

Present: Planning Board: Chairperson Jensen; Vice-Chair Tillman; Members: Bliven, Borowski, Freedman, Landsman, Ostrowski, and Wayne

Council: President Downey; Pro-Tem Woodrow; Members: Domzal, McCleary, Mooney, Pfeifer and Schmitt

Absent: Planning Board member, Nedley

Also Present: Assistant to the Manager, Pasieka
Planning Consultant, Wenzara

Jensen called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Village municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Bliven, seconded by Wayne, to approve the agenda as published.

Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE PUBLISHED AGENDA

There were no comments from the public.

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion by Bliven, seconded by Landsman, that the minutes of a regular Planning Board meeting held on Wednesday, September 24, 2003 be approved as submitted.

Motion carried.

STRATEGIC THINKING ABOUT SOUTHFIELD CORRIDOR: ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES AND IDEAS (Hirshorn)

Jensen reviewed that the Planning Board has been collecting data on Southfield Road corridor properties for the purpose of analyzing existing conditions and is now at the goal setting stage. Prior to creating a corridor plan, the Planning Board suggested engaging a facilitator to work with the Village to establish common goals and a vision for how the business district should look.

Seth Hirshorn, professor with the University of Michigan, has been selected to act as facilitator to assist the Village with the development of a Southfield Road Corridor study work program. He has conducted individual interviews with members of the Planning Board and Council. Hirshorn is present this evening to spend an hour with Council and Board members to talk about the Southfield Road corridor.

Hirshorn will lead a group process to help provide some clear vision for what should be done on the Southfield Road corridor. Based on interviews and his own observations, Hirshorn compiled a list of landmarks that can be observed on Southfield Road. He asked those present to go through the list and prioritize the items and issues. The number one indicates items that require

immediate action; number two indicates that the item may require action but should be studied further; and three is something that can be delayed and referred to a committee for review.

After everyone marked their sheets, Hirshorn went through each landmark recording the scores and asking for a group discussion on related issues. The landmarks include the following items: drainage ditch, Medical Village, bus stop, signs, line of trees, site planning of adjacent sites, guard rails, excess asphalt, dumpsters, fencing (Gould Court), Detroit Edison substation, Gould Court mail boxes, disconnected sidewalk, pedestrian lighting, standing water, entry sign, curb cuts and interior circulation, lack of public space, and disorganized land uses.

Hirshorn then distributed a handout consisting of a number of questions he would like Council and Planning Board members to think about and answer in writing. He asked that the completed exercise be returned to the Village Manager within a week. Hirshorn will assemble and process the responses and present them to the Planning Board and Council in an effort to create a larger vision for the Southfield Road corridor.

The questions are as follows:

- Think of a commercial street that you really like to go to and walk down. What are the qualities of that street that you would like to incorporate in the Southfield Road Corridor Plan?
- Imagine yourself 20 years from now viewing the Southfield Corridor. What does it look like, who is there, what are they doing?
- Describe a civic activity that deeply inspired you?
- Identify ten things that are important to the health, functioning and beauty of the Southfield Corridor.
- In five years the local newspaper will do a feature article on the Southfield Road initiative. What do you want the story to say?
- What are the resources needed and available to accomplish the changes in the Southfield Corridor?
- Speed-write the mission of the Southfield Road Initiative. Make it short, easy to remember and appropriate to the task. Pick a slogan for the initiative. Does it inspire? Is it great?

Codification of Site Development Handbook

Council approved a budget for the planning consultant to assist the Planning Board with the codification of the Village's Site Development Handbook into specific, enforceable zoning ordinance language. The project involves the creation of a new zoning ordinance article that will include most regulations applicable to site development as well as revisions to other sections of the ordinance to properly address all elements of the Site Development Handbook. Work on this project is underway. The first draft has been reviewed by the Planning Board and changes have been incorporated into a revised draft that will be discussed at the next Planning Board meeting.

Domzal referred to a one-page sheet prepared by the planning consultant summarizing the status of work on the Site Development Requirements Ordinance. He commented on the practical implications of the proposed ordinance to the Village. The new ordinance will consolidate design regulations so that a commercial developer will be able to easily refer to the single chapter.

Domzal noted that the ordinance may change to some extent how decisions are made and approvals are obtained by business owners. There was discussion on factors that determine whether a modification would trigger a review by the Planning Board or a full site plan review. The proposed ordinance gives the Planning Board additional authority to review and regulate commercial development within the Village.

Planning consultant Wenzara commented on site changes initiated by a property owner that would trigger review and approval from the Village under the Site Development Ordinance. Under the new ordinance, minor façade improvements that would normally require compliance with building codes and a building permit would come before the Planning Board for a quick review to make sure the change is generally consistent with the intent of the regulations.

Domzal asked Council to consider the proposed ordinance and make sure that they are comfortable with it so the Planning Board does not spend time and money on an effort that will not satisfy the majority of people. Questions and comments on the proposed ordinance were addressed by the Planning Board and consultant.

There was agreement among Council that the Planning Board is going in the right direction with an ordinance that will provide more consistency and control over future redevelopment of the business district. The comment was made that the concept is great with a need to see more details. A majority of members voiced support for the Site Development Ordinance.

14 Mile Road Corridor Study

Jensen reported on the status of the 14 Mile Road Corridor study. He mentioned that the Village changed planning consultants before the study was completed. The new consulting firm of Langworthy Strader LeBlanc & Associates has been assigned three projects. The Planning Board is currently working on the Site Development Handbook with the planner. The 14 Mile Corridor plan will be the next work program to be undertaken.

Wenzara stated that the approach that LSL will take on this project is to provide the Planning Board and Council with visual examples of some of the concepts and recommendations for the study area and receive input on those ideas. The intent of the plan is to have something in place for future redevelopment that may occur in that area.

The Planning Board timetable for completion of the projects under discussion was questioned. Jensen replied that the Board has taken a deliberate approach to a work program whereby it establishes a goal and a budget before proceeding. A budget was approved for LSL to work with the Board on the Site Development Handbook, 14 Mile Road Corridor study, and Master Plan update.

The first quarter of next year was established as a tentative deadline for presenting a visual presentation for the 14 Mile Road Corridor study area. The Site Development Requirements Ordinance will be completed and forwarded to Council during the last quarter of this year. It is anticipated that the Planning Board will work on updating the Master Plan in the second quarter of 2004.

Master Plan Update

Jensen reviewed that the Planning Board discussed absolute requirements for updating the Village Master Plan and arrived at a consensus on what needs to be done. A cost estimate was received from the planning consultant in the amount of \$5,000 to do that work. Jensen understands that there may be grant money available for this project. There was discussion of the master planning process and changes required under the new State Act.

It was mentioned that the Village received notice that Bingham Farms is studying its master plan. Wenzara suggested that Beverly Hills respond to the notice indicating whether or not it is interested in being involved in their process. Bingham Farms has also requested copies of specific Village documents.

PLANNING CONSULTANT'S COMMENTS

Wenzara stated that she will distribute the second draft of the Site Development Requirements Ordinance to Planning Board members following the meeting.

Schmitt recalled that the planning consultant was given direction at a joint meeting in May to develop a proposal to address electronic flashing signage in the Village. He believes that the direction was to prohibit existing flashing signs within the next seven or eight years.

Jensen responded that electronic flashing signs are addressed in the proposed Site Development Ordinance. Requiring existing signage to be replaced would probably require Council action. Wenzara added that amortization is not dealt with in the zoning ordinance section of the Municipal Code. The Village cannot address elimination of existing non-conforming signage through zoning ordinance text. A separate ordinance could be drafted with the assistance of the Village Attorney.

There was general agreement among those present that flashing signs are objectionable. Domzal urged caution in terms of being too restrictive and thus discouraging people from remodeling or improving property. Freedman commented that we should not lose sight of what it takes for a business owner to make a go in the Village.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Pfeifer expressed the view that the Village's requirements for site plan review are burdensome and should be streamlined. That would require an ordinance amendment. Others agreed with her position. It was also mentioned that site plan review is important because the opportunity for input is lost once the plan is approved.

Downey will place site plan review requirements on his list of action items for Council consideration.

Domzal commented that the strategic planning process is underway. The Personnel Committee of Council has reviewed 44 applications for 15-20 positions on the Strategic Planning Development Committee. The goal is to get everyone involved in some manner. All applicants will receive a letter notifying them of an orientation meeting in October. The process is proceeding, and Domzal thinks it will yield long-term benefits to the Village.

Downey commended the Planning Board on its good work.

Motion by Bliven, seconded by Wayne, to adjourn the meeting at 9:28 p.m.

Motion carried.

**David Jensen, Chairperson
Planning Board**

**Doyle Downey, President
Village Council**

**Ellen E. Marshall
Village Clerk**

**Susan Bernard
Recording Secretary**