

1.29.25

CITY OF SOUTHFIELD

PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

Council Chambers - Southfield, Michigan

Wednesday, January 29, 2025 - 6:30 p.m.

Video recording transcribed by

Janice P. Yates, CER-9181

COMMISSION MEMBERS AND STAFF PRESENT:

Jeremy Griffis, Chair

Cynthia Bernoudy, Commissioner

Andrea Storch Gruber, Secretary

Anthony Martin, Commissioner

Robert Willis, Vice Chair

Alex Bollin, Assistant City Planner

Thomas Paison, Deputy City Planner

1 Planning Commission Meeting

2 Wednesday, January 29, 2025

3

4 (At 6:30 p.m., meeting begins.)

5 CHAIR GRIFFIS: This is the city of
6 Southfield regular meeting of the Planning Commission,
7 January 29, 2025. Can we please stand for the Pledge
8 of Allegiance?

9 (Pledge of Allegiance recited.)

10 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Can we have a roll call,
11 please?

12 MR. BOLLIN: Yes, sir. Commissioner Bernoudy?

13 MS. BERNOUDY: Present.

14 MR. BOLLIN: Commissioner Griffis?

15 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Here.

16 MR. BOLLIN: Commissioner Gruber?

17 MS. GRUBER: Present.

18 MR. BOLLIN: Commissioner Martin?

19 MR. MARTIN: Present.

20 MR. BOLLIN: Commissioner Willis?

21 V. CHAIR WILLIS: Here.

22 MR. BOLLIN: Commissioners Goodwin-Dye and
23 Dr. Stephens-Gunn are excused, but we do have a
24 quorum.

25 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Thank you. Do we have a

1 motion to approve the agenda?

2 V. CHAIR WILLIS: Through the Chair?

3 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Yes.

4 V. CHAIR WILLIS: I move to approve the
5 agenda dated January 29, 2025.

6 MS. BERNOUDY: Second it.

7 CHAIR GRIFFIS: I've got a favorable motion
8 on the agenda by Commissioner Martin, second by
9 Commissioner Bernoudy. All in favor?

10 FULL COMMISSION: Aye.

11 CHAIR GRIFFIS: All right, the agenda
12 proceeds as written. First item is -- well, two
13 items, at 22106 and 22108 West Eight Mile Road.

14 MR. PAISON: Yes, Mr. Chairman. That is the
15 Eagle Landscaping item that was before you in
16 December. They have asked for a postponement to a
17 date uncertain to complete their storm water design.
18 I did speak to their architect earlier this week, and
19 they expect to be presenting something to the city
20 engineer next week. And once they get the feedback to
21 the city engineer and make any necessary changes, and
22 the city engineer says that it's a viable solution
23 that could be approved, then we'll schedule them to
24 come back before this body.

25 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Okay.

1 V. CHAIR WILLIS: One more?

2 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Sure.

3 V. CHAIR WILLIS: Basically a question.

4 When they were here before us, we adjourned the
5 hearing for a period of 30 days to continue the
6 decision we had already made with them. Does this,
7 first an adjournment for 30 days and then an
8 adjournment without date, did that kind of break the
9 continuity of that hearing? Does it?

10 MR. PAISON: We will do notices again.

11 V. CHAIR WILLIS: Okay.

12 MR. PAISON: Because when you -- the dates
13 that were in the original notices, we had a date
14 certain. We don't have a date certain now. So, when
15 they do come back, if it's, say, March, we will mail
16 notices again and put it in the agenda in the paper
17 again.

18 V. CHAIR WILLIS: And so, upon return in
19 March, we will then have a full hearing?

20 MR. PAISON: Yeah, the question is like the
21 public hearing was held. Technically, you don't have
22 to hold the public hearing again because it's the same
23 item. But we will do the notices again so the public
24 understands that that 30-day postponement did not lead
25 to an action, and that there will be another meeting

1 at which it'll be heard.

2 So, that's one of those ones where,
3 typically, you don't do the public hearing again
4 unless like, say, if they withdrew it and came back a
5 year later; yeah, we'd start over. But it's still
6 more or less the same project.

7 That's when, if the Chair feels that people
8 show up and they want to talk and you want to open it
9 for public comment because of the extraordinary
10 nature, you could do so.

11 CHAIR GRIFFIS: During that item?

12 MR. PAISON: During that item.

13 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Yeah.

14 MR. PAISON: But you're not obligated to
15 hold another public hearing. But you could take
16 public comment if you deem it, if the Chair deems it
17 appropriate. And it may be, if for some reason, we
18 have a number of people turn out who want to speak on
19 that item, and it's been ongoing for this long, I
20 would, if I were chairman, probably would make the
21 effort to have the public be heard on the item before
22 you vote on it.

23 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Okay. Or if there's a
24 substantial design change.

25 MR. PAISON: Yeah.

1 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Other than just --

2 MR. PAISON: But you wouldn't say you're
3 opening a public hearing; you would say you'll take --
4 you will take public -- additional public comment.

5 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Okay.

6 MS. BERNOUDY: Okay.

7 MR. PAISON: At that time.

8 CHAIR GRIFFIS: I think that sounds good.

9 V. CHAIR WILLIS: Thank you.

10 MR. PAISON: We do need a motion and support
11 for that postponement, though.

12 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Then, we have to do each --
13 each item, correct, in order?

14 MR. PAISON: Probably would be best.

15 CHAIR GRIFFIS: The rezoning and then
16 special use?

17 V. CHAIR WILLIS: Okay.

18 MR. MARTIN: My question would be, right
19 now, both items state public hearing.

20 MR. PAISON: Yep.

21 MR. MARTIN: But there would -- that would
22 only be public comment if necessary?

23 MR. PAISON: Yeah, the public hearing was
24 -- actually, I looked back at the minutes. The public
25 hearing was actually held on both items.

1 MS. GRUBER: We're not gonna take comment?

2 MR. MARTIN: So, yeah.

3 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Yeah, we're gonna vote to
4 postpone these.

5 MS. GRUBER: Oh, we're going to vote to
6 postpone?

7 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Yeah.

8 MS. GRUBER: Okay, yeah.

9 MR. PAISON: You're postponing action.

10 MS. GRUBER: That's exactly what I was --
11 okay.

12 MR. MARTIN: Okay. Just trying to clarify
13 for my own.

14 MR. PAISON: Yep. Yeah, I did -- because I
15 knew we held the public hearing on the rezoning. I
16 had to double check that we also held it on the
17 special land use. But I went back and looked through
18 the minutes and the recording, we did actually open
19 and close the public hearing on both items. So, that
20 was held.

21 CHAIR GRIFFIS: So, if there's a no
22 additional discussion or comments?

23 MS. BERNOUDY: No.

24 CHAIR GRIFFIS: We're gonna -- we're gonna
25 look for a motion to postpone to no date certain on

1 each of these items in order, you know, two separate
2 motions.

3 MS. BERNOUDY: I'll make that motion.

4 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Okay. So, we got a
5 favorable motion on the first item, PZR24-0013, by
6 Commissioner Bernoudy.

7 V. CHAIR WILLIS: Support.

8 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Supported by Commissioner
9 Willis of postponing to no date certain. All in
10 favor?

11 FULL COMMISSION: Aye.

12 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Any opposed?

13 (No response.)

14 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Okay. So, the first item is
15 postponed to no date certain. Same action on the
16 second item here, which is PSLU24-0021, looking for
17 another motion on that one.

18 MR. MARTIN: To motion -- so motioned.

19 MR. PAISON: Okay. So, moved.

20 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Okay. I have a favorable
21 motion to postpone to no date certain by Commissioner
22 Martin.

23 V. CHAIR WILLIS: Support.

24 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Supported by Commissioner
25 Willis. All in favor?

1 FULL COMMISSION: Aye.

2 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Any opposed?

3 (No response.)

4 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Okay. That item is also
5 postponed to no date certain while they figure out
6 their engineering.

7 All right. Next item, the 2024 Planning
8 Commission Annual Report.

9 MR. PAISON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As we
10 discussed at the earlier meeting, we presented the
11 kind of initial run on this. This is the annual
12 report required by from the Planning Enabling Act,
13 that the Planning Commission makes regarding the
14 activities of itself and the Planning Department to
15 the legislative body on an annual basis.

16 As noted here on the first slide, it just
17 lists the particular law that requires that annual
18 report. So, just reminding people, like, why do we do
19 this? It's a requirement of the law. It's also good
20 practice.

21 So, we're just going to go over kind of a
22 broad slate of what we do and what we've done this
23 year. As we know, the Planning Commission, this is
24 the body as it sits now with its current officers, and
25 then the staff. One of the things that came up in the

1 last discussion was it wasn't -- not everybody knew
2 what everybody did on the staff. So, I actually added
3 a little detail to this.

4 We've got City Planner/Planning Director
5 Croad and myself as the Deputy City Planner. I do
6 mostly non-administrative reviews, which are things
7 that go to City Council or Planning Commission. And
8 then, I also do a lot of Planning Commission, City
9 Council support, meeting prep for the city planner.

10 Sarah Mulally, you see her at the CIP
11 meetings. She helps run the CIP. That's her main
12 goal -- job is dealing with administrative reviews of
13 site plans; she's our lead person on that. And she
14 provides support to the Zoning Board of Appeals. She
15 writes the staff reports for commercial requests, and
16 she also organizes and manages the Capital Improvement
17 Program project, which is -- it's a lot. And she's
18 the one who preps the document that gives that real
19 professional look at the end and organizes it and
20 organizes all the departments to get their information
21 in.

22 Suzanne Yousif, our Sustainability Planner,
23 you probably like remember her name as Suzanne Hannah.
24 She got married this year, so new name. She's working
25 on our Sustainability Action Plan, and works on our

1 sustainability activities, kind of across the board.
2 She also works on our tree removal permitting and
3 wetland permitting and anything kind of more
4 environmentally related. I assist her with those
5 because of my landscape architecture background.

6 And then we have Alex, our Assistant City
7 Planner, who helps with the prep of this body, helps
8 with City Centre Advisory Board, Southfield Public
9 Arts Commission, grant writing. Alex kind of does
10 like whatever needs doing. He's our -- he's on
11 anything that needs getting done, and works also on
12 the non-administrative reviews with me.

13 And then, we have Lisa in our office. She's
14 the administrative assistant. She handles the
15 payroll. So, everybody, you know, your quarterly
16 payments, our payroll, handling accounts payable,
17 purchase orders, you know, all of that administrative
18 work, pretty much.

19 That's the Planning Department in a
20 nutshell. So, we're a small organization. We do a
21 lot of stuff, though. You know, we deal with,
22 actually, if you count this body and the City Council
23 and the City Centre Advisory Board and the Arts
24 Commission and the Zoning Board and the Sustainability
25 Advisory Board, we deal with six different boards

1 regularly. And then, we also deal with the
2 subcommittees of council, and sometimes the Wildlife
3 Commission and other bodies as well. So, we're a
4 pretty -- pretty busy group.

5 Now, we are looking at 2024's activities.
6 We had 29 Planning Commission meetings last year.
7 There were 12 study meetings, 13 regular meetings,
8 three long-range study meetings, and the one joint
9 visioning session with City Council in July. We did
10 eight City Centre Advisory Board meetings, 10 public
11 Arts Commission meetings, four Sustainability Advisory
12 Board meetings, and 14 Zoning Board of Appeal
13 meetings.

14 All those meetings have a lot of prep that
15 go into them, so we like to list that. I don't think
16 there's any other department that deals with that many
17 bodies and preparing that many meetings in the city,
18 honestly.

19 Looking at our land use projects, just kind
20 of a summary here. Nine standard rezonings, three
21 conditional rezonings, and six of the ODD, RUDD,
22 mixed-use corridor district rezonings, 26 special land
23 uses, 23 site plan reviews, six zoning amendments, and
24 97 administrative site plans.

25 So, that's, you know, we're looking at the

1 proposed value of development, you know, this year,
2 it's \$180 million. Last year, it was about
3 \$78 million. The previous year, \$300 million, but
4 that one's kind of an outlier because \$250 million of
5 that was just the Middlepointe development across the
6 street. And then, 2021 was \$174 million.

7 Normally, and as Mr. Martin had asked, we
8 added the administrative review amounts there, so they
9 would know, you know, that's, of that \$180 million,
10 almost \$24 million of that is adminis -- stuff we're
11 reviewing administratively, small projects, small site
12 improvements, smaller scale items.

13 And that, both the number of site
14 administrative site plans and that value will likely
15 increase next year because, you know, we delegated
16 more things to administrative review mid-year, when we
17 adopted that change to site plan review in July, that
18 became effective in August.

19 Just going over the zoning amendments we
20 did. The first one and biggest one had been in the
21 works for quite some time, was delegating site plan
22 review to this body and more to the City Planner for
23 administrative. That was a requirement for our
24 redevelopment-ready certification with the state.

25 One of the -- one of the kind of items that

1 was still holding us up -- which I will say, we've
2 actually gotten the green light that our
3 recertification for redevelopment-ready has been
4 tentatively approved. They haven't made the official
5 announcement or anything, but like our person at MADC
6 that manages our account said that as far as she's
7 concerned, we've completed everything. They're just
8 kind of waiting for final sign-offs in the hierarchy
9 of their organization.

10 Marijuana retailer hours, we expanded the
11 weekend hours from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. to match more or
12 less what was going on in surrounding communities for
13 the two retail outlets that we have in town. Security
14 fences, we permitted decorative security fences up to
15 eight feet tall, with the approval of the city
16 planner, in cases where they were warranted for, you
17 know, uses that required some additional security.

18 Beekeeping and backyard fowl, that one
19 started in October of '23, and we're almost done.
20 It's going back to council this -- in February, for
21 the general ordinance amendment and the zoning
22 amendment, and it would be effective in March. So
23 that one, finally almost done with that one.

24 The drive-aisle width in parking lots, that
25 was really just to clean up some inconsistent language

1 and just providing some more flexibility and reducing
2 the minimum requirements, so that we weren't requiring
3 more pavement that was really needed.

4 And then, the drive-thru restaurant
5 standards was just a cleanup of we had -- the
6 drive-thru restaurants were allowed in six different
7 commercial districts, and only two of them had these
8 weird special requirements, and even those weren't
9 consistent with each other. So, getting rid of those
10 made it the same across all those zoning districts.

11 And then, we had some highlights of the
12 projects you guys looked at this year. Obviously,
13 there's the Panda Express on Telegraph on an outlot
14 development. The Culvers, which is another outlook
15 development on Telegraph, that one got its ODD
16 approval last month, just working on the ODD agreement
17 now.

18 Wellspring housing development on Hooper,
19 over there off of Telegraph and Central Park
20 Boulevard, Civic Centre Boulevard -- Berg, rather.
21 That one is -- they're still working on the financing
22 on that one, because there's a stack of financing
23 required for that project, with state incentives. And
24 it's still -- it's proceeding. It's just there's a
25 lot of -- lot of hoops to jump through to get that one

1 finally financed and out of the ground. They're still
2 hopeful to commence construction this year, though.

3 The Tunnel 2 Towers Veterans Village on
4 Northwestern, former Holiday Inn Suites, that
5 conversion, they've already begun work on that. So,
6 that one was approved earlier in the year.

7 The Harpo Townhomes on Bush Street, that
8 rezoning was approved, and will be going forward.
9 There should be a site plan coming back to you in the
10 not too distant future on that one, for final
11 approvals of the layout. But the rezoning just became
12 effective, like the 23rd. Because, you know, they
13 -- the council approves it, then they enact it, then
14 it has to be -- then it has to wait 10 days, and then
15 it gets published. Then, it becomes effective. It's
16 kind of a chain of things that happen.

17 The El Car Wash approval is in place.
18 They're kind of where, I think they're working through
19 permitting now. I know they're getting -- looking to
20 get their bond in for their art. So, they're going to
21 be proceeding on that one this year for sure.

22 Drifter Vans, they're in operation. They,
23 you know, they were already operating within their
24 existing site. They've been able to scale up their
25 business. And from what I understand from our

1 business development person, they are doing quite
2 well.

3 Glassman Kia, the project hasn't commenced
4 yet. I don't, you know, that's one of those ones that
5 I don't know if they're still in negotiation with Kia
6 over like the final architecture of the building,
7 because I know there was some back and forth on that.
8 I don't think they've applied for any permits yet, but
9 my understanding is they still intend to do the
10 project, and it should commence in 2025.

11 The MUC, our first mixed-use corridor
12 district approval on 10 Mile, we met a few -- a couple
13 of weeks back with a local development group that's
14 now partnered with the property owner and the
15 architect that did the design work. They're going
16 through and kind of pricing things, and I would not be
17 surprised to see that project get rescoped a little
18 bit.

19 If it's a substantial change, it'll have to
20 go back through the process. If it's minor
21 modification, we might be able to do it administratively.
22 But now that they've actually got like a local, like a
23 southeast Michigan developer and construction team on
24 board, and they're looking to actually price things and
25 figure out financing, we'll see how that -- how that

1 proceeds. But at least we do know that they've brought
2 partners on who are actually looking to build. So,
3 that's promising.

4 The Lahser Woods Park dog park, the pathways
5 have gone in. The dog park is going in this year, is
6 my understanding. So, we should see, and I think the
7 initial parking, the phase one parking lot improvements
8 are going in. So, we should see that up and running at
9 some point this year.

10 And then, a few other items, the Capital
11 Improvement Plan that we organize and handle every
12 year, Sarah handles that. That's, you know, that's
13 kind of a big deal that feeds right into the budget,
14 helps us plan for longer term capital spending.

15 The LTU Summer Camp, placemaking through
16 landscape design, that we do every year as like an
17 outreach and educational item, is planned to occur
18 again this year if we get enough students signed up.

19 Nine Mile Greenway Corridor, the task force
20 has been formed under the Oakland County Parks and
21 Rec. They've got a branding campaign that's pretty
22 much nearing completion now. The Prescott to Plum
23 Howell Trail segment has been installed.

24 The Evergreen to Southfield Road Trail
25 segment has TAP grant funding, but due to some delays

1 in getting like environmental clearances and other
2 clearances and easement clearance, like right-of-way
3 clearances, it's likely that won't actually be built
4 this year, or it'll be built next year, which they do
5 have like until 2027 to build it. But it's just that
6 we don't have enough clearances to go out for the
7 spring bid in March, so they have to bid it in fall
8 and build it in the spring of 2026.

9 So, unfortunately, we'd hoped that it would
10 be under construction this spring, but it looks like
11 because of, we don't -- because it's federal money, we
12 don't have all the boxes checked to get clearance on
13 that yet.

14 It's not that the TAP grant has been taken
15 back. It's just, you know, there's two biddings that
16 happen with MDOT in the -- that in, you know, that
17 occur in the different points of the year, and this is
18 the bidding for the spring, and we're not going to
19 make that, based on -- well, we're still waiting for
20 clearances from the feds and MDOT.

21 We do have a TAP grant application in for
22 the north -- the section of Nine Mile between
23 Northwestern Highway and Greenfield. We think we have
24 a very strong application there. We have really good
25 information and data supporting it. So, we're hoping

1 to get another TAP grant.

2 And then, really the only remaining big
3 piece will be that bridge across the mixing bowl of
4 freeways. So, we're hopeful, if we can get the trail
5 built on either side of it, then the logic behind
6 getting funding to do the bridge becomes, you know,
7 almost undeniably compelling if the funds are
8 available out there for grant monies.

9 We had some placemaking efforts. We got new
10 art installations this year. The Key by LTU, which is
11 the kind of the tall, skinny one there. Brothers,
12 which is the bottom right, by the fire station at Nine
13 Mile and Beech, some additional murals.

14 We also started a process of doing a
15 Greenfield Gateway Beautification, kind of as an
16 adjunct to the Northland development and as a gateway
17 to the city. So, you see at the top right, the
18 Greenfield Gateway signage, there's also banners.
19 Landscaping has now been put around those signs, and
20 there's plans to actually extend that, do additional
21 landscaping, but extend that all the way up. It was
22 from 8 to Nine Mile, but they want to actually, with
23 Oak Park, we want to do it up to 10 Mile at this
24 point. So, it's going to be expanded again next year
25 if we can get the funding in place for it.

1 And then, we also did some additional bus
2 stop improvements, 13 bus stop enhancements, pavement,
3 benches, and trash bins. We did some more solar
4 bollards along the City Centre Trail. We had put in,
5 I believe, 20 in '23. And then, those were working
6 really well, so we did another 10 to make that area a
7 nice lit path.

8 And then, we did some community entry signs
9 where there was -- you were entering Southfield and
10 there was no indicator you were coming across the
11 border. So, up in the top right there, the new
12 "Welcome to Southfield" signs that were added.

13 We'll be doing some more of those this year,
14 correct, Alex?

15 MR. BOLLIN: Yeah.

16 MR. PAISON: Yeah. I think we'll have all
17 the entrances pretty well covered after this year.

18 Sustainability highlights, the Sustainability
19 Action Plan, the framework is established, the full
20 draft is nearing preparation. We have engaged a public
21 engagement consultant, who's going to work with the
22 taking the draft of the plan out and getting public
23 feedback for it. That's kicking off next week.

24 The Food Waste Elimination Study was
25 actually completed. It's being presented to council

1 next Monday, so that, they're gonna be looking at.
2 And they've already gotten, the basis of the draft
3 plan that hasn't been adopted yet, they've already
4 gotten -- the nonprofit has gotten a grant to try to
5 pilot some different ways of maybe getting this
6 composting food-waste reduction into like multifamily
7 condos and apartments.

8 They're going to be piloting a potential,
9 couple of different potential methods: big belly
10 compactor trash cans are designed for that, or -- and
11 also these inhouse mills that reduce it down to
12 smaller amounts. So, it's interesting that that one
13 is -- and that's all grant funded, and it's gonna be
14 managed by the nonprofit. We're just helping them
15 kind of identify where to put those.

16 Lawrence Tech University collaborations.
17 Make Food Not Waste is working with the vending -- the
18 dining hall vendors, trying to get the food waste out
19 of LTU reduced. They -- we've assisted graduate
20 student thesis reviews and presentations. We've
21 advocated for some grant funding for university on
22 their programs, working with their newly formed
23 Environmental Alliance, and ongoing volunteer work
24 with the summer camp and civil engineering
25 perspectives course. So, we're very engaged with LTU,

1 both on planning and sustainability, as one of our,
2 you know, main institutions here in the city center.

3 Education and outreach. We have the
4 reusable grocery bags, which we now have a new version
5 of, that we're using out. We're gonna get some more
6 bamboo kitchen utensils we've distributed in the past.
7 And we've had articles in the City of Southfield
8 Source on sustainability. And our sustainability plan
9 has been working on getting some videos done, so they
10 can be messaged on Cable 15.

11 And then, we've gotten some certifications
12 this year. Charging Smart Program Bronze Designation
13 because of our updated ordinances and policies related
14 to EV chargers and encouraging them, and having
15 reasonable rules for them to make it like more
16 transparent and easy for people to deploy them and
17 know how to deploy them here.

18 And then, we have the Michigan Green
19 Communities Challenge Gold Designation, which that was
20 our first year we got all the way to gold. So, we
21 looked at all the things we've been doing and trying
22 to do, and it turned out we were -- we were ahead of
23 many of our peers, actually.

24 And then, the United States Conference of
25 Mayors' Climate Protection Award, got an honorable

1 mention here for Mayor Siver for the city of
2 Southfield.

3 So, the sustainable efforts we're making
4 really are, like we have actually now get contacted by
5 some of our neighboring communities, wanting to know,
6 like, learn from us. We're actually ahead of the ball
7 on that. How are we doing things? What did we learn?
8 What are our lessons learned? So we're, this is one
9 of the areas that we're like, kind of a little bit
10 ahead of our peers in this region.

11 And then, we did get some grant awards and
12 applications. We wanted to feature this, because
13 there's always this question like, are we applying for
14 grants? Well, yeah. Yeah, we apply for grants.
15 We're putting in a grant application, I would say,
16 almost every month, as much as we can do it.

17 We got a Detroit Institute of Arts Partners
18 in Public Art Mural Grant, that's going to go -- the
19 mural is going to go on the ice arena. We just met
20 with them today for the next step of that. That's
21 going to happen this year.

22 We got a -- we did apply for the
23 Reconnecting Communities Grant. We tried to go for
24 the money for the big bridge across the freeways, for
25 the Nine Mile Trail, but that was a limited pool of

1 money, and there were a lot of really sophisticated
2 applications from larger cities. And we just didn't
3 make the cut in that round, unfortunately. It would
4 have been nice, but, you know, if you don't ask, you
5 don't -- hey, if you don't play, you don't win, right?

6 MR. MARTIN: That's right.

7 MR. PAISON: We did get our DTE Energy tree
8 planting grant. That's one we apply for most years,
9 we usually get it. It's an extra \$4000 of trees that
10 we plant when we do our tree plantings in the spring.

11 The Keep Michigan Beautiful grant is a small
12 grant, but it's a fairly easy one to get and
13 administer, and we use it -- like last year, we used
14 it to pay for part of the pollinator garden at the
15 butterfly sculpture. So, we used -- we leverage those
16 dollars into existing projects.

17 We did get a technical assistance award from
18 the Michigan Infrastructure Office. They did a like a
19 cost-benefit analysis of like the Nine Mile pathway
20 that went through all of the various ways in which
21 that was actually like a benefit, and the kind of
22 benefits it brought.

23 And they said like a good project for them
24 typically scores like a one or two. That Nine Mile
25 pathway section that we were looking at scored like a

1 nine when they ran the numbers on it. Like we were --
2 they'd almost never seen a project score that high.
3 That's one of the reasons we think we might have a
4 good shot at that TAP grant for doing that next
5 section, because we have this professionally prepared
6 analysis now that shows the amount of benefit,
7 community benefit, that comes from that project.

8 Oakland County Access to Transit Program,
9 that was the award that Alex worked on that we got
10 \$200 grand to do additional benches and trash cans and
11 trash cans and bus stop improvements, on top of the
12 \$100,000 we usually do. So, we're going to do like
13 three times as much of that in '24. He's -- you're
14 working on the bids right now --

15 MR. BOLLIN: Yep.

16 MR. PAISON: -- to get that out so that we
17 can get that stuff under construction in the spring.
18 And then, the '25 Transportation Alternatives Grant,
19 -- that's that Nine Mile corridor south side from
20 Evergreen to Southfield -- that's awarded. That's one
21 we got. So, and that's a big one. That's, you know,
22 that's 80 percent of the construction cost of that
23 mile of trail. Those are -- those are big grant
24 dollars. So, we -- the more of those we can get.
25 Many of our bigger trail segments have been built with

1 TAP grants. That's where that pool of money is coming
2 for.

3 And then, we get into the staff and
4 training. You know, we go annual, the EPA annual
5 conference. Planner Croad usually goes to the
6 national conference every year or every other year.
7 He was at Minneapolis last year. They have a variety
8 of courses on a bunch of different topics.

9 And then, we also were looking at the -- we
10 have all kind of -- many of us sat through the 2024
11 Trend Report for planners. I actually just sat
12 through the 2025 one that they just released, or
13 they're just releasing this week.

14 Interesting stuff, because like the
15 highlights, I think it was seven. The actual Trend
16 Report has like 100 items. Like it's a substantial
17 Trend Report. There's a lot of meat in there. Might
18 even be worth it if we had a slow -- study meeting
19 actually going over that in a little more detail.

20 Michigan Association of Planning, Alex and
21 Sarah went to that this last year. A number of topics
22 covered there, anything from housing, zoning reform,
23 design practices, sustainability.

24 The Michigan Association of Planning spring
25 institute, which was on resilience, community

1 resilience. The Michigan Association of Planning
2 Transportation Bonanza was about building healthy
3 community, building communities for health and
4 accessibility, specifically focused on how you plan
5 your transportation system.

6 And then, a training on the Michigan Zoning
7 Atlas. There's a pilot for that, where they're
8 looking at having an interactive GIS Zoning Atlas for
9 the whole state, where developers could literally go
10 and go, where can I build duplexes in this area? And
11 it would actually show you those locations and whether
12 or not they are special approvals or they're by right,
13 if there's any other restrictions.

14 It was interesting. I sat through that one,
15 and Grand Rapids did that because they were figuring
16 out -- they figured out they had this huge gap between
17 the amount of housing they needed in the next 10, 20
18 years, and the amount of housing they were producing.
19 And the Zoning Atlas helped them like figure out why,
20 like what the barriers were to getting there. Like,
21 you know, they're producing say, 10,000 -- they were
22 going to produce 10,000 units over the next 20 years,
23 but they need like 50 based on the projections they've
24 got. And they really had to think about like where
25 could they focus that, and what did they need to do to

1 make that happen. So, it has its uses. It's
2 interesting.

3 The International Council of Shopping
4 Centers, Planner Croad goes there with the business
5 development team to talk to potential developers, in
6 his case as the city planner, like about our processes
7 and what approvals look like.

8 State of Michigan, we do a variety of
9 training with them, a lot of training with EGLE on
10 sustainability or environmental items and
11 redevelopment-ready communities.

12 Oakland County, particularly their planning,
13 zoning, and land use, the planners' gatherings, they
14 do a variety of focus topics that are known to be kind
15 of high priorities in Oakland County. Once again,
16 workforce development, housing, economic outlook, Nine
17 Mile Task Force.

18 National Council of Architectural
19 Registration Boards, we had our chair attend some
20 training there on building design and construction.

21 So we do, like we will have training with
22 the board, as well as the staff. We like to list all
23 that. We get, and it has been noted in previous
24 presentations to council, like that we do a lot of
25 training, but really there's a lot to keep track -- up

1 to -- up to date on. You kind of got to start, you do
2 have to pay attention.

3 So, we looked at the '25 Planning Commission
4 initiatives. This was discussed with the body a
5 couple of times, and these are the things we're
6 looking at trying to move this year.

7 For housing zoning amendments. Looking at
8 those accessory dwelling units and tiny homes, looking
9 at infill housing options in single-family districts;
10 one- to four-unit buildings, you know, your duplexes,
11 tris and quads; and then, missing middle housing,
12 which is kind of everything between the larger
13 apartment complexes and the quads.

14 Like we don't, you know, like we're kind of
15 a built-out community. We need to start thinking
16 about how we're going to do infill and redevelopment,
17 not just new development because we're mostly built
18 out for that first round.

19 Then, reuse/redevelopment. You know, more
20 mixed-use options; flexibility in development
21 standards; discretion in development approval process,
22 you know, give more discretion to the council if
23 they're approving something, or to this body if
24 they're approving it, or to the city planner if he's
25 approving it; to be able to maybe, without having to

1 go to the Zoning Board for a waiver, maybe there's a
2 certain amount of flexibility built into the code that
3 allows the approving site plan approval body to go,
4 yeah, we can approve it with this deviation without
5 going through a whole 'nother process.

6 Other zoning amendments we're looking at,
7 and we discussed these earlier last year, but I want
8 to circle back to them. Consolidation of similar
9 commercial districts to simplify and streamline the
10 ordinance. You know, as we noted in some of the data
11 analysis I did, a lot of our -- there are zoning
12 districts that only have a handful of properties zoned
13 that, and the differences between those districts are
14 very small. It might make sense to have -- just
15 consolidate them into fewer districts, instead of
16 having, I think it's eight or nine commercial
17 districts, have like three or four, and make them more
18 flexible so that reuse and redevelopment can happen
19 more organically and not be so process-cumbersome.

20 Consolidation of similar to residential
21 districts, we did note the single-family districts.
22 We've got five of those, actually six, six of those.
23 And most of them, if you look at the schedule of
24 regulations, have almost exactly the same
25 requirements. Like, there's only like three really

1 just differences, and they're pretty minor.

2 So, that would be another potential option
3 is like the single-family district could almost
4 collapse from six down to two or three, and still
5 serve the same purpose and have really the same rules.
6 But it would simplify the zoning map and make things a
7 little easier, make the code a little more compact and
8 easier to follow for people.

9 Public benefit zoning amendments. That's
10 been under discussion, I guess, for a few years. It's
11 another one of those conversations we want to have
12 with council, because we're not quite sure what
13 they're looking for there, because we've had -- what
14 dialog has been had with that, is it just industrial
15 zones? Is it commercial? Is it large residential?
16 Like what are they looking for there? What kind of
17 benefit analysis are they looking for? Like that's
18 one of those ones of like, yeah, we could probably do
19 that, but what does it look like in Southfield?

20 It's still pretty undefined. It's hard to
21 write an ordinance amendment for something that's not
22 -- you don't understand what the desired outcome is.
23 So, in my case, I don't even know where to start
24 drafting that, because I don't know exactly what it is
25 they want to accomplish. So, I think we need to have

1 more dialog with council to find out what their goals
2 are, and then once we understand the goal, we can
3 maybe figure out if there's a way to do that that fits
4 within the law.

5 Trails. Once again, City Centre Trail,
6 additional placemaking and solar lights. Nine Mile
7 Greenway corridor, fill those gaps and also layer in
8 some trees and benches, some additional improvements.
9 And Rouge River trail access along the Valley View
10 trail, I know Planner Croad is now in discussions with
11 Oakland County Parks because they're interested in
12 doing some more projects with us in Southfield, after
13 doing, you know, with Beech Woods and some of the
14 other projects they've done, to serve the population
15 down here.

16 And that's one that like we would really
17 need some assistance to make that happen. It's like,
18 it could be two miles of trail, of like nice nature
19 trail through like the Rouge River corridor. But
20 there's freeways you have to get under in a couple of
21 spots, and that really gets engineering intensive,
22 where you gotta like build some things to make that
23 happen. And that's where the price tag really comes
24 in, is when you interact with those freeways.

25 And if you want to make it ADA accessible,

1 some additional engineering has to happen to get those
2 grades to work. But we had an initial study done by
3 OHM, which sort of scoped what would be needed to do
4 to a construction design and what they thought the
5 approximate cost of the project would be. So, we're
6 going to start conversations with Oakland County Parks
7 to see if we can get them to partner with us on that.

8 Greenfield Road beautification phase two, as
9 we discussed, some additional layering on that Eight
10 to Nine Mile, expand up to 10 Mile. The dog park at
11 Lahser Woods, you know, we want to get that one moved
12 and done, like we're going to keep poking Parks and
13 Rec and provide them whatever they support they need
14 from us to make that happen.

15 And Redevelopment Ready Recertification,
16 nearly complete. We've gotten the unofficial
17 approval, but we haven't gotten the official one yet.
18 But now that we have everything in and we have the
19 unofficial approval, that was all due by the end of
20 the year. It was all in by the end of the year, so we
21 should be in good shape.

22 The seven need to know trends, do you know
23 want to talk about these, Alex?

24 MR. BOLLIN: Yeah. So, the seven need to
25 know trends, as he mentioned earlier, these are just

1 the seven highlights out of about 100. As we talked
2 about with the middle -- missing middle housing. We
3 have more housing hurdles, insurance costs, as we see
4 in California and in the south from hurricane season.
5 That's going to continue to go up. We're going to
6 continue to see the climate impacts on housing and
7 population migration as that takes effect.

8 Public spaces for dogs, as we just talked
9 about, with the expansion of dog parks in the city.
10 People are wanting more of a third place, instead of
11 what used to be going to the bar as your third place,
12 now they want like to go to the dog park to meet with
13 their friends and have their dog child be able to
14 play.

15 As we all know, and again, evidenced by the
16 fires in California, that water is precious and it's,
17 you know, limited in some areas. We're lucky here.
18 We've got five fresh-water lakes. As that comes into
19 more people's minds, I'm estimating that more people
20 are going to be coming to Michigan in the future.

21 As hybrid and work from home evolves, you
22 know, would we see a post work world with AI coming
23 more to the mainstream? There has been talk of a
24 four-day work week for a while; that is gaining some
25 steam. Digital fatigue and pushbacks are setting in.

1 People are putting down their phones, getting away
2 from social media, touching grass, and enjoying life.

3 Fungus is making its 15 minutes of fame. I
4 didn't really touch on this a whole lot, but it's just
5 -- it's getting more popular. Mushrooms in your food
6 -- yeah.

7 MR. PAISON: Yeah, detoxification of soils.
8 Apparently it can -- some mushrooms can actually --
9 fungus can actually digest PFAS and break it down into
10 all safe stuff. So, they're finding like fungus may
11 be a good way to do environmental remediation. It's
12 getting into various foodstuffs, and they are even
13 looking at ways to use the fibers to do construction
14 materials and to make biofuels.

15 So, there is -- and fungus is like literally
16 everywhere. Like it's one of those things that's like
17 in every ecosystem and in way more abundance than most
18 people realize. There's almost, because it's a --
19 it's a decomposer, almost anything where there are
20 other living things, there are funguses part of the
21 decomposition cycle.

22 So, it's an interesting and robust group of
23 not really plants exactly, because they're not
24 photosynthetic. They're fungus. They're their own
25 thing. But yeah, that one is an interesting one.

1 And on the dog space, what I would note, one
2 of the big things there is like they actually showed,
3 as we were watching the presentation, that the table
4 of like number of household with pets has been going
5 up, and the number of households with children has
6 been going down.

7 MR. MARTIN: Children is going down, yeah.

8 MR. PAISON: And like a year or two ago, it
9 crossed, and now there are more households with pets
10 than there are households with children. So, it's
11 really kind of a -- and that trend doesn't look like
12 it's, like it's not flattening out. It's pretty much
13 doing this (indicating). Like it's going to continue
14 for a while.

15 We actually have a project come in next
16 month for a dog bar, like a bar that has a dog park
17 kind of built into it. There's one in Detroit. It's
18 called Barkside, if you want to look it up on online.
19 But they want to open one in Southfield. So, that
20 should be interesting.

21 MR. MARTIN: Yeah.

22 MR. PAISON: It's a special land use because
23 it's a bar, but it's basically a bar with like a dog
24 park attached to it. It's an interesting concept. I
25 think it might be pretty popular. Apparently, they do

1 really well in Detroit.

2 And then, the last item is that, I mean
3 pretty obvious, balancing green energy demand with
4 indigenous rights. You hear it with the pipeline
5 stuff, also green energy. A lot of the green energy
6 systems in our electronics require mining rare earth
7 elements. And that kind of mining is kind of
8 destructive, and the demand has gone up. They're
9 slating the demand is going to go up at least 30
10 percent in the next decade for those rare earth
11 elements, and that's after going up 10 percent just in
12 the last 10 years.

13 So, it's pretty big, like they're looking
14 for all the rare earth elements that go into our
15 modern electronics. And additionally, I heard
16 mentioned like the coming back of nuclear power is
17 putting another demand on uranium, which I hadn't
18 really thought about. And even copper is another one
19 that they're looking for sources on that again,
20 because there's so much usage of it.

21 So, I think we're looking at like between
22 the inputs into green energy, like solar panels and
23 whatnot, and then also, you know, the -- just the way
24 you move that energy around across the native lands
25 is, you know, one of those issues that perennially

1 comes up. So, it's likely to be more of a flash point
2 going forward.

3 We are looking today for a resolution
4 approving the report, and then referring it to the
5 City Council if it's acceptable in the form that we've
6 presented it. And then, we can -- I can take it and
7 present it to council on the 10th. In their -- in
8 their case, it's mostly a receive and file, because
9 this is your report. So, you actually don't make a
10 recommendation on adoption, you act on it. It's the
11 Planning Commission's report that then you refer to
12 council.

13 CHAIR GRIFFIS: All right, thank you. Any
14 further discussion on the report? Commissioner
15 Martin?

16 MR. MARTIN: I like the report. I think
17 it's very good. The full presentation, the way that
18 it was set out in the thing was very important, and I
19 thought it was very good.

20 I have questions, but they're not related to
21 the report. There's information in the report that --

22 MR. PAISON: Raised questions?

23 MR. MARTIN: Yeah, they raised questions,
24 but.

25 MR. PAISON: Maybe you'll -- hmm.

1 MR. MARTIN: But I think the report is good.

2 MS. BERNOUDY: Yeah.

3 MR. MARTIN: I think it's -- I think it's
4 worthy and very good, and I think it should be sent on
5 to the City Council.

6 MS. BERNOUDY: Absolutely.

7 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Commissioner Willis?

8 V. CHAIR WILLIS: Following Commissioner
9 Martin's statement, I agree wholeheartedly. And
10 again, kudos on the report.

11 MS. BERNOUDY: Absolutely.

12 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Commissioner Gruber?

13 MS. GRUBER: Ditto.

14 MR. PAISON: Thanks.

15 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Commissioner Bernoudy?

16 MS. BERNOUDY: Yeah, excellent report, thank
17 you.

18 MR. PAISON: Thanks.

19 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Yeah, very good job. That's
20 good, I guess, the projects keep getting bigger and
21 bigger over the years. There's actually things that
22 are done so you can -- you got momentum now of art and
23 trails. And yeah, it's kind of hard to convince
24 somebody to put out public art or pay for a trail, I
25 know, 13, 14 years ago, but now it's a pretty robust

1 system that's --

2 MR. PAISON: Yeah, we don't even get much
3 pushback on the art requirement anymore.

4 CHAIR GRIFFIS: No?

5 MR. PAISON: Like they -- because they can
6 see it.

7 MR. MARTIN: Yes.

8 MR. PAISON: They can see it's a thing.

9 CHAIR GRIFFIS: It's everywhere.

10 MR. PAISON: They're not the first person,
11 you know. It's interesting, because either they're
12 like, oh yeah, we'd like to do that, that would make
13 our place really stand out, or they're like, no, I get
14 it. Yeah, we'll contribute to the art fund. We don't
15 really want to do it on our site, but we're fine with
16 throwing our art fund money in.

17 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Okay.

18 MR. PAISON: So, one way or the other, art
19 gets put in.

20 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Yeah, that's great. Nice
21 job. Commissioner Martin?

22 MR. MARTIN: I do have one -- one other
23 thought. I don't remember the development costs for
24 the Northland project.

25 MR. PAISON: Oh, yeah.

1 MR. MARTIN: But I think that is something
2 we should always be able to report, what our major
3 goals are, the development costs for Northland. I
4 know we've come up and we've had, you know, with
5 Middlepointe, we come up with large -- larger project
6 development costs.

7 MR. PAISON: Yeah.

8 MR. MARTIN: But I think we need to hang
9 that star rock there with Northland each and every
10 year.

11 MR. PAISON: Yeah, we've got a meeting on
12 that this Friday. I could -- I could ask and see if
13 anybody's got updated numbers. Because if I look back
14 at the original application from the first ODD, it's
15 going to be dated.

16 MR. MARTIN: Yeah.

17 MR. PAISON: I mean, I can reference that.
18 But I, you know, I talk to the developer somewhat
19 regularly, dealing with his stuff. So, if he's got an
20 updated, you know, number that he's telling funders or
21 loan people or whatever he's using in his pro formas,
22 maybe I can get kind of an updated scope and scale.
23 Because obviously, the project's been going long -- on
24 long enough that inflation has obviously affected the
25 number.

1 MR. MARTIN: Yeah, just -- just my thought --

2 MR. PAISON: Yeah.

3 MS. BERNOUDY: Yeah.

4 MR. MARTIN: -- is, you know, that's such a
5 big number that you have there to show, you know,
6 we're still working to get there again.

7 MR. PAISON: Oh, yeah.

8 MR. MARTIN: Yeah, that's all. But I think
9 it's an excellent report.

10 MR. PAISON: To that point, I was talking to
11 the DDA director today, and the DDA now is actually
12 like collecting tax capture again because the Costco
13 went in. Like they finally, they were underwater for
14 a while.

15 MR. MARTIN: Yeah.

16 MR. PAISON: But now there's enough taxable
17 value from the original base when they established the
18 DDA, that they're actually collecting an increment now
19 because of Costco. It's not a ton of money, but like
20 it's finally they're in positive territory.

21 MR. MARTIN: Yeah.

22 MR. PAISON: And as those two buildings on
23 Greenfield come online and get occupied, that'll bring
24 them further, and then they'll be able to do more. I
25 mean, they're working on a strategic plan, the DDA

1 right now, to try to update that. Because the last
2 one they did was like, it was the 2013 to 2015, I
3 think, or 2018. So, it hasn't been updated in a
4 little while. So, they're updating that and looking
5 at, you know, what they can do short term with the
6 resources they have, but longer term as more resources
7 become available.

8 So, that is -- that's good initiative on
9 their part, because there's some areas, like along
10 Eight Mile, that are part of the DDA, like between
11 Southfield and Northwestern, that stretch of kind of
12 little office buildings along Eight Mile is part of
13 the DDA, but it's really not doing anything.

14 MR. MARTIN: Yeah.

15 MR. PAISON: And there's some discussion
16 about what we can do to maybe jump start that area a
17 little bit. So, yeah, no, I think you're right.
18 There's a lot of, there's progress there. Like the
19 fact that the DDA went cash positive this year, to me,
20 that's a huge -- like that's a -- that's a tipping
21 point. So, and I think the Costco is adding momentum
22 in that area. So, yeah, no, absolutely. I'll see
23 what I can dig up on the Northland stuff.

24 CHAIR GRIFFIS: If there's no further
25 discussion, we're looking for a motion to adopt and

1 refer the annual report to the City Council.

2 MS. BERNOUDY: I'd like to make that motion.

3 CHAIR GRIFFIS: All right.

4 MR. MARTIN: Second.

5 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Favorable motion by
6 Commissioner Bernoudy, second by Commissioner Martin.

7 All in favor?

8 FULL COMMISSION: Aye.

9 CHAIR GRIFFIS: All right. That proceeds on
10 to City Council.

11 Meeting minutes from December 4th and
12 December 18th.

13 MR. MARTIN: Motion to approve the -- I just
14 lost the pages -- the minutes for -- the study meeting
15 minutes for December 4 and regular meeting minutes for
16 December 8 -- 18th.

17 V. CHAIR WILLIS: Support.

18 CHAIR GRIFFIS: All right. I've got a
19 favorable motion on the minutes by Commissioner
20 Martin, supported by Commissioner Willis. All in
21 favor?

22 FULL COMMISSION: Aye.

23 CHAIR GRIFFIS: All right. Minutes proceed.

24 Now, we have the public comment portion of
25 the meeting. Any members of the public who wish to

1 speak, please come forward, state your name and
2 address for the record. You'll have three minutes to
3 speak.

4 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Name is Garland McWilliams.
5 I live on Pennsylvania Street off of Greenfield.

6 And my concern was, and you kind of brushed
7 on it a little bit. In fact, I have two things I want
8 to bring up. The Northland project, you know, I drive
9 by there, you know, quite often and everything, and
10 it's been going on for a few years now. And I was
11 wondering, when is that going to be completed, you
12 know? I mean, it's been a long time, you know.

13 I don't have any other places to shop
14 anymore. I got to go to another city to shop and
15 everything. And when Northland was there, I really
16 appreciated, you know, the convenience of going to
17 Northland. And I see a lot of other projects are
18 going on in the city, and that's commendable. But I'd
19 just like to know when is going to get done.

20 Next thing I want to talk about, bring up,
21 is the theaters on 12 Mile and Telegraph there.
22 What's going to become of those? They've been vacant
23 for a number of years now. And I, you know, I haven't
24 heard anything about it. I used to go to the theater,
25 I had some place to go to, you know. And now there's,

1 I got to go to some other city to see a movie.

2 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Absolutely.

3 MS. BERNOUDY: Yeah.

4 CHAIR GRIFFIS: I think we do have some info
5 on that. Any other questions while you're here? And
6 we'll let the Planning Department give you some better
7 dates than I can remember.

8 MR. PAISON: Yeah.

9 CHAIR GRIFFIS: I know Northland is a big
10 one.

11 MR. PAISON: Yeah, I mean that technically,
12 for full build out for all the phases of Northland,
13 you could be talking another decade or two. The two
14 buildings on Greenfield that are under construction
15 are supposed to be completed and beginning occupancy
16 this year. So, those two will be done. And then,
17 they're supposed to commence construction on the next
18 two buildings along Greenfield also this year.

19 So, ideally, the four buildings along
20 Greenfield, which will have commercial on the ground
21 floor and then apartments above, within the next few
22 years, those will be complete and occupied.
23 Hopefully, the first two buildings will be complete
24 occupied by the end of this year, and the second two
25 buildings by the end of next year.

1 And then, there's like the big center
2 building where the mall used to be, that would be --
3 that's another phase. It's a multi-phase project.
4 So, that one, and there's buildings that go behind the
5 Greenfield buildings as well. My understanding is,
6 just because of the scale of the project being built
7 by in phases, I would be surprised if, as a whole,
8 completely done, developer is out of there in less
9 than 10 years, just because it is such a huge project.

10 And you gotta remember, like that project
11 kicked off, and then the pandemic happened, and then
12 the supply chain problems happened. And it kind of
13 derailed the thing for a couple of years. So, it's
14 moving along. We're going to have those first couple
15 of buildings open and occupied this year, if all
16 continues to go.

17 But it's -- and the Costco, the thing about
18 Costco is like Costco came in with their own general
19 contractor and built that Costco. The developer sold
20 them that piece, and they built, the Costco guys built
21 that themselves. So, that was a completely different
22 entity that built that.

23 And Costco is like a global corporation.
24 They've got fast-track contractors who literally just
25 work for them, that they go -- like the general

1 contractor who ran Costco, he travels from place to
2 place building Costcos. He just goes, like wherever
3 Costco sends him, he goes and builds a Costco. That's
4 all he does. He just builds Costcos.

5 So, that's kind of what Costco can do. When
6 you're a Costco, you can do that. You're like one of
7 the biggest corporations doing retail. But yeah,
8 that's probably that -- it's a huge project, so it's
9 going to take a few years to get built out.

10 The theaters, the one on 12 Mile, that's the
11 one that was bought by, I think, the Triumph Church.

12 (Crosstalk.)

13 MS. GRUBER: The AMC, yeah.

14 MS. BERNOUDY: The church.

15 MR. PAISON: Yeah, and that one, for a
16 while, they were trying to stick tenants in there, but
17 without doing any of the stuff to fix the building.
18 Now, it sounds like they might be trying to sell it.
19 If they sell it, then maybe somebody would do
20 something with it. But the church was just going to
21 make it into a church, but like they haven't done it.
22 They bought it and just sat on it. They haven't done
23 anything with it.

24 MR. MCWILLIAMS: They did buy it?

25 MR. PAISON: They did buy it. Oh yeah, they

1 bought it a few years back. That's why it's been
2 sitting vacant like that is because it was not on the
3 market anymore. The church bought it, and then they
4 just sat on it. And I don't know what their thinking
5 is, if they were storing, you know, if they were
6 parking money there, if they thought they were going
7 to do another church there.

8 I don't, you know, I don't -- I don't really
9 know. I don't know what their thoughts were. They
10 don't -- they don't tell us what their business plan
11 is. They just go buy property, then we find out when
12 they file their property transfer affidavit that they
13 bought it. So, and we can't stop them from buying it.
14 That's a free trade between two private entities.

15 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Yeah.

16 MR. PAISON: If Star -- if AMC was willing
17 to sell it to them, and they were willing to pay the
18 price, and they're not -- we can't force them to
19 occupy it. We can't force them to sell it. We can
20 only force them to do property maintenance. That's
21 all we can force them to do.

22 So, yes, would like to see another theater
23 or a redevelopment. Like, if it's not going to be a
24 theater, knock it down. That's a lot of land, like
25 valuable land, in a really high visibility location,

1 that could be something.

2 MS. BERNOUDY: Yeah.

3 MR. PAISON: So, we're -- we have encouraged
4 all the parties involved, like yes, we'd support a
5 theater. We'd also support redevelopment of the
6 property to something new for Southfield; retail,
7 maybe a theater and retail, you know, maybe it could
8 be a Dave and Busters. I don't know, something, build
9 something there. But once again, we don't control the
10 property, so there's only so much we can do with that,
11 other than make them do property maintenance. It's a
12 code enforcement.

13 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Is -- and there's no kind
14 of pressure we can put on people to fix it?

15 MR. PAISON: Well, because they're not
16 occupying it as a church, we have not given them
17 tax-exempt status, so they've had to pay taxes on the
18 property. So that -- and we, when we do go out there,
19 code enforcement goes out there and makes them clean
20 the landscaping, remove the litter, you know, remove
21 dumping on the property; that's all legally we can do
22 is make them do property maintenance and pay their
23 taxes.

24 MR. MCWILLIAMS: And with Northland, it's
25 going to be something like 10 years?

1 MR. PAISON: Yeah, Northland is huge.
2 There's like 300 acres there.

3 MR. MCWILLIAMS: I know, but didn't they --
4 didn't they realize that when they started?

5 MR. PAISON: Yeah, no, it was always a
6 multi-phase plan that could take up to two decades.
7 It was always a multi-phase plan that could take up to
8 20 years. The market can't actually absorb that much
9 stuff that fast. You have to bring it on at a pace.
10 If you try to dump 3000 apartments in the market at
11 once, it can't absorb it. But if you had a few
12 hundred apartments every year, the market can absorb
13 it.

14 Like nobody will finance you to do all that
15 at once, because the market can't absorb it. There's
16 no way your pro formas work. The banks won't finance
17 it that way. They'll finance it in phases, but
18 there's no way they'd finance the whole thing over 20
19 years. So, yeah, it had to -- it always had to be
20 built in phases, a building at a time.

21 MR. MCWILLIAMS: So, I'm going on 80 years
22 old, and so by the time I'm going on 90?

23 MR. PAISON: Yeah. Unfortunately, regional
24 malls are dying. Where I live in Dearborn, Fairlane
25 Mall is dying. The Hyatt Regency there is already

1 vacant.

2 MS. GRUBER: In the (INAUDIBLE) that one?

3 (Crosstalk.)

4 MR. MARTIN: You have to look at places like
5 Pontiac, that's been vacant for 10 years.

6 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Yeah.

7 MR. MARTIN: And there's nothing there.

8 MR. PAISON: And the studies that I've seen
9 actually indicate we're --

10 MR. MARTIN: Hall Road is going, you know,
11 they're getting rid of the mall there.

12 MR. PAISON: Yeah.

13 MR. MARTIN: They're getting rid of large
14 malls all over.

15 MR. PAISON: Yeah.

16 MR. MARTIN: And everybody's trying to
17 redevelopment. The day of the large market stores is
18 dying. They're all going to online and all that.

19 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Yeah, yeah, for sure.

20 MS. GRUBER: All over the country, not just
21 here.

22 MR. PAISON: Oh no, it's everywhere.

23 MS. GRUBER: Yeah.

24 MR. PAISON: We're over-retailed in America.
25 Like if you look at Europe, we have per person four

1 times the retail square footage that Europe has. So,
2 we have way more retail space than we actually can
3 support in the long run. We overbuilt, and this
4 adjustment, combined with online shopping, is just --
5 this is the adjustment that's happening.

6 You see it in this, you see it in office
7 space, too. Office space is now like, even though
8 people are -- they have returned to work now, they're
9 not returned to work all the time. It's flex now. So
10 like, even then, they don't need quite as much square
11 footage as they used to.

12 So, you know, we've got a lot of adjustment
13 to do. And it's not just us. It's happening all over
14 the country. It's the same thing with a lot of older
15 churches now that are looking for new purposes,
16 because a lot of older parishes or older congregations
17 have shrunk to the point where they can't support the
18 building. And in my career, I've been at this over 20
19 years, I probably dealt with a church conversion or a
20 church going vacant every year of my career, because
21 just the declining numbers of people who are active
22 parishioners of that church.

23 Now, some places, some groups, some of the
24 bigger congregations have active like committees and
25 plans to consolidate and repurpose properties. Other

1 ones, it just kind of happens in a disorganized way.
2 So, unfortunately, yeah, it's just like you're seeing
3 it -- you're seeing it with the banks. You end up
4 with a lot of vacant banks because banks are going
5 more online.

6 You're seeing it with the Rite Aids and
7 CVS's and Walgreens. They're contracting because they
8 overbuilt. They built way too many of them. So,
9 yeah, it's just a -- I think we're gonna see it with
10 the dollar stores. I think the dollar stores are over
11 building, and I think they're gonna -- we're already
12 seeing mergers in that industry, and we're gonna see
13 retraction eventually.

14 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Well, you know, what
15 bothered me was it was -- it was such a rush to tear
16 it down. They had all these plans and everything.
17 And I said, oh boy, that's --

18 MR. PAISON: Yeah.

19 MR. MCWILLIAMS: That's going to be a nice
20 deal, you know? And they tore everything down, and it
21 just sat there.

22 MR. PAISON: Yeah. Some of that is --

23 MR. MCWILLIAMS: The apartments are there,
24 you know.

25 MR. PAISON: Yeah.

1 MR. MCWILLIAMS: That's fine and everything.
2 But, you know, it was such a rush to tear everything
3 down, but nothing's been done with it.

4 MR. PAISON: Well, it would have just sat
5 and rotted because we didn't have anybody to occupy
6 it. So, and also tearing it down -- okay. This is a
7 little arcane economic development stuff. One of the
8 ways you fund these projects is through a Brownfield
9 plan. The way you get a Brownfield plan is tax
10 capture on the improvements on the property with the
11 new development. The way you get the most tax capture
12 is if you actually start with the lowest assessed
13 value at the beginning, which is usually like when the
14 building is completely empty or been demolished,
15 because you're just at land value then.

16 So, the project in the long run, there was
17 no way we were going to reuse the stuff that was torn
18 down. It was in too bad a shape, and there was no way
19 to repurpose it. It had to come down. So, that was
20 just to make room for the development to occur. But,
21 you know, yes, we could have still left buildings
22 there, but they would have just been derelict
23 buildings with roofs that were leaking and full of
24 water and rodents. It wouldn't have done the
25 community good to keep those buildings, so.

1 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Well, that answers my
2 question.

3 MR. MARTIN: To answer your question.

4 MR. MCWILLIAMS: I've got one more thing
5 that's always been my pet peeve.

6 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Sure.

7 MR. MCWILLIAMS: I know my three minutes are
8 up.

9 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Not a long line behind you.

10 (Inaudible crosstalk.)

11 MS. GRUBER: It's okay.

12 V. CHAIR WILLIS: Not a big crowd here.

13 CHAIR GRIFFIS: I'll give you three minutes
14 starting now.

15 (Inaudible crosstalk.)

16 MS. GRUBER: Undivided attention.

17 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Three minutes starting now.

18 MR. MCWILLIAMS: You know, I've been to the
19 City Council meetings and everything, and I always
20 brought up the issue of the condition of some of our
21 roads. And, you know, I live a block off of Mount
22 Vernon, and it's in pretty bad shape. And I
23 understand the west side of Southfield is going to be
24 -- have some work done on it next year. Mount Vernon
25 and Lincoln, Lincoln is in horrible shape, you know.

1 And you know everything, every time I ask
2 about it, they said, we don't have any money. They
3 can't get any money, you know. It just seems like
4 there is no will. When there's a will, you can find
5 some money from some place, you know. But you know, I
6 just wanted to bring that up.

7 And, you know, I talked to my neighbors, and
8 they say they call, and they say, well, we seem to be
9 getting the run around and everything, and you know.
10 And I know not enough transparency with the, you know
11 -- look at this. There's nobody else here and
12 everything. You know, I try to be involved with, you
13 know, my neighborhood and city affairs as much as I
14 can and everything.

15 MR. PAISON: Yeah.

16 MR. MCWILLIAMS: And, you know, I retired.
17 I retired from Ford engineering. And you know, I like
18 to -- I moved to Southfield. I've been here for 25,
19 26, 27 years now. And neighbors change and
20 everything, and for the most part, for the better. I
21 got a few things that I complained to a couple of
22 neighbors in a nice way and everything, and they
23 cooperate and everything.

24 But I just want to see the Southfield that I
25 moved into to progress comfortably, and I need some

1 place to shop, okay? And you know, that's about all I
2 got. That's all I got.

3 V. CHAIR WILLIS: If I could respond, I need
4 to say, I appreciate you. I appreciate your
5 questions. We have had exactly the same conversations
6 over the last couple of months. Northland, we've
7 talked about the number of times it's been before us;
8 and we even compared the church at 12 Mile and
9 Northwestern to the churches at Southfield -- I'm
10 sorry it's Woodward and Seven Mile, because both of
11 them have been long-term projects.

12 We shared the frustration. I think we're
13 here because we want to make sure we can push those
14 same things.

15 MS. BERNOUDY: Yeah.

16 V. CHAIR WILLIS: So, I'm glad to hear from
17 you, because it just kind of reinforces our commitment
18 to the same thing. So, thank you.

19 MS. GRUBER: Thank you for coming.

20 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Thank you.

21 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Well, thanks for listening.

22 MS. GRUBER: Anytime.

23 MR. PAISON: And another thing I would add,
24 in terms when it comes to roads, what we're going to
25 be addressing next month at the meeting in the middle

1 of the month, is the capital improvement program,
2 where we talk about capital projects, which include
3 infrastructure like roads. And then, that feeds right
4 into the budget.

5 And that's really where the rubber hits the
6 road. If it's not in the Capital Improvement Plan,
7 then it can't go in the budget. And then, you know,
8 that's kind of how that money stacks through.

9 And one of the things people don't seem to
10 understand like about, by law, local governments have
11 to have balanced books. Every year, you've got to
12 balance your books. You cannot spend more money than
13 you have, and you have to send reports to prove you
14 have balanced books to the state, or you end up in
15 receivership like Flint and Detroit did.

16 So, it's -- it is tough. There is a limited
17 pool of money. Michigan's finance system for local
18 government is kind of broken. There's some good
19 articles out there about what the problem is, between
20 the Headlee Amendment and Proposal A that were passed
21 back in the 90s under Engler, it broke how local
22 government was financed. And all local governments
23 have kind of been in trouble since then.

24 And then, when all the property values
25 dropped during the Great Recession, because Proposal A

1 and Headlee Amendment assumed the property values
2 would never drop, that they would always go up. And
3 then, when they dropped 40 percent, that put everybody
4 -- I think right now, the Finance Department and city
5 administrator estimate that like we will catch up to
6 where we were at the beginning of the Great Recession
7 in terms of revenues in perhaps another 20 years.
8 That's how much revenue went down. And we're capped,
9 our revenue increase is capped at, I think it's
10 5 percent or the rate of inflation, whichever is
11 lower. That is the maximum amount our taxable value
12 can go up.

13 So, with those caps in place, when you drop
14 40 percent, to recover at say 3 percent a year, it
15 takes a long time to actually get back up to that
16 level. So, unfortunately, like we took a huge hit.
17 All local government did, not just here. All local
18 government took this huge hit in their tax base and
19 their revenues in the Great Recession when it
20 happened, and none of them have recovered completely
21 yet.

22 So it's, unfortunately, it's a bad -- we're
23 kind of stuck in like a bad system of -- and like
24 things -- actually, local government finance worked
25 kind of okay before Prop A and the Headlee Amendment

1 were passed, like they actually functioned. Because
2 local -- local voters could vote to tax themselves.
3 Like if we want more stuff and we want better roads,
4 we, as all local voters, we could say, you know what,
5 we're willing to pay another mill if you fix these
6 roads. We can't do that anymore. Like we're capped.
7 We cannot do that locally. There's limits now on
8 that.

9 So, yeah, unfortunately, that's -- the state
10 of Michigan kind of took a lot of the, I would say the
11 rights of the local people to decide how much taxes
12 they wanted to pay and for what, they took that out of
13 your hands and out of the hands of your local
14 government at the Lansing level. So, it's one of
15 those things, if it doesn't change, it's going to lead
16 to a lot more of this kind of deferred infrastructure
17 work, because it's happening everywhere.

18 It's, like I said, I've worked in other
19 communities, and it's -- it's not just here, it's
20 everywhere. All of the local governments in Michigan
21 are fighting the same problem. And the state
22 legislature is basically just kind of, they don't want
23 to address it. They're just, it doesn't matter,
24 Republican, Democrat. I've seen it go back and forth,
25 and it gets raised every legislative session, and they

1 never address it.

2 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Yeah. Well, you know, I am
3 glad to see, you know, Pierce was one of my -- one of
4 the streets I brought up, and they did black top
5 Pierce between Mount Vernon and 10 Mile. So, that was
6 a great help, because it was --

7 MR. PAISON: That one was really bad.

8 MR. MCWILLIAMS: It was -- it was bad.

9 MR. PAISON: The potholes in the street were
10 insane.

11 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Yeah, yeah.

12 MR. PAISON: They'd eat your car. It was
13 bad.

14 MR. MCWILLIAMS: So.

15 MR. PAISON: It was bad.

16 MR. MARTIN: There's plans to do Mount
17 Vernon this summer.

18 MR. MCWILLIAMS: What's that?

19 MR. MARTIN: Mount Vernon, between
20 Southfield and the expressway, they're working on
21 redoing that, resurfacing that.

22 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Yeah, yeah. That's what I
23 understand, yeah.

24 MR. PAISON: Yeah, that section, yeah.

25 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Yeah, so.

1 MR. PAISON: Yeah, it's -- it's tough. It's
2 tough. Like I said, to really understand the details
3 of it, the capital improvement program and the budget,
4 are really where the like the details, where the
5 rubber hits -- literally, the rubber hits the road on
6 that stuff. And I can tell you, our city engineer
7 goes after all the grant money she can get for roads.
8 But it's -- there's different categories of roads, and
9 certain types of roads qualify for some grants; they
10 don't apply for other grants.

11 So, it's -- it's unfortunately, and there's
12 a lot of competition. Every local government is after
13 this money, and there's just never enough of it to go
14 around for the amount of roads we have. We have a lot
15 of roads. We've got two hundred and something miles
16 of roads in Southfield. So, yeah, it's -- it's
17 challenging. You're correct, like it -- it's very
18 challenging, absolutely.

19 But I would say, if you get a little deeper
20 in like the -- if you wanted to come to the capital
21 improvement -- the meeting that's on the 13th?

22 MR. BOLLIN: I think so, yeah.

23 MR. PAISON: In my notes right here, yeah,
24 February 12, sorry, 3 p.m. That meeting is where all
25 the departments actually present to this body their

1 capital plan and what they intend to do and why they
2 chose the projects they chose.

3 So, that one's like where they really get
4 into the detail, every single department comes and
5 presents at that meeting who has capital projects.
6 You learn a ton from that capital improvement program.
7 I learn a ton from that, because I don't even know
8 what all the departments are up to until they present
9 for capital improvements. Then I'm like, oh,
10 libraries is there, engine -- public works is there,
11 planning is there. All the departments are there.

12 MR. MARTIN: All the departments.

13 MR. PAISON: IT.

14 V. CHAIR WILLIS: Police, fire.

15 MS. BERNOUDY: Fire department, police.

16 MR. PAISON: Fire department, police
17 department, they're all there with their capital
18 projects.

19 MS. BERNOUDY: Yeah.

20 MR. PAISON: So, you learn a lot about like,
21 not only what they're doing, going to do next year,
22 but it's the capital improvement plan is current year
23 plus five. So, you learn what they're planning to do
24 the next five years.

25 MS. GRUBER: And you might even see on there

1 when they plan to do your street, because they -- I
2 remember that. They laid it out.

3 MR. PAISON: Yeah, they have -- yep.

4 MS. GRUBER: For five years.

5 MR. PAISON: Now, they do get updated. We
6 update it every year. But like having that forward
7 look, where you see like, oh okay, they're doing this
8 one and they're doing this one and they're doing this
9 one. It gives you that sense of like what the actual
10 plan is for the next five years.

11 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Well they, you know, they
12 did some work on my -- on my block. It was, I brought
13 it to the attention of some of the areas of, I mean,
14 they were -- you'd have to drive around --

15 MR. PAISON: Yeah.

16 MR. MCWILLIAMS: -- certain little spots.
17 And they did about one, two, three -- about three,
18 three or four areas on my block that were really,
19 really bad. And that was -- that was very
20 appreciated.

21 MR. PAISON: Yeah.

22 MR. MCWILLIAMS: In fact, one of my
23 neighbors said, you know, wanted to give me a hug and
24 give me -- gave me a gift card, you know, so.

25 MS. GRUBER: That was nice.

1 MR. MCWILLIAMS: I -- but you don't have to
2 do that.

3 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Yeah, that was nice.

4 MR. MCWILLIAMS: But you know, I -- you
5 know, people get tired of seeing nothing, you know.

6 MR. PAISON: Yeah, yep.

7 MR. MCWILLIAMS: And they get, you know,
8 there's a lot of my -- a lot of my neighbors are
9 retirees like myself, and --

10 MR. PAISON: Yeah.

11 MR. MCWILLIAMS: And they don't have the
12 energy to come to the meetings and everything. And
13 they say, well, whatever. They just going to do what
14 they want to do. And that gives a bad -- a bad name
15 for the councils and, you know, city government.

16 MR. PAISON: Yeah.

17 MR. MARTIN: But the one thing people don't
18 understand is that, yes, city government, but
19 businesses do the building, the development, the
20 buying. We can't force them to do that. We can only
21 try and work with what they plan to do.

22 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Yeah.

23 MR. MARTIN: And the money that they have,
24 because we don't have it. We don't control them.

25 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Gotcha.

1 MR. MARTIN: But it's, you know, hey, it's a
2 dog eat dog world, and we're always on the bitten end.

3 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Yeah, I understand, yeah.
4 Well, hopefully things get a lot better. And you
5 know, like I say, I try to come to as many meetings as
6 I can, just to see what's going on.

7 MR. PAISON: Sure.

8 MR. MCWILLIAMS: You know, I'm not a chronic
9 complaint -- some people just are chronic complainers,
10 you know. But you know, I'll --

11 MS. BERNOUDY: Well, it's important to show
12 up.

13 MR. MCWILLIAMS: I gotta -- I gotta know
14 what's going on.

15 MR. PAISON: Yeah.

16 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Yeah.

17 MR. PAISON: That capital improvement plan
18 meeting on the 12th, then, there's just a lot of
19 really good lot of really good information that's
20 presented at that.

21 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Okay. I'll try to make
22 that.

23 MR. PAISON: If you can make it to that one,
24 you'll learn a ton about what they're planning next
25 year and for the next five years.

1 V. CHAIR WILLIS: This is way off the
2 conversation we're having now, but they're always
3 opening some boards and commissions. They're always
4 looking for people who want to be involved in things
5 that goes on with the city. So, it's an application
6 process. It's simple to do, and you could join a
7 board. This -- all of us are --

8 MS. BERNOUDY: Right, volunteers.

9 V. CHAIR WILLIS: Yeah, we're all kind of
10 volunteers.

11 MS. BERNOUDY: Right.

12 V. CHAIR WILLIS: And so, they have it for
13 virtually every area. So, it would be a thing to
14 consider.

15 MR. PAISON: Yeah.

16 MS. BERNOUDY: Right. Don't give up.

17 MR. MCWILLIAMS: I got a little age on my
18 side.

19 (Inaudible crosstalk.)

20 V. CHAIR WILLIS: We can all raise our
21 hands.

22 MR. MCWILLIAMS: I got a plate that's
23 running over.

24 MR. MARTIN: Yeah.

25 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Yeah.

1 MR. MCWILLIAMS: I need a couple of clones
2 for myself and everything.

3 V. CHAIR WILLIS: I got you.

4 MR. MCWILLIAMS: But I try to do the best I
5 can.

6 MR. PAISON: Yep.

7 MR. MCWILLIAMS: But thanks for the
8 information.

9 MS. BERNOUDY: We appreciate your comments.

10 MR. MCWILLIAMS: I appreciate all of you.

11 V. CHAIR WILLIS: Yeah, thank you.

12 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Thank you.

13 MS. GRUBER: Take care and be well.

14 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Okay. You, too.

15 MS. GRUBER: Try to go to that meeting.

16 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Okay.

17 MR. PAISON: That one's pretty good.

18 CHAIR GRIFFIS: I'll close the public
19 hearing, but we never have any public comments, so
20 sometimes we can run over, but we rarely.

21 MS. GRUBER: Council update.

22 MS. BERNOUDY: Council update.

23 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Council items update.

24 MR. PAISON: Yeah. So, the oil change place
25 on Southfield, between Stratford and Silver Maple,

1 went to council for its rezoning and special land use,
2 and the rezoning did not pass. Mr. Crews was missing,
3 and they deadlocked three-three. So, it just -- it
4 failed to pass because they didn't have a majority
5 vote for the rezoning.

6 Some of the neighbors finally came out
7 against, like two households came out against the oil
8 change place.

9 MS. BERNOUDY: No, wow.

10 MR. PAISON: And then, a couple of the other
11 people who are always at the City Council meeting also
12 spoke against it. And for some reason, it broke
13 three-three on that, so.

14 MS. BERNOUDY: You said the council meeting?

15 MS. GRUBER: Yeah.

16 MR. PAISON: Yeah, I don't -- that one,
17 we're looking at like, first off, since they actually
18 didn't pass a resolution for or against, they just
19 deadlocked three-three.

20 V. CHAIR WILLIS: Okay.

21 MR. PAISON: Technically, the issue is not
22 final, like --

23 MS. GRUBER: Right.

24 MR. PAISON: So it doesn't preclude them
25 from bringing it back. But we don't know --

1 Councilman Crews is not well. I do not know when he
2 will be at a council meeting. He's been having some
3 health issues.

4 MS. BERNOUDY: You know they (INAUDIBLE) --
5 (Crosstalk.)

6 MR. MARTIN: Yeah.

7 MR. PAISON: I don't know the details, but
8 he's --

9 V. CHAIR WILLIS: It's been true for years.

10 MR. MARTIN: Yeah.

11 MR. PAISON: I don't know when he's going to
12 be there or not there, so you really can't count on
13 that. I, you know, got a little bit of feedback for
14 some of the council members, kind of off the record as
15 to what -- what they were concerned about. So, with
16 some changes -- the other thing is, we actually -- I
17 suggested, well -- and then, the city attorney is
18 reviewing this, to whether or not they can bring it
19 back as is, or they have to bring back sort of a
20 different proposal.

21 My thought is they could actually come back
22 and propose like a conditional rezoning in the B-3,
23 exclude some uses, maybe tweak the site plan a little
24 bit, and then take another crack at it. I did tell
25 the owner, I said you could probably do that, and it

1 would be legal, because you're not asking for the same
2 exact same thing.

3 But that doesn't guarantee you're going to
4 get another vote. Like, I mean, you'll get a vote,
5 but it doesn't matter -- it doesn't guarantee you're
6 going to get a majority. You might have the same
7 result.

8 MS. BERNOUDY: Oh, yeah.

9 MR. PAISON: I can't guarantee how council
10 is going to vote.

11 MS. BERNOUDY: (INAUDIBLE.)

12 MR. PAISON: I always tell people, council
13 doesn't work for me, I work for them.

14 MR. PAISON: So, it's -- it's tough.

15 (Inaudible background conversation.)

16 MR. PAISON: Because, you know, he did like
17 everything we asked him to do on those plans, pretty
18 much.

19 V. CHAIR WILLIS: Yeah, ideal location.

20 (Inaudible background conversation.)

21 MR. PAISON: And he went through, he came to
22 council kind of like before he bought. Then, he
23 acquired the property, then he went through the
24 process. I'm like --

25 MS. GRUBER: I don't know.

1 MS. BERNOUDY: How does that work, when it's
2 tied like that?

3 MR. PAISON: Well, a rezoning, to change the
4 zoning, you have to have a majority vote. So, with
5 six people there, you needed at least four.

6 MS. BERNOUDY: Yeah, it needs to be

7 (INAUDIBLE).

8 (Crosstalk.)

9 MR. PAISON: Because three-three like just
10 leaves it as is. The resolution to approve the
11 rezoning failed for lack of a majority, just like
12 when --

13 MR. MARTIN: Just before this.

14 MR. PAISON: -- you guys voted on Eagle,
15 same thing. You guys locked three-three.

16 MS. BERNOUDY: Right.

17 MR. PAISON: And no -- nothing passed. So,
18 in your case, you decided to postpone it for them to
19 address the concerns that were stated, and maybe to
20 have a seventh member present when you voted. Council
21 just kind of like --

22 MS. BERNOUDY: They didn't want to

23 (INAUDIBLE) --

24 MR. PAISON: -- yeah, we don't have the
25 votes, issue dies for lack of, you know, lack of --

1 MS. BERNOUDY: Oh, my gosh.

2 MR. PAISON: -- lack of support, and they
3 moved on.

4 MS. GRUBER: That's too bad.

5 MR. PAISON: Like I said, I -- like I said,
6 the city attorney's reviewing, like there is some case
7 law out there about like when a zoning issue is
8 considered final and like -- because what they -- you
9 don't want to get into a double jeopardy thing where
10 you're going back and asking for the same thing three
11 times and hold three public hearings on the exact same
12 thing. Because that's not fair to like anyone
13 involved in the process, including the neighbors.
14 Like, you know, they came, they placed their opinion,
15 the thing happened, and then you're going to come back
16 and do it again?

17 So, we have to be cognizant of the fact that
18 there is a degree of finality to those decisions, and
19 they have to change something to bring it back, or
20 it's because it was not a majority vote denial or
21 approval, that it's still an open issue; like they
22 never effectively acted on it. You know, they made a
23 motion in support, but there were not enough votes to
24 approve or deny. They deadlocked.

25 So, that one, we're still working out. But

1 I'm working with Dawn to see if there is a -- but like
2 even if Dawn and I can figure out a legitimate way
3 that it can come back --

4 MS. BERNOUDY: Yeah.

5 MR. PAISON: -- that doesn't guarantee
6 approval, that just guarantees them another round.
7 So, I don't -- I don't know on that one. Even the
8 mayor spoke up kind of in favor. He's like, that's
9 been vacant for years. It was approved for an office
10 building in 2002 and nothing got built.

11 MS. GRUBER: Yeah.

12 MR. PAISON: You know, there's a lot of
13 underutilized and older buildings on that strip that
14 really need to be repurposed. I'm personally of the
15 opinion the OS district is too narrow of a district.
16 We're never going to get reinvestment in those
17 buildings and reuse, unless we allow more flexible use
18 of those buildings. At least service uses in addition
19 to the office uses, or maybe specialty retail could
20 also go in those buildings. They're probably suitable
21 for that, not assembly, they just don't have enough
22 parking.

23 But I just think like if we took with the OS
24 district and combined it with like the B-1 and the NS,
25 the Neighborhood Service district, like that mix of

1 lower intensity commercial uses could work in any of
2 those buildings.

3 So, you know, that's -- that's one of the
4 things that looking at it convinced me like, you know,
5 the OS district in these small office building
6 corridors isn't working for us. We're not getting the
7 investment. The buildings are just sitting or they're
8 going through the spirals. They're spiraling down.
9 Like we gotta -- what we need to do is have enough
10 flexibility that someone sees that they can make the
11 return on the building with tenants, and then they'll
12 come in and invest in the building.

13 (Inaudible background conversation.)

14 MR. PAISON: So, I really am of the opinion
15 that as part of that consolidating commercial
16 districts we were talking about, consolidating the OS
17 with the less intense commercial districts might be a
18 good way to do that. But unfortunately for that guy,
19 you know, like we had all those meetings, and they
20 showed up. These two neighbors showed up for the last
21 meeting out of the four meetings that were held. So,
22 I don't --

23 MS. BERNOUDY: Yeah.

24 MR. PAISON: And some of the concerns they
25 had about like air pollution were like, well, that's

1 coming from the highways.

2 MS. GRUBER: Yeah.

3 MR. PAISON: It's Southfield, Northwestern,

4 like --

5 CHAIR GRIFFIS: If you live next to a

6 (INAUDIBLE) --

7 MS. GRUBER: (INAUDIBLE.)

8 MR. PAISON: That's where -- that's where

9 your air pollution is coming from.

10 MS. GRUBER: Yeah.

11 MR. PAISON: Not from the oil change place.

12 MS. BERNOUDY: Right. It didn't come from

13 there.

14 MR. PAISON: And then, there was concern

15 about the traffic, but we're like, it's a highway,

16 seven lanes.

17 CHAIR GRIFFIS: That argument, that's why

18 people want to build on the main road, Telegraph or

19 Southfield.

20 MR. PAISON: Yeah. But also, the guy said,

21 like on a busy day, on a busy day, they do 35 cars.

22 MS. GRUBER: Cars, right.

23 MR. PAISON: In a 10-hour, you know, eight-

24 to 10-hour period.

25 MS. GRUBER: Yeah.

1 MR. PAISON: That's, you know, two, three,
2 four cars an hour. That's not a substantial traffic
3 impact.

4 CHAIR GRIFFIS: No.

5 MR. PAISON: I'm like, they were wondering
6 why we didn't make them do a traffic study. I'm like,
7 if you're only generating four cars an hour, there's
8 no justification for the cost of a traffic study.

9 MS. BERNOUDY: No.

10 MR. PAISON: I can't -- I can't justify
11 making a guy like this spend \$10,000 on a traffic
12 study, when he's got such a low-traffic generator.
13 It's just one of those things that was a little
14 strange.

15 CHAIR GRIFFIS: That was the perfect design
16 for that site.

17 MR. PAISON: No, it fit nicely.

18 CHAIR GRIFFIS: I don't know what else you
19 could build there.

20 MR. PAISON: We were getting the sidewalks,
21 we were getting the green belts, we were getting the
22 screening wall.

23 MS. BERNOUDY: Yeah.

24 MR. PAISON: The building looked decent, you
25 know.

1 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Yeah.

2 MR. PAISON: It was a low -- relatively low
3 intensity use. I don't think they quite appreciate
4 that. That's actually a relatively low intensity use.

5 V. CHAIR WILLIS: Four cars an hour.

6 MR. PAISON: So, I'm still working on that.
7 We'll see what happens with it. I don't think the
8 issue is done done. I just don't know what the next
9 chapter is going to look like yet. I got to get --
10 talk to the city attorney again about our options.

11 My own figure is the cleanest way to do it
12 is just to have them come back with a conditional
13 rezoning, go through the process again with the
14 conditional rezoning, have them tweak the site plan a
15 little bit based on some of the comments I heard that
16 were more of the legitimate variety, and see if maybe
17 that's enough to flip one vote, and they would then
18 pass.

19 MR. MARTIN: There's always the trick of the
20 Planning Commissioner show up and speak, too.

21 MR. PAISON: Yeah, yeah.

22 MR. MARTIN: That always helps.

23 MR. PAISON: Yeah. I mean, even the mayor
24 chimed in, and he doesn't do that on very many of
25 these.

1 MR. MARTIN: Yeah.

2 MR. PAISON: Like he normally leaves that to
3 the council to decide, but he actually did chime in on
4 that one. So, yeah. So, that's -- that was a little
5 disappointing.

6 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Not everyone's gonna build a
7 \$50 million development. You gotta take your singles,
8 you know, singles and doubles.

9 MS. BERNOUDY: Yeah.

10 MR. PAISON: This is a family operation.
11 The gentleman was like, the building, he's like, yeah,
12 this was the first one. I was gonna build this and
13 turn it over to my son to run.

14 MR. MARTIN: Yeah.

15 MR. PAISON: And it would stay in the
16 family. And I'm like, going, yeah, I know how this
17 works. I've dealt with the Arab American community in
18 Dearborn. That's how they build generational wealth.
19 That's how they do it. And I'm like, and a lot of,
20 you know, like minorities do that, that's how they do
21 it. It's like, one will start a business, they built
22 the second one, they turned over to the kid to run,
23 because they trust a family member to run it.

24 MS. BERNOUDY: Right.

25 MR. PAISON: You know, and then, it builds

1 up over time. And I'm just like, you gotta stop
2 thinking that it's all about the big corporations. We
3 need these small investors. We need that guy on Bush
4 Street who's gonna do the six condos. We need this
5 guy who's gonna build the little oil change on these
6 pieces of property that we have left. We need these
7 people.

8 We need them to come. They're willing to do
9 a smaller project because they're not looking to turn
10 a profit in five years. They're looking to turn a
11 profit like generationally. So, they'll make an
12 investment if they think it's going to pay off for
13 their family over that longer time period. And
14 that's, a lot of that small business, that's how they
15 -- that's how that operates. Their return on
16 investment isn't five years; it's 10, 15, 20 years,
17 maybe. But it's growing.

18 It's also employment for family members and
19 stuff, too. Like it's all, you know, I came up in a
20 family business. I know how this works. So, you
21 know, it, hopefully we can move the ball on that one.
22 It was an interesting -- the things that were
23 discussed as part of that were interesting.

24 Then, just talking about next month's
25 meetings, and this is our last item. We got a meeting

1 next Wednesday, a study meeting. We have four
2 development projects that will be coming in front of
3 you, a couple special land use site plans and a couple
4 of just site plans. So, that's ramping up.

5 On the 12th at 3 p.m., that's that day
6 meeting, that's the CIP meeting, where all the
7 departments present. And then, at the end of the
8 month, we'll be bringing back the items from the
9 beginning, the four development went to have their
10 public hearings and for the special land uses, and to
11 have approvals for the site plans and then referrals
12 to council for the special land uses.

13 So, you know, we've got a, I'd say a fairly
14 full agenda for February.

15 CHAIR GRIFFIS: Okay.

16 MR. PAISON: And then, in March, just to
17 look ahead to March. In March, we've got another four
18 or five developments queued up to come in March
19 already. And then, the CIP will come back at the end
20 of March for an actual final recommendation to council
21 on that agenda.

22 So, we're probably not going to get into
23 these other like zoning updates. I'm working on some
24 drafts and things, but like additional zoning
25 amendments and things, they probably would not really

1 be coming out in front of you until April. Once we
2 clear the CIP Annual Report development backlog, we'll
3 move into some of these longer-term goals. Because we
4 want to look at the tree ordinance, I want to look at
5 these commercial districts. There's a few things that
6 I'd like to bring forward that I think would be
7 helpful for the way the system runs, and also helpful
8 for our reuse, redevelopment, tax base growth
9 situation.

10 I will say one of the things that when that
11 24412 was up, Councilwoman Houge gave a very nice
12 like, because she voted in favor. And she said -- she
13 gave a nice like look, if we want to build a community
14 pool, if we want to have these nice things in the
15 community, we need to be growing the tax base. That's
16 where the money comes to pay for these things.

17 And I'm like, I always feel refreshed when
18 somebody will say that at a meeting on camera. And
19 Councilwoman Houge, I think did a nice job of
20 explaining that. And like, look, we can't say no to
21 everything. That's what --

22 MR. MARTIN: Yeah.

23 MR. PAISON: She's like, we really cannot be
24 saying no to everything, you know, that can't be the
25 approach we're going to take if we're going to thrive.

1 So, I appreciate that somebody, you know, actually
2 like went on the record and said that. That was, I
3 thought helpful, at least that it got said.

4 MR. MARTIN: I have a question for you, in
5 that at the City Council meetings, and even at our
6 meetings, there's a lady that comes in. She's here
7 for her neighborhood in Southfield. She's at
8 Farmington Hills in her neighborhood, and she's in
9 Livonia for her neighborhood.

10 V. CHAIR WILLIS: On TV.

11 MR. MARTIN: She did this on TV for these.

12 MS. BERNOUDY: Oh, I saw that. I saw that.

13 MR. MARTIN: She's a -- she's hell bent on
14 sheets in Livonia and Farmington, and she's anything
15 in Southfield.

16 MS. BERNOUDY: (INAUDIBLE.)

17 MR. MARTIN: How can she speak for each and
18 every community like that?

19 MR. PAISON: Well, two things. When we have
20 a public meeting, they don't have to be a resident to
21 speak. Any member of the public can come and address
22 a public meeting during the public comment period.

23 V. CHAIR WILLIS: But she uses a Southfield
24 address.

25 MR. PAISON: They have a right to do that.

1 And under First Amendment, they can say -- they can
2 assert --

3 MR. MARTIN: She uses a post office box.

4 MS. BERNOUDY: She's always (INAUDIBLE) --

5 MR. PAISON: They can assert they represent
6 whoever they want to assert they represent. But you
7 should always take those with skepticism.

8 MR. MARTIN: Yeah.

9 MR. PAISON: Like even when like a president
10 of a neighborhood association comes to speak on behalf
11 of their association, their board should have passed a
12 resolution sending them to speak on behalf of the
13 association. Otherwise, they're just speaking for
14 themselves, and they just happen to be the president
15 of the association.

16 You know, that was one of those things
17 where, you know, I've dealt with that in the past,
18 where someone asserts their speaking on behalf of the
19 association. When I contact the board of the
20 association, they're like, no, we didn't send them.
21 They were speaking on their own behalf. You know,
22 like, which is fine, they can. They're also a private
23 citizen who can speak, right?

24 But I always take -- you gotta take those
25 assertions with a grain of salt. And I think council

1 does to a degree, but they have a right to speak.
2 That's, you know, Michigan law, the Open Meetings Act
3 and the First Amendment, you really, you know. You're
4 not disrupting the meeting. You have a right to
5 speak.

6 MR. MARTIN: But she disrupts because she
7 starts the hand --

8 MS. BERNOUDY: Oh, yeah.

9 MR. MARTIN: -- the hand clapping and the
10 amen and all this other crap always.

11 MR. PAISON: Yeah. And the council
12 president does rein that in, or tries to as best he
13 can.

14 MR. MARTIN: Yeah.

15 MR. PAISON: I think having an officer at
16 those meetings also helps.

17 MR. MARTIN: I'm sorry?

18 MR. PAISON: I said a having a police
19 officer at those meetings also helps keep --

20 MR. MARTIN: Yeah, but she --

21 (Crosstalk.)

22 V. CHAIR WILLIS: She has (INAUDIBLE) out of
23 meetings.

24 MR. MARTIN: Yeah.

25 MR. PAISON: Yeah, it's unfortunate, but

1 that is --

2 MR. MARTIN: Not enough.

3 MR. PAISON: That's just the nature of
4 Michigan's Open Meetings Act.

5 MR. MARTIN: Yeah.

6 MR. PAISON: They have a right to speak, and
7 they don't have to be a resident of the city. You
8 know, any member of the public at an open meeting.

9 CHAIR GRIFFIS: That's enough for this
10 meeting. This meeting is adjourned at 7:50.

11 (At 7:50 p.m., meeting adjourned.)

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIPTION

STATE OF MICHIGAN)

) SS

COUNTY OF KENT)

I, JANICE P. YATES, hereby certify the transcription of the foregoing proceedings. These proceedings were recorded on video; said video was not recorded by me nor under my supervision or control. I certify that this is a full, true, complete, and correct transcription of the video to the best of my ability.



JANICE P. YATES, CER-9181

Notary Public,

Kent County, Michigan

My Commission expires: December 2, 2029

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25



Andrea Storch Gruber, Secretary

Date: 2/19/2025