currently proposed land use read: *Residential may include condominium townhouses, lofts, garden apartments or other attached residential options. Density should not exceed eight (8) to ten (10) units per acre.* This included the area encompassing the Cider Mill, the existing lumberyard, and the River Place Condominiums.
- Discussion was held regarding desired commercial uses, including the Winery associated with the Cider Mill. Blanket commercial zoning would not limit the types of businesses permitted. An overlay district might encourage desired businesses while prohibiting others. The consensus of the Commission was that some commercial businesses, including historic-type businesses, would be appropriate in this residential-planned area. Perhaps one limitation could result in a text amendment to a PR-1 District that any commercial sales would be limited to products manufactured on site. The planning consultants would research this issue and return with proposed zoning or other controls for the area.

*North Center Street Sub Area*

- An Overlay Zoning District was already in place for this area. *Site Design and Pedestrian Considerations* should especially take that Overlay Zoning District into account. Comparison and conformance with the Overlay District needed to be pursued.

*Joint Committee/Cady Town/Race Track Sub Area*

- Discussion was held regarding the name of this sub area. The name seemed unnecessarily unwieldy. While descriptive, perhaps *Joint Committee* did not need to be in the title. The Joint Committee's work could be referenced in the body of the report.

- Specificity regarding density was discussed. Should this be more vague? A general statement of higher density near Cady Street and lower density as the development moves toward Seven Mile might be sufficient. Further discussion was held regarding this issue.
- Would there be value in separating this area into a *Cady Town* area and a *Race Track* area? While it was important to encourage integrated pedestrian traffic connecting to the town square, perhaps dividing the area in this way offered significant planning and development advantages. Labeling ideas were discussed. The race track area could be called *North Center*. The consensus of the Commission was to look at this as two areas.

#### *Seven Mile/South Main Sub Area*

- This area was planned as *Mixed Use/Planned Development*. Currently the description read: “*May include single use development or a mixture of residential, retail or office uses.*” “Retail” needed definition. Was this area appropriate for fast food drive-through restaurants or big box retail, for instance?
- Stores such as Whole Foods usually were about 40,000 square feet.
- The Master Plan could include a prohibition of large format retail, as defined by a certain square footage. That is, the Master Plan could limit retail to stores less than 55,000 square feet, for instance.
- A discussion of exclusionary zoning ensued. While fast food drive-throughs could probably not be prohibited from the City altogether, this area was not the appropriate place for them. However, they could be in LCD Zoning Districts, which allowed drive-through restaurants as a special use. The two sections of LCD zoning in the City (8 Mile Road/Taft, Novi Road) might be the appropriate place for such facilities. On the other hand, less intensive drive throughs such as drive-through banks and pharmacies could be permitted in the Seven Mile/South Main Sub Area.
- The consensus of the Commission was to keep the language as presently presented regarding land use, with the addition of a statement that drive-thru restaurants, car washes, gas stations and large format retail were not appropriate for this area.

#### **Local Commercial/Corridor Commercial**

Consultant Wortman referred to a handout *Master Plan – Zoning Plan*, a matrix that showed Future Land Use Designations, the Zoning district in which those designations could be located, and the Zoning Ordinance Controls within the Zoning Districts. He pointed out the Local Commercial and the Corridor Commercial Designations, which were new. The Local Commercial District allowed drive through restaurants as a special land use, and the Corridor Commercial would be in the General Commercial District and would allow gas stations/car washes as a special land use.

#### **Residential Densities**

Consultant Wortman referred to a handout *Residential Density Matrix*, which illustrated housing types within dwelling unit densities. He suggested attaching this matrix to the Master Plan.

#### **Building Height Overlay**

Consultant Wortman referred to a handout *Preliminary Draft CBD Height Overlay Adjustments*. He pointed out a proposed draft 5-story Height Overlay, which would replace a current 4-Story Height Overlay on south Cady Street east of Center Street. Discussion ensued. It appeared that the proposed 5-story height overlay should show a 4-story step down on parcels 176, 177a, and 3 stories on parcel 177b.

Further discussion was held whether elevations should be determined from Cady Street or rather be an average of the grade. If the Commission wanted elevations to be determined at Cady Street, the Zoning Ordinance averaging requirement would have to be addressed. It was noted that due to grade changes, a 5-story building could actually be 6 stories from the south. If parking were constructed under the building as a first floor, it could still be considered a 5-story building (five stories of living area).

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

It was noted that the Master Plan discussion would continue at future meetings.

**Motion by Gazlay, support by Maise, to adjourn the meeting at 9:34 p.m.**

***Voice Vote: Yes: All. Nays: None. Motion unanimously carried.***

Respectfully submitted,  
Cheryl McGuire  
Recording Secretary