



FINAL

SPECIAL STUDY SESSION MEETING MINUTES

A Special Study Session meeting of the Farmington City Council was held on March 3, 2014, in City Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, MI. Notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with Public Act 267-1976.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Mayor William Galvin.

1. ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Greg Cowley	Councilmember	Present	
William Galvin	Mayor	Present	
JoAnne McShane	Councilmember	Present	
Steve Schneemann	Mayor Pro Tem	Present	
Jeff Scott	Councilmember	Present	

City Administration Present

Director Christiansen
City Clerk Halberstadt
City Manager Pastue
Attorney Schultz

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Greg Cowley, Councilmember
SECONDER:	JoAnne McShane, Councilmember
AYES:	Cowley, Galvin, McShane, Schneemann, Scott

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was heard.

4. REVIEW OF PROPOSAL FROM OHM

1. Review of Proposal from OHM Regarding Grand River Traffic Analysis

Orchard Hiltz and McCliment (OHM) Representatives Present: Matt Parks, Steve Dearing, John Kramer

Mr. Parks briefly discussed the proposal for a Grand River traffic analysis from Shiawassee to Orchard Lake Road. He pointed out this stretch of road has been reviewed extensively over the past year and noted data has been collected by other agencies including: the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC). He stated based on the analysis they will look at three different alternatives for Grand River, including: 1) do nothing; 2) a road diet down from five to three lanes; and 3) a hybrid approach of four lanes, but changing one of the inside thru lanes to a center lane for left turns.

Scott raised concerns regarding the scope of the proposal. He noted a large portion of the study is part of the Grand River Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) that has organized its own taskforce to look at some MDOT issues for the entire corridor extending down to Eight Mile Road. He stated MDOT has agreed to take a look at Grand River from Halsted to Eight Mile Road. He expressed concern that there will be a redundancy of data collected and does not want the City to pay for work that has already been performed. He asked how we will coordinate and assess the information from the studies done by the City, CIA and MDOT to achieve the goals of the City Vision Plan and CIA Plan.

Dearing advised every agency reviewing the project will want to start from the same benchmark. He stated a model of Grand River has already been done through its entirety by MDOT. He indicated OHM would use that model and populate it with current data and that kind of effort is not a throw away if MDOT also wants to look at Grand River outside of the limits of Farmington. He stated the modeling is valuable in stating the case for proposed changes to Grand River by the City.

Scott asked why the City should pay for data that will be created by MDOT.

Parks advised that before they begin the process of data collecting there should be a kick-off meeting arranged with MDOT so there will be no overlap.

Pastue advised the evaluation by MDOT will not occur until 2015. He pointed out OHM will provide data later this year providing the basis for moving MDOT in the right direction.

McShane asked about the inclusion of bike lanes in the proposed study.

Dearing responded that in the context of a road diet it is possible to use excess space for parking or bike lanes. He advised there is not enough room for both on parts of Grand River. He stated the City needs to develop priorities for use of the excess space. He discussed the generous space needed for bike lanes, especially near parking.

McShane noted the City may not need additional parking. She pointed out every road paved recently has not included bike lanes. She noted the City wants to attract young people and they ride bicycles. She asked if crosswalks would be part of the study.

Dearing responded crosswalks will be included in the study. He stated once the model is in place and there is an understanding of how traffic signals are operating, then you can discern how traffic is moving from signal to signal. He stated at that point it can be determined where it would be the safest to add crosswalks between signals. He spoke about possible installation of refuge islands.

Discussion followed regarding the hazard of crossing the intersection at Shiawassee and Grand River. Dearing pointed out the study will look at a possible crosswalk on Grand River between Shiawassee and Farmington Road.

McShane pointed out an OHM proposal may not be compatible with the plans of the CIA. She stated the importance of meeting with the CIA to ensure everyone is on the same page.

Schneemann concurred that it would be important for OHM to meet with the CIA, but with the Downtown Development Authority Design Committee as well. He referred to an earlier conversation regarding the use of MDOT models for Grand River. He noted with the Grand River Streetscape Project, OHM was able to demonstrate to MDOT that their model for Grand River as it related to the project was incorrect. He stressed the importance of OHM as an advocate in making changes to Grand River. He does not want to turn over the gathering of data to MDOT for the proposed project.

Discussion followed regarding the role of Council and scope of the project.

Cowley would like to see both bike lanes and parking included in the project, but stressed the importance of the need for additional parking. He asked about increased traffic volume with increasing redevelopment projects and how it would be handled.

Dearing stated they will work with future developers on modifying the model to determine if there is enough capacity to increase volume.

Discussion followed regarding the number of additional parking spaces that would be generated with the project. Christiansen speculated 40-50 additional parking spaces.

Discussion continued regarding limiting trucks on Grand River and redirecting traffic to the M-5 bypass.

Dearing expressed concern regarding the impact on the commercial interests if the City limited trucks on Grand River. It would be difficult from an enforcement standpoint to determine what trucks would be allowed on Grand River.

Dearing suggested working with Farmington Hills on developing a formal truck route.

Galvin asked regarding the scope of the project.

Dearing responded OHM was asked to look at Grand River from Shiawassee to Orchard Lake Road, however, the analysis will be expanded from Halsted to Nine Mile in anticipation of what MDOT will require.

Responding to an additional question from Galvin, Dearing advised the pedestrian count is done manually and includes bicyclists.

Discussion followed regarding the need for pedestrian-friendly sidewalks and inclusion of bus stops as part of the analysis.

Discussion continued regarding how a rapid transit would function and where the stops might be placed; possible use of M-5 rather than Grand River.

Scott stated the City needs to anticipate extending the proposal up to Eight Mile Road.

Scott advised a conceptual plan needs to include all types of transportation including pedestrian, bicyclists, parking, etc.

Pastue stated the proposal would be brought back to Council for approval at the next regular meeting.

5. REVIEW OF PASER ROAD RATING SYSTEM

1. Review of PASER Road Rating System -Matt Parks OHM

City Administration advised a Paser Road Rating System was used to evaluate the City streets and roads last Fall. The evaluation provided information on the existing road infrastructure. He stated a model was constructed to show how much the City should be spending based on the condition of roads. He noted the road millage is up for renewal and will be placed on the August or November ballot.

Matt Parks provided a power point presentation on the Paser Road Rating System. He pointed out the analysis completed last Fall was a baseline study. He stated the information in the report provides the City with a recommended funding level to maintain a healthy road infrastructure and prevent the percentage of the system in poor condition from increasing. He noted Farmington has done a good job of maintaining its roads.

Responding to a question from Schneemann, Parks stated the evaluation last Fall included travel lanes only, not parking.

Parks went on to discuss the condition and rating of various roads in the City. He discussed the high costs the City would incur if road maintenance is not done.

Responding to a question from Cowley, Pastue stated parking lots would be part of a separate analysis.

Schneemann would like some assurance that when roads are reconstructed they

will perform well. He noted part of the reconstruction of Farmington Road north of Grand River is not performing well.

McShane was happy to see the report and believes it gives the City a good sense of direction and the ability to develop priorities for road maintenance.

Responding to a question from Scott, Parks stated he can provide a map that reflects the ratings of City roads.

Scott noted the report recommended \$900K to reconstruct and maintain City roads going forward, however, the current road millage only generates \$300K per year. He asked how the City would make up the difference.

Pastue responded some of the funding would come from federal grants. He noted originally the road millage was 1.6, however, it was reduced to one mil. He pointed out with the reduction in property values one mil does not generate the revenue it once did. He noted the City has supplemented the road millage with funds from the Major Street Fund.

Galvin pointed out the road fund takes care of every road in Farmington and benefits every resident. He noted this issue will be brought back in future study sessions.

6. DISCUSSION - GRAND RIVER/HALSTEAD PLAZA

1. Discussion - Grand River/Halstead Plaza Redevelopment Planned Unit Development Concept Plan

Kevin Christiansen introduced the concept plan for the redevelopment of the Grand River/Halsted Plaza. He introduced Todd Firestone, Developer and Project Manager for the proposed project. Mr. Firestone is a partner in the Farran Group, LLC, based out of Missoula, Montana.

Christiansen reviewed the current occupancy status of the proposed redevelopment site. He spoke about the process of establishing this site as a Commercial Rehabilitation District. He noted the redevelopment of this property was a key element of the Visioning Plan.

Firestone discussed the profile and history of the Farran Group. He reviewed a number of projects the group has undertaken throughout the country. He discussed the development opportunities in the Detroit metro area. He reviewed a proposed site plan that includes four-story apartment buildings and light retail.

Firestone discussed the traffic flow through the site, green space, parking and garages. He stated the development would include 200 units of mostly 1-2 bedroom apartments. He presented a prototype for building design, but stressed they are looking for input from the community to strike the right architectural balance.

Responding to a question from McShane, Firestone stated he does not know if the proposed development will be eligible for Title IX applicants.

McShane envisioned a more classical look for the apartments that would attract higher-end renters. She would like to see more brick incorporated into the project. She is pleased access will be created to the apartments east of the development. She expressed the importance of sufficient green space.

Schneemann stated the importance of retaining the tile shop which serves as an anchor and attracts a broad demographic. He would like to see the other retail pick up on a theme that might fit with the tile shop. He was glad to see that types of parking other than surface parking will be considered. He liked the connection points to the Jamestown Apartments and to see those points tied into a network of circulation on the development site. He expressed support for a contemporary look to the development. He believes a "modern" message would attract the younger generation.

Scott also expressed support for a different architectural design. He expressed opposition to including a drug store in the project, citing a past negative experience involving a drug store redevelopment project. He expressed concern regarding a proposed retail site that is perpendicular to Grand River with no frontage. He noted the importance of visibility from Grand River. He also stressed the importance of green space.

Firestone stated they are currently working on a redesign of the site plan that would provide frontage for all retail sites.

Discussion followed regarding the importance of this project as the gateway to the City.

Responding to a question from Cowley, Firestone stated they intend to hold on to the development for at least 7-10 years.

Galvin discussed some of the challenges of the property and also expressed support for keeping the tile shop. He stated some on Council were slow to support multi-housing in order to grow density, but they now understand its value to the community. He expressed concern regarding the price point of the rental units and how they will be marketed.

Pastue discussed the next steps in the Planned Unit Development process which ultimately must be approved by Council.

7. NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES

1. National League of Cities Service Line Warranty Program

City Administration recommended the City of Farmington consider participating in the National League of Cities Service Line Warranty Program. The program provides insurance for property owners that in the event of a sewer lateral failure, the lateral repairs would be covered up to \$4000 which is the responsibility of the program; another \$4,000 is available for road restoration. The program comes at no cost to the City.

Responding to a question from Schneemann, Pastue stated they are unaware of any pre-existing conditions that would preclude a resident from participating.

Discussion followed regarding assurances that the provider is reputable, soundness of the program, and adequacy of the coverage.

Discussion continued regarding the City's involvement with the program. Pastue advised a joint letter from the City and provider would go out to residents publicizing this program.

Responding to a question from McShane, Pastue stated he is not opposed to competition if another company comes into the market offering the same service.

McShane requested more information on the provider and a sample contract.

Council took a break at 8:35 p.m. and returned at 8:45 p.m.

8. CLOSED SESSION - LAND ACQUISITION AND LABOR NEGOTIATIONS

1. Motion to enter closed session to discuss land acquisition and labor negotiations.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Greg Cowley, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Steve Schneemann, Mayor Pro Tem
AYES:	Cowley, Galvin, McShane, Schneemann, Scott

The votes were taken in the following order: Galvin, McShane, Schneemann, Scott, Cowley.

Council entered closed session at 8:45 PM.

2. Motion to exit closed session.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Greg Cowley, Councilmember
SECONDER:	JoAnne McShane, Councilmember
AYES:	Cowley, Galvin, McShane, Schneemann, Scott

Council exited closed session at 10:30 PM.

9. COUNCIL COMMENT

No Council Comment was heard.

10. ADJOURNMENT

1. Motion to adjourn the meeting.

RESULT: **APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER: JoAnne McShane, Councilmember
SECONDER: Steve Schneemann, Mayor Pro Tem
AYES: Cowley, Galvin, McShane, Schneemann, Scott

The meeting adjourned at 10:33 P.M.

William E. Galvin, Mayor

Susan K. Halberstadt, City Clerk

Approval Date: _____