

**PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING AGENDA
Final
August 21, 2006**

CALL TO ORDER: 7:30 P.M.

MINUTES: July 17th, 2006 Business

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

PUBLIC COMMENT: Items Not On Agenda

PUBLIC HEARING

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1.

NEW BUSINESS: 1 SPRINGFIELD MARKET PLACE – PRELIMINARY PUD

OTHER BUSINESS: Miscellaneous

1. Update Priority List
- 2.

NEXT MEETING DATE

September 7, 2006 Workshop Meeting
September 18, 2006 Business Meeting

ADJOURNMENT:

The Mission of the Springfield Township Planning Commission is to guide and promote the efficient, coordinated development of the Township in a manner that will best promote the health, safety, and welfare of its people.

**Springfield Township
Planning Commission – Business Meeting
Minutes of August 21, 2006**

Call to Order: Vice Chairperson John Steckling called the August 21, 2006 Business Meeting of the Springfield Township Planning Commission to order at 7:30 p.m. at the Springfield Township Civic Center, 12000 Davisburg Rd., Davisburg, MI 48350.

Attendance:

Commissioners Present

John Steckling
Bill Leddy
Dean Baker
Bill Champion
Ruth Ann Hines
Paul Rabaut

Commissioner(s) Absent

Roger Lamont

Consultants Present

Randy Ford
Sally Elmiger

Staff Present

Leon Genre
Collin Walls
Nancy Strole

Approval of Minutes: July 17, 2006

Commissioner Rabaut moved to approve the minutes of July 17, 2006 as presented. Commissioner Champion supported the motion. Vote on the motion. Yes: Steckling, Leddy, Baker, Champion, Rabaut and Hines; No: none; Absent: Lamont. The motion carried by a 6 to 0 vote.

Approval of Agenda:

There was unanimous consent to approve the agenda as published.

Public Comment: None

Public Hearing: None

Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

1. Springfield Market Place – Preliminary PUD

Ms. Elmiger summarized Carlisle/Wortman's review dated July 5, 2006. She explained that the applicant proposes to construct a PUD consisting of approximately 370,000 square feet of retail

space on 35.6 acres. The retail will be a mix of large retailers and outlot parcels to accommodate restaurants and other smaller scale retail uses. Potential uses include a major home improvement

retailer, a major department store and a major national office supply office retailer. The applicant proposes to construct this development in two phases. Ms. Elmiger reviewed the township ordinance regulations regarding planning. Ms. Elmiger said she believes regarding this proposal, the environmental protection and mitigating an existing, non-conforming use are not the main topics but the main topic is the proposal must provide a recognizable material benefit. The applicant states that the benefits from this PUD will provide a gateway development that will improve the image of the township's southern entry, will provide increased tax base, a stop light at the southbound exit ramp at Dixie Hwy. off I-75 and conform with the Dixie Highway Overlay District. Ms. Elmiger said, it is Carlisle/Wortman's opinion that the benefits enumerated by the applicants narrative could also be provided if the property were developed as a residential development or simply rezoned and developed as a retail center. **[A copy of the full review by Carlisle/Wortman is on file at the Office of the Clerk, Springfield Township].** Carlisle/Wortman is of the opinion that this proposal does not meet PUD requirements.

Mr. Randy Ford of Hubbell, Roth & Clark (HRC) summarized HRC's review dated June 30, 2006. Mr. Ford said from an engineering standpoint, he would cover some of the more significant issues. Regarding site grading, this site is fairly flat in grade and does not present any particular problems from an engineering standpoint. However, this proposal would involve mass grading of the entire site with cuts and fills at a maximum of approximately four feet. There is a pond at the rear and it is a state regulated wetland and there are requirements for preservation of woodlands and natural features. The applicant must respond as to how they will preserve those resources. With respect to storm drainage, the applicant is proposing an enclosed storm system to a large centrally located underground detention system. It would be a series of oversized pipes under the parking lot where they will capture the runoff from rain. It will be stored in this system and discharge through a restricted outlet pipe towards the pond. Mr. Ford said there is still a long ways to go in terms of the submitted calculations. **[A copy of the full review by HRC is on file at the Office of the Clerk, Springfield Township].** The applicant must show that they are implementing Best Management Practices. In regard to site access, a traffic study has been submitted but a detailed review has not been done at this conceptual point of the proposal.

Mr. Dale Watchowski, President and CEO of REDICO explained that he hopes to explain and demonstrate the benefits of this development. Their intent is to relocate and expand the existing Dixie Baptist Church and Springfield Christian Academy; redevelop the current site to a Class A retail development and create a gateway to Springfield Township. He explained that REDICO and Lormax Stern have developed many projects in southeastern Michigan including Green Oak Village Place in Green Oak Township; Independence Marketplace in Allen Park; Northville Village in Northville Township; Troy Marketplace in Troy and Utica Park Place in Utica. REDICO has also been involved in the development of the Palace of Auburn Hills, Compuware World Headquarters, Oakland Towne Square and Kennedy Square.

Mr. Mark Drane of ROGVOY Architects explained that they are asking for a deviation for the parking ratio which is lower than the Township's standards and they are asking for a deviation for the underground storm water. Mr. Drane said he believes they can work around all the other issues that have been raised in the planner and engineer's reviews. He explained that they are proposing a large development with several access sites and 2500 parking spaces. They hope to open the first phase in the fall of 2007 and the second phase in the fall of 2008. They tried to pull the buildings up to Dixie Highway as much as possible and have come very close to meeting the objective of the Dixie Highway Overlay District. The density of this is not different from similar types of developments and they feel they are not overdeveloping this site. Mr. Drane explained that, near the residential development, there is a significant hedge row of trees and they plan to put in a significantly large, high berm of six feet with an 8-foot high wall on top with landscaping on either side. Trash compactors and dumpsters are set down in truck wells below grade with screen walls. Mr. Drane said, per the PUD requirements, he believes they can come to an agreement with the Township regarding deliveries and trash pickup. The intent is to create boulders, ponds and significant image features as one enters the site flanked by two smaller buildings, possibly containing restaurants. They intend to construct seating areas and gathering areas near the buildings that are close to Dixie Highway. The architecture would be constructed of brick, stone and canvas awnings and would appear more of a rural look as Springfield Township requests. They are proposing several man-made water features in the front of the development to enhance the entry to the Township.

Mr. Watchowski commented in regard to community concerns, they intend to meet any township noise ordinance; the berm and screenwall would be 14 feet with appropriate plantings to provide noise absorption and buffering; the project will meet all OCHD and MDEQ requirements in regard to the degradation of wetlands; there would be a study to ensure impact is minimized on light pollution and they would use cut-off luminaries, shielding and directional lighting to limit light "trespass." Mr. Watchowski said in regard to traffic control, REDICO does have a good relationship with the state and county and sees no problem addressing traffic issues. They would like to add signalization to the site driveway and Dixie Highway interchange and access improvements on Dixie Highway. In regard to the loading docks, they would be depressed and entirely screened.

Mr. Watchowski commented that REDICO is prepared to spend as much money as it takes and do whatever it takes to assure a Class A development in Springfield Township. He believes this proposal will provide a gateway to the community, create approximately 800 jobs and provide a tax base of approximately \$1,100,000 per year to Springfield Township. Mr. Watchowski noted that residential development is not feasible on this site and their proposal preserves a low impact on E. Holly Rd. [where the Dixie Baptist Church proposes to relocate].

Commissioner Baker asked how many trips per day this site would create in regard to traffic? The applicant said they have not done a daily estimate of trips yet but would do so at the request of the township. Commissioner Baker asked the applicant to pay special attention to where the traffic will be coming from as he believes it will come from the south and that may not mesh into the need to meet the requirements of the overlay district. Commissioner Baker commented that Section 14.01 of the ordinance states that to obtain a PUD there must not be a negative impact on

existing businesses. He believes this development could have a negative impact on similar business ventures already existing in the township.

Commissioner Leddy said he is glad to see that the rear of the buildings will look just as nice as the front. He asked if there is a possibility of making some of the parking underground? Mr. Wochowski said they had not looked into that possibility and believes it would be far too costly.

Commissioner Champion asked if a wall on a berm with landscaping provides a smooth transition between uses and is there opportunity to soften that impact? Mr. John Curry, the design engineer, said they would be happy to accommodate whatever the Township thinks may be appropriate. If the community would like access from the residential portion to the retail, they would be happy to provide that but the other side is highway. Commissioner Champion said there is a considerable grade difference along the northbound on-ramp to I-75 to the proposed septic field area. He asked what the plan is for that? The applicant said the end result will be an open field with landscape buffer up against the interchange. Commissioner Champion asked if the fence inside the boundary line is to be moved? The applicant said the fence would be moved to the right-of-way if it is not there currently.

Commissioner Hines said she shares concerns about the transition and access from the residential to this facility with the intent that they have pedestrian access.

Vice Chairperson Steckling said he would like the applicant to consider purchasing some land for open space. Mr. Watchowski said they would definitely consider it. In regard to parking, he asked if the potential tenants are driving the number of proposed parking spaces? Mr. Watchowski said, yes, and the ordinance is well beyond what they require.

Commissioner Hines said the review by HRC states that the proposed underground storm water detention system does not meet the criteria for exception from this ordinance requirement and she believes that is a major issue in going forward with this project. She does not find that this proposal will benefit the community and does not find that it qualifies for a PUD.

Commissioner Champion commented that he was looking for more innovation and asked the developer to consider rearranging the buildings to save greenspace along the condominiums. He would like the pedestrian/bike path integrated into the project and incorporate it as a community feature. He encouraged the applicant to follow Best Management Practices and said the appearance of the proposed buildings are encouraging.

Commissioner Rabaut thanked REDICO for the confidence shown in Springfield Township as a place to make a major investment. What determines whether a plan goes forward or not is the goals and objectives of the Township, its Master Plan and the Dixie Overlay District. He has read all the submitted material and agrees the plans are very creative including the landscape and building style. The report by Carlisle/Wortman has listed at least 43 concerns and there are detailed engineering concerns. He does not find the magnitude of these concerns to be very reassuring and it creates an impression that this project may not be appropriate for this location. Commissioner Rabaut said he does not believe this project would qualify for a PUD rezoning and he believes the benefits to this community are illusionary. As a gateway to the Township it

would be in contrast to the residential, rural character and natural features of the township and do little to enhance that image. The traffic improvements would be offset by the traffic generated by this development and therefore, be little net gain to the township. In regard to the tax-base increase, if residential properties decline in value, then that would be an off-set. He believes the development is not consistent with the Master Plan adopted in 2002.

Commissioner Leddy commented that we should have artist renderings of this project if the proposal comes back to the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Baker commented that, personally, the test of this request comes down to one of three necessities to fit in as a PUD. The only one that has the potential of being valid is that this brings a benefit to the ultimate users of the project in the community. In his opinion, "community" is tough to define. However, he does not believe this is compatible with the township Master Plan and is not compatible with the residential character of the township and the source is not confined to meeting the needs of township residents. Commissioner Baker said he has concerns with the proposed underground water treatment system.

Vice Chairperson Steckling commented that he strongly encourages the applicant to go to the Township Board with this proposal. He thinks it would be a worthwhile expenditure of the applicants time. He believes this parcel will be commercial in some form at some point and the transition that this developer has indicated is one we try to strive for. There is a lot of square footage and large buildings in this proposal, but the fact that Home Depot is in there is not a consideration because we do not approve a project based on the tenant; it is approved based on the building proposed. Vice Chairperson Steckling said this proposal can be brought into line to meet the PUD requirements and all the issues raised by the residents, lighting, buffering, etc. can be dealt with appropriately.

Supervisor Walls commented that the Township has several written communications from residents either opposing or agreeing with the proposed development. **[Copies of these letters are on file at the Office of the Clerk, Springfield Township].**

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Joe Hampton, 10850 Rattalee Lake Rd., commented that this proposal offers great benefit to Springfield Township and the residents and he is in favor of the PUD rezoning and supports the development.

Mr. Rob Gray, 9022 E. Blue Water Dr., commented that he is opposed to this development because he intended to live in a condo with no shopping center behind him and will move.

Ms. Kim Huppertz, 9009 E. Blue Water Dr., commented that she is glad the Planning Commission is looking into all the concerns of the residents but believes there can be more innovative ways to develop this property.

Mr. Tim Wittabort, 8615 South Shore Point, commented that this is a great project for this community and he is in favor of it. He has submitted support in writing to the Township.

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Mr. Andrew Hyde, 9005 E. Blue Water, commented that the project does not seem the correct scale and size and to keep in mind that people do live close. Some of the existing buffering can be left in his opinion and trees can be moved and he hopes the Planning Commission uses common sense.

Ms. Joyce Gibbs, 7243 Blue Water Dr., urged the Planning Commission to consider the total picture of Dixie Highway when considering this project.

Ms. Ellie McCue, 9635 Forest Ridge, said she is opposed to this development and is concerned with the intensity of the traffic that it will generate. She is also concerned that we do not have the proper police patrol for this development and traffic.

Ms. Carol Cane, 9067 Bavarian Ct., urged the Planning Commission to listen to the residents and their concerns. She would like to see some commercial in this area, however, not as intense as REDICO is proposing.

Mr. Tim Rydman, 12175 Rattalee Lake Rd., commented that he is in favor of this proposed development. He believes it will bring jobs, especially for teenagers to this Township.

Ms. Linda Griffin, 11420 Shaffer Rd., asked the Planning Commission to consider the project on its merits and not only on the opinions of the immediate neighbors. There are more voting people in Springfield Township that will benefit by this and will have their needs served.

Ms. Connie McClellan, 7300 Blue Water Dr., commented that she is concerned with the odors from the restaurants and dumpsters in this development.

Mr. Chad Tally, 5249 Drayton Rd., Clarkston, commented that he is pursuing purchasing property in Springfield Township and is thrilled with the proposed development and believes it will be good for the community.

Mr. Alan Jesiel, 9872 Forest Ridge, commented that he believes this proposed development is too big.

Ms. Pam Merritt, 9030 E. Blue Water, commented that she is opposed to the proposed development and it should be moved out of Springfield Township.

Ms. Janet Madock, 7310 Blue Water Dr., said she is opposed to the development and is concerned with the odors and traffic.

Ms. Karen Jones, 990 Broadway, commented that the Planning Commission should be sensitive to the people that live close to this project. She lives close to the Civic Center and can hear the mechanical units run and must endure the parking lot lights year round. There has also been a tremendous amount of traffic increased on Davisburg Rd. since Kroger has been built. She is opposed to the project.

Mr. Joel Frick, 7744 Lavon, said he is opposed to the proposed project as it will increase traffic for the residents of Lavon.

Ms. Theresa Kelly, 9042 East Lake Rd., commented that this project is too big and too close to the residents. She would like to see the same care shown for the existing sign shown to the residents of Softwater Lake.

Ms. Judith Kowalski, 7172 Blue Water Dr., commented that she is opposed to the proposed project and is concerned with the devaluation of property values. Any proposed project for this parcel should be in moderation.

Mr. Kirk Comstock, 5850 Paramus, Clarkston, said this is a good project and will bring money into the Township. He believes it is a beautiful complex and should be considered.

Mr. Dan Lanfer, 900 Baron Rd., Groveland Township, said he is in favor of the proposed development and the proposed underground storm water system would be much more pleasing to the eye.

Mr. Craig Comstock, 2611 Woodcreek, said he is looking forward to this development going in.

Mr. Trevor Cole, 4971 Lancaster Hill Dr., said REDICO is a great company to work with for a high class development.

Mr. Scott Yerk, 3147 N. Oakland, Davison, said he is in favor of the proposed development.

Ms. Lynn Kukovich, 9026 E. Blue Water Dr., said she is opposed to the proposed development.

Mr. Todd Vanaman, 9939 Davisburg Rd., commented that he lives behind Kroger and the concerns regarding docking, loading, odors, etc. are all legitimate concerns. However, he has no issues with them living behind Kroger. He believes this development will be a great benefit for the Township and is in favor of the development.

Other Business:

- * Commissioner Rabaut moved to hold a September 7th Workshop meeting and hear a site plan review at that time. Commissioner Champion supported the motion. Vote on the motion. Yes: Steckling, Rabaut, Baker, Leddy, Hines and Champion; No: none; Absent: Lamont. The motion carried by a 6 to 0 vote.**

Adjournment:

Hearing no other business, Vice Chairperson Steckling closed the meeting at 10:40 p.m.

Susan Weaver, Recording Secretary