



## PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA

July 5, 2022 – **6:30 PM**

**LOCATION:** City of Northville Municipal Building – Council Chambers, 215 W. Main St., Northville, MI 48167, 248-449-9902 (the public may attend the meeting in-person or use the Zoom option below)

**Zoom public participation option:** Members of the public may participate electronically as if physically present at the meeting using the following links:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83097161209>, Or Telephone: +1 646 558 8656 or +1 301 715 8592  
Webinar ID: 830 9716 1209

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**2. ROLL CALL**

**3. APPROVE MINUTES** June 21, 2022

**4. AUDIENCE COMMENTS** (limited to brief presentations on matters not on the agenda)

**5. REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE**

- A. City Administration
- B. Planning Commissioners
- C. Other Community/Governmental Liaisons
- D. Correspondence

**6. APPROVE AGENDA**

**Consideration of agenda items generally will follow this order:**

- A. Introduction by Chair
- B. Presentation by City Planner
- C. Commission questions of City Planner
- D. Presentation by Applicant (if any)
- E. Commission questions of Applicant (if item has an applicant)
- F. Public comment
- G. Commission discussion & decision

**7. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**8. SITE PLAN AND ZONING CHANGE APPLICATIONS**

- Downs Preliminary Site Plan Review

[Vacant parcels on the south side of Cady St. (between S. Center & Griswold), the Northville Downs racetrack property south of Cady St. (between S. Center and River Streets), and two areas on the west side of S. Center St.]

**9. OTHER PLANNING COMMISSION BUSINESS**

**10. ADJOURN**

**CITY OF NORTHVILLE**  
Northville City Hall  
215 W. Main Street, Northville MI  
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes  
June 21, 2022  
6:30 PM

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Tinberg called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and explained that per the Open Meetings Act members of the public could either participate in person or participate via ZOOM webinar platform. Members of the Commission must be physically present to participate in the meeting.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

Present: Thomas Barry  
Paul DeBono  
Jeff Gaines  
David Hay  
Steve Kirk  
Carol Maise  
William Salliotte, Jr.  
Donna Tinberg  
AnnaMaryLee Vollick

Absent: None

Also present: Sally Elmiger, Planning Consultant  
Barbara Moroski-Browne, Mayor Pro-Tem  
Marilyn Price, City Council  
Andrew Krenz, City Council  
Lori Ward, Downtown Development Authority Director  
George Tsakoff, Engineering Consultant

Audience: approximately 3 in person, 25 on ZOOM call

**3. APPROVE MINUTES: June 7, 2022**

**MOTION by Hay, support by Vollick**, to amend and approve the June 7, 2022 meeting minutes as follows:

- Page 3, under Correspondence, June 1 email from Liz Cezat, add as follows: . . . Bennet Arboretum Pathway . . .

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

**1. AUDIENCE COMMENTS:** (limited to brief presentations on matters not on the agenda)

Michelle Aniol, 402 Yerkes, made the following points:

- She encouraged the Commission to consider allowing short term rentals in The Downs, and in the entire Northville community, as a way to provide places for people to stay when they visit the City. This would be a good way to have control over economic development and tourism, and to activate retail and community space.
- She opposed angled parking, and related her experience with back-in angled parking where she worked in Dexter MI, where people remained very uncomfortable with angled parking, and where removing angled parking was being considered.
- She encouraged allowing Accessory Dwelling Units as part of The Downs and elsewhere as a way to provide attainable workforce housing.

Nancy Chiri, 661 West Main, made the following points:

- She supported responsible development. She agreed that angled parking caused problems. She was concerned about pedestrians being able to see around parked cars on Main Street.
- If a roundabout was going to be constructed, she continued to encourage placing the roundabout at Center and Sheldon, where a leg of the roundabout could direct people north on Griswold. Without a good north/south road, drivers will continue to navigate through the neighborhoods.
- She noted that all the parking lots on Cady were full last weekend.

**2. REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE**

**A. CITY ADMINISTRATION:**

City Manager Sullivan

On behalf of City Manager Sullivan, Chair Tinberg reported that City Council approved the reappointments of Commissioners DeBono, Gaines, and Hay to the Planning Commission, for terms ending June 30, 2025.

Mayor Pro-Tem Moroski-Browne

City Council approved the Brownfield Plan for the Foundry Flask project, following the recommendation of the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.

Building Official Strong

No report.

DDA Director Ward

Regarding the street closures, DDA recommended reopening Center Street but leaving Main Street closed. City Council decided to maintain both Main Street and Center Street closures until November 7, 2022. Council asked for further information to be provided in July, when Council will be discussing what will happen post-November.

Mayor Turnbull

No report

**B. PLANNING COMMISSIONERS:**

Commissioner Gaines, Historic District Commission

Commissioner Gaines reported on the June 15 HDC meeting.

Commissioner Maise, Downtown Development Authority

No report

Commissioner Hay, Brownfield Redevelopment Authority

June meeting cancelled.

Commissioner Barry, Sustainability Committee

Sustainability Committee meeting postponed. Sub-task force will be presenting to the Planning Commission regarding placemaking at The Downs' Central Park .

Commissioner Vollick, Combined River and Farmers Market Task Forces

No report.

Chair Tinberg, Board of Zoning Appeals

Next ZBA meeting July 6.

**C. OTHER COMMUNITY/GOVERNMENTAL LIAISONS:**

None.

**D. CORRESPONDENCE:**

None

**3. APPROVE AGENDA**

**MOTION by Maise, support by Hay, to approve the agenda as published.**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

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- G. Commission discussion & decision

**4. PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

None

**5. SITE PLAN AND ZONING CHANGE APPLICATIONS**

**Downs Preliminary Site Plan Review**

[Vacant parcels on the south side of Cady St. (between S. Center & Griswold), the Northville Downs racetrack property south of Cady St. (between S. Center and River Streets), and two areas on the west side of S. Center St.]

Members of the Development Team who participated in tonight’s discussion included:

- Seth Herkowitz, Partner, Hunter Pasteur
- Randy Wertheimer, CEO, Hunter Pasteur Homes
- Andy West, Elkus Manfredi Architects
- Robert Miller, Miller Architects
- Greg Presley, Presley Architects
- Alex Martin, Toll Brothers
- Robert Emerine, Sieber Kiest Engineering

Chair Tinberg explained that tonight the Planning Commission will continue deliberations relative to the Downs PUD Preliminary Site Plan, specifically the topic of Architecture, Landscaping, and Aesthetics. The Hunter Pasteur Team presented regarding this topic at the June 7 meeting, including a revised preliminary site plan.

Tonight’s discussion would follow the same process as in prior meetings.

**Compatibility with the traditional, historic character of downtown and neighborhoods**

The 2018 master plan includes a goal that properties should be improved in a manner that complements the downtown area and provides an attractive entrance to the city. Does the proposed preliminary site plan accomplish this goal?

**Residential product mix**

Commission felt this topic had been discussed and will continue to be discussed as other topics are deliberated.

**Row housing Griswold south of Cady, vs. single family**

Kirk: The new proposal presents a bow-front flat stark façade. Would like to hear from the designers how the façades fit with Northville. Noisy substation right across the street from this portion of the development. The fact that these particular rowhouses don’t have front porches might be wise in this instance. However, coming down Griswold, much of the charm from the original renderings is lost.

Barry: Agree.

Tinberg: Shares this concern. Would like ornamentation, window shaped soffits, etc., that give a more classic or traditional appearance.

Vollick: Likes the blending of different designs and styles

Gaines: Context is important. On the other side of the street is the substation, and then a house with a detached garage. The row houses will provide 10 or 11 addresses, or more, depending on where the front doors are. It is a stark change from what is on the other side

of the street, as well as a stark change from what is there currently. From a use standpoint, this design is fantastic, and what the neighborhood needs. Suggested that the facades might be all brick throughout, or alternatively the design could be purposefully mixed up so that there wasn't a blending, and each building had its own identity.

Mr. Wertheimer: Toll Brothers has a number of single family attached units in the south portion of the site, on the Seven Mile and Center corridor. Hunter Pasteur wanted diversity, offering a contemporary choice including farmhouse contemporary, and providing good transition. It was important to remember there was a park right behind these units. They were working with DTE to plant large evergreen trees in front of the substation, which would not block the noise, but which would improve the aesthetic appearance of the street. Having said all that, they could change to a more traditional look, if so directed.

Mr. Miller: The design of the townhomes was a result of feedback received from the Planning Commission and the Historic District Commission, which feedback included: 1) Don't step down too quickly in density. 2) HDC selected the two buildings shown.

- HDC was interested in a more contemporary look because it offered something different, and complied with Secretary of Interior standards not to copy and mimic history.
- They asked HDC if everything should look the same or different. HDC wanted difference. The two buildings on Griswold were completely unique to the entire Downs project.
- The conceptual rendering appeared more flat than the finished product will be.
- They did shorten the porches.
- The property line varied along the street.
- The materiality also showed diversity, reflecting Northville's character, which was not 100% brick. The materiality changes as it moves down Griswold Street and transitions from the more commercial feel along Cady to a more residential feel along Beal street, moving from an all brick building at the corner of Cady and Griswold, to a mixture of brick and siding on the two center buildings, to all siding as the project becomes more residential at the corner of Griswold.
- First building to the south of Cady will have more detail such as banding, frieze board, sub rakes, rake boards, etc. The next building to the south will remove those details, also resulting in the more contemporary appearance.
- "Not everyone wants to live in their parents' house."

Planning Consultant Elmiger: The HDC has jurisdiction up to the line of the Historic District boundary. Under a PUD, the Planning Commission has the ability to talk about architecture. The HDC and the Planning Commission will need to work together.

Barry: The fenestration of the more modern building might benefit from modification.

Vollick: Likes the two roof lines on the more modern building. The more modern twist works with the industrial feel of the DTE substation across the street.

Kirk: Once explained, he was fine with the design of the more contemporary building.

Salliotte: With everything put in context in this area, including other new construction, this will be a very eclectic part of town. He supported the diversity represented by the current design, although he might support changes in materiality.

Summary by Chair Tinberg: Commissioners are okay with the street frontage as pictured.

Materiality and ornamentation of 2.5 story rowhouses on Center and Beal.

Tinberg: The clean lines, flat roof, and minimal ornamentation of the rowhouses convey a faux industrial look that is trendy rather than a classic, timeless look. She would like something more traditional on these two important, highly visible streets in order to carry Northville's character and sense of place into this development.

Gaines: Architect's work around Central Park is spectacular. The question is how the development fans out to the rest of the area. It appeared as if the development is trying to take cues or elements from nearby Central Park. The design could be tweaked, but he was encouraged that the development was not going immediately to pitched roofs, for instance.

Vollick: Agrees. She liked this section because it reminds her of the buildings on Main Street.

DeBono: The homes do resemble a commercial building, with ties to downtown. Perhaps they could be warmed up a bit.

Barry: Agrees that this area can be done well, with different cornice designs, nodding to downtown.

Planning Consultant Elmiger: The rendering should be redone so that the spaces between the buildings would be more visible.

DeBono agrees with Planning Consultant Elmiger regarding the renderings. He likes what is being done here, including the flat roofs.

Maise agrees.

Tinberg: Likes the right corner building (brick) in the rendering. Other detailing was cold in appearance.

Mr. Wertheimer: Summarizes: the flat roof is liked, the appearance needs to be a little less industrial, and the rendering needs to be improved. They will soften the design but not do a major overhaul.

Gaines: There are flat roofs on the other side of Beal also; the design is contextual with the street.

Summary by Chair Tinberg: Consensus regarding warming up the buildings on the south side of Beal, along with the buildings on Center.

Front porches

Barry: Will the size and depth of the porch provide enough room for people to actually partake in the experience of sitting on a front porch?

Mr. West: The porches will be a minimum 6' deep, and 10' wide. This is an amenity for the residents of the apartment buildings, which also impacts the activation of the street. 10'-15' feet of surrounding landscape will also be provided.

Barry: Not a fan of balconies that jut out from the building, a design that changes the feel of the building and the public space. Some of the projecting balconies need to be pushed back, recessed.

Mr. West: Balconies are a great asset, and become part of the ornament of the building, as shown on other buildings in the City.

DeBono: Not opposed to balconies.

Gaines: Balconies are fantastic and provide street life and eyes on the street. While recessed balconies are gorgeous, they tend to leak and cause other structural difficulties.

Hay: Agrees with Gaines. Success will be in the details. Renderings were sometimes limited in how they presented architectural elements. He supported balconies in general, unless they were done poorly.

Kirk: Supports having the balconies. The renderings were missing the trees.

Maise: Supports the balconies and porches as is.

Gaines: Supports porches throughout the development, but do them well.

Hay: Is rooftop activity envisioned, designed in from the beginning?

Mr. Wertheimer: 150 units in the development have rooftops, some with very large balconies on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. Corner unit of Cady and Griswold shows useable rooftops.

Mr. Miller: Everything in the development has porches, except the Cady-facing units that have ground floor flex space, and those units have two balcony spaces – one at roof level and one over the top of the garage. The units on Griswold all have front covered porches that stick out a little from the front façade. All the corner units have wraparound porches. The 2.5 story townhomes along Beal have stoops and steps with recessed entryway for street activation. The 3 story townhomes on the south end of the project have front porches along with potential for rooftop garden space. The single family homes all have large front porches. The carriage homes have small covered entryway porches and stoops as well, that extend out beyond the front facade of the building.

Summary by Chair Tinberg: No changes are being recommended for porches and balconies. The Commission is looking for good quality design.

Back porch/rear façade design



Vollick: Curious about what is going on behind the rowhouses on Griswold. Wants to make sure that throughout the development the back elevations are as well designed as the front facades.

Barry: Agrees with Vollick. The Commission would like to see elevations of all sides at final. It was important to “trust but verify.”

Mr. Miller: Rear elevations will be shown at final site plan review.

Differentiation in the design of all corner lots in the development

Vollick: Structure at corner of Beal and Griswold was much improved; interested in how other corners will present.

Gaines: Seeing an overall aerial rendering of the entire site would be helpful to see how sides and backs of buildings relate to each other, as well as seeing the relationship of and how all the components of the development interact with each other.

Mr. Wertheimer: This is in process.

Salliotte: Slide 102 shows an aerial of the roundabout/gateway feature. Does the landscaping at the gateway feature fall under the developer’s scope, or is it part of the gateway feature for which the City has responsibility? The façades of the buildings at the entryway needed attention.

Mr. Wertheimer: Will plant 14’-16’ foot evergreens and/or 4.5”-5” caliper deciduous trees on the north side of the traffic circle. They are making a 7-figure commitment to that corner. The rendering shows intent of quality, not final design.

Gaines: Agrees with Salliotte regarding the sides of the buildings at the gateway. There are other sides of buildings that face the street throughout the development. Any part of a building that faces a public street or public right-of-way should be treated as a front and not a side.

Mr. Martin: High visibility home sites will be treated differently than townhomes that abut each other. No vinyl will be used in this development.

Alley functions and materials

Mr. Martin: Widened alleys to 22’, allowing more landscaping, fencing, and is wide enough to promote more than just vehicular access between units. Can be used for walking and biking within the neighborhoods. There is push and pull regarding the alleyways because the more impervious surface, the more stormwater detention is needed.

Mr. Martin: Regarding detention, they continue to try to soften the pond to create a more natural appearance.

Barry: Wing Court is 18’ wide and is serviced by GFL right now. Concerned about the growth of the detention area. Anything that can be done to reduce the detention area would be beneficial.

Mr. Wertheimer: They will design the alley to whatever width the City wants. They had originally suggested 16’.

Hay: Wing Street is actually about 16’ wide; residents put their trash receptacles on the sidewalk for pickup.

Gaines: Commission needs to go on record that it does not support a 24’ alleyway; a much narrower alleyway is preferred.

Vollick: Are green alleys possible?

DeBono: Developer should provide renderings of the alleys.

Planning Consultant Elmiger: This project has 12-foot alleys behind single family homes, and “back driveways” are 22’ wide 2-way lanes behind townhomes and attached houses on the south.

DeBono: Discussion is about the back driveways, not the alleys behind the single family homes.

Planning Consultant Elmiger: The issue of alley width needs input from Public Works and the Fire Department, and City engineers.

Mr. Herkowitz will work with DPW regarding this issue.

Summary by Chair Tinberg: What is the smallest functional alley that can be designed? Impervious surfaces should be designed to keep the detention pond as small as can be reasonably designed.

#### Lot Size and FAR for single family detached homes

Tinberg: Ordinances that govern lot coverage and floor area ratio were developed thoughtfully over time with an eye toward preventing overcrowding, making thoughtful use of available space, and creating a sustainable community. In establishing limits on lot coverage and floor area ratio, the Commission attempted to reasonably address market expectations while still protecting the small town feel of Northville. Because this is an older community and many areas were platted before the demand for today’s larger houses, some existing lots are so small as to make them unappealing, or even unsellable, in the current market if the City were to enforce the lot coverage and FAR limits. To protect existing homeowners against that unintended consequence, the ordinance included provisions for 35% lot coverage on “existing and recorded” substandard sized lots, as well as a maximum 2500 sf home size (relative to FAR) regardless of lot size. Those protections were put in place to protect homeowners on older properties from any unanticipated negative consequences of newer requirements.

This preliminary site plan proposes that about half of the single family detached homes be built on lots that are smaller than the 7200 square foot average Northville lot. Smaller lots generally equal smaller homes which (theoretically) should mean more affordable homes.

However, because many of the proposed lots are less than average size, it might be reasonable for someone to assume that they would receive the protections in our ordinance regarding allowing a higher percentage of lot coverage or a maximum home size that exceeds the established FAR. Was making this assumption a good idea?

First, the size of these lots is completely within the control of the developer. In this instance the City does not need to protect homeowners from the unanticipated consequences of having a smaller lot, as those consequences could be reasonably anticipated and prevented at the time of development. The smaller lot sizes are a challenge created by the developer, not an accident of history, and there was no need for a safety net provision when the lot sizes can be configured appropriately at the outset.

Second, if the Commission allows these smaller lots to exceed the established maximums for lot coverage and floor area ratio, it acts in opposition to the stated priorities about creating more affordable options, maintaining appropriate density, promoting lots with appropriate green space, and supporting a sustainable community over time.

Chair Tinberg did not necessarily have an issue with the smaller lots, because they could, indeed, lead to greater variety and affordability in housing. However, if the substandard lot sizes go forward, she would like to ensure that the 35% lot coverage provision and the 2500 sf maximum house size protection relative to FAR not be available for the lots, because there is no need for safety net protection from a self-created problem.

Gaines: Is concerned about the contextual nature of the different housing types. In particular, the townhomes on the south side of Beal Street have an alley behind, with 3 single family homes on each side of the street further south. It would be unfortunate if a comparison between those two buildings showed a difference in scale because FAR prevented a more contextual approach.

Kirk: Tinberg's concerns are reasonable.

Hay: Tinberg's point is a good one. The question of lot coverage may negate ever being able to consider an accessory dwelling unit. There are conflicting issues between affordability and ordinance requirements. The advantage of a PUD is the Commission can look at everything in totality.

Mr. Wertheimer: Diversity of lot sizes will allow for smaller lots, allowing for less expensive homes. Some of the larger lots are the corner lots, which will help with the scale relative to the townhomes. None of the lots will require variances; the homes will comply with FAR no matter the size of the lot, which will create diversity of home sizes, scale, and attractive streetscape.

Mr. Martin: They needed the ability to go up to the 2500 sf cap on the smaller lots. The homes on the smaller lots would appeal to the empty nester, who needs at least 1800-1900 sf on the main level to account for the normal areas, including 2 bedrooms. Those rooms under the same roof have the ability to pop up and provide a loft space, which will get a study and a third and maybe fourth bedroom if that's what is desired for when friends and family visit, including grandchildren. Also, not every couple sleeps together. Sometimes both members

of a couple work from home, and they need two different spaces to work within. Hunter Pasteur needs to have the 2500 sf cap on the smaller lots; a 2500 sf home in Northville is actually fairly small. Conversely, to put things in context, they are designing a similar bungalow style home, that is targeted toward a young starting family, where 2500 sf is needed to put most of the bedrooms upstairs. Very few young families want to have a new child living on a different floor than where the parents live. They want to maintain the FAR limits but adhere to the spirit of them by allowing the homes to go up to 2500 sf under the lot coverage and FAR.

Tinberg: Half of the properties that are being proposed would trigger the 2500 maximum sf house, and would have more house on the lot than FAR intended. The 2500 sf safety net in FAR was for people who had a really small older lot, but these lots are being created as small lots that will have a greater percentage of house on them, covering more of the green space, and packing more square footage of house in the smaller space. That was not the intent of FAR, which was to preserve green space by not overbuilding lots.

Mr. Martin: The footprint will not change whether the home is 1800 or 1900 sf, or 2500 sf. They were asking for the ability to build vertically onto a second story – really a half story – that will be ingrained into the roof system of the home. They were not using up green space and the setbacks will remain exactly the same. They needed to be able to offer diversified housing types that attract diverse consumers while creating an aesthetically pleasing community. The price the developer paid for this was adhering to the existing FAR rules. The home design was in reaction to the feedback they heard from the community prior to even coming before the Commission; that same feedback came from the Commission regarding the desire for a diversified streetscape and affordable housing that attracts all consumer types from young professionals to the age-in-place demographic. They were trying to create a community from scratch that mimicked the eclectic nature of what was already in the City. The single family lots were not a betrayal of the ordinances because the ordinance exists in an attempt to give the community diversified housing, diversified streetscape, and diversified consumer segments. The public benefit of providing this far outweighs the ability to handicap those homes, because history has taught that homes under 2000 sf sell to a very few people. Requiring smaller homes would alienate entry level first time family buyers, leaving the homes solely for empty nester use at best. That is not what has been envisioned for this development.

Kirk: There are many 1000 sf homes in Northville that sell very quickly.

Gaines: Opposed to holding the developer to a .36 FAR on small lots.

Vollick: Can see both sides of this issue. The lots would not be losing green space if the developer built up.

DeBono: Could there be a blending compromise? Allow 2500 sf on X number of lots, but not on others?

Mr. Martin: They were trying to incorporate the spirit of all the things that had been discussed. They also needed to pay for all the public benefits that occur. Toll Brothers studies have shown that having flexibility of development will greatly increase the likelihood of success of

the project. Keeping the 2500 sf option doesn't mean every home site is going to use the option. It likely means about 40% or 50% of the homes will the second floor option; they need to give the consumer that flexibility. Someone driving down the street or walking the community would never know the home was 2500 square feet versus 1800 to 2000 square feet. They were not reducing green space nor were they increasing the height of the units. They were just trying to create livable, functional space that would appeal to the diverse consumer segments that they had been asked repeatedly to bring to market.

Planning Consultant Elmiger said that most of the small lots are approximately 6500 to 6600 sf. A .36 FAR would generate a home of between approximately 2350 sf and 2370 sf, or about 150 sf smaller than that being requested by the developer.

DeBono: Nothing wrong with that size of home. His own home is 1600 sf on the first floor, with first floor master, with modern first floor amenities including open design and 2 first floor bathrooms. It would sell quickly in today's marketplace.

Kirk: The original intent of the FAR ordinance should be respected.

Maise: Did the FAR ordinance have an "intent" paragraph?

Gaines: The intent of FAR was to protect the character of existing neighborhoods. This is a brand new development. He would like to see the development have the ability to create the best character for the development as possible. Then, a year or so after it is built, the most appropriate thing would be to apply the same types of rules to make sure that character is maintained.

Mr. Wertheimer: The development team agreed to the smaller lots because they heard that desire from the community and the Commission. If they didn't think they could build 2500 sf homes, they might not have agreed to the smaller lots. They should be held to the same ordinance the way everyone else was in the City. Diversity in lot sizes is better for the overall development, and they were asking to be allowed the same 2500 sf maximum on smaller lots as everyone else.

Planning Consultant Elmiger: She would need to check to be sure, but she thought the Commission could permit deviations from the ordinance, but did not have the authority to change ordinance requirements, create new ordinances, or come up with new requirements for a PUD that are not in the ordinance. The width and area of the single family lots would require a deviation but the FAR ordinance could not apply differently to the development than elsewhere.

Salliotte: What is proposed is that the developer can have the maximum 2500 sf and meet all other requirements with the exception of the deviation for a smaller width and lot size. He did not support that.

Hay: What was being requested made sense to him. Part of the intent of FAR was to prevent the tear down of smaller homes in order to construct big-foot homes on small lots. This case was different, in that everyone will know what they are getting in advance. The existing neighborhood protection aspect of the FAR ordinance was the driving factor in discussions

when FAR was written. Still, what the developer was proposing made good sense, and he was comfortable with what was being proposed.

Barry: Agreed with Mr. Wertheimer, that this was a reasonable request.

Summary by Chair Tinberg: Due to lack of consensus, discussion of this topic was closed.

Overall materiality, variations in style/scale

Gaines: In their June 7 presentation, the developer had addressed concerns about creating a canyon effect on S. Center Street. The problem was the solution had resulted in a “Toll Brothers enclave” appearance driving north on Center from 7 Mile Road. While good planning principles were used, the elaborate gateway and the drive up Center gave the appearance of a gated community, partly due to the scale and proportions of the housing product. One way to salvage the street is to mix the massing, style, and materials along the street to create a more urban feel. He had consistently been concerned about how the housing units are mixed or not mixed where there were segregated uses. At a minimum, mixed housing uses should be used on the main streets.

The Commission agreed with Gaines’ comments.

Mr. Wertheimer asked for more specific direction.

Gaines: If the roundabout is constructed, architecture needs to be the foundation of the gateway, not landscaping or masonry walls. In other words, the buildings should form the gateway entrance, presenting a more urban, reflective, responsive appearance, similar to some of the details seen around Central Park. Also, the appearance, scale, and proportions are key drivers in terms of what streets residents feel welcome to walk down. Architectural language can open doors and announce that that the street is part of a greater community. Add components that add vitality activity to the street, especially at important intersections. In hindsight, the advice the Commission gave to avoid a canyon effect did not take into account that good design could create a good canyon effect.

Kirk: The rendering did not show the gaps between different styles and did not show color. He felt that someone driving down Center would not see a canyon, and would see different styles.

Mr. Martin: He did not disagree with Gaines’ comments, but the styles changed more than shown in the rendering. This was a short stretch of road, not even two city blocks in distance. They had intentionally kept the rendering colors muted, in order to focus on massing, etc.

Salliotte: Slide 45 showed design along Griswold Street with variation, scale, and eclectic style. Similar design from 7 Mile to Fairbrook would be appealing. He did take strong exception that any 3-story building along the street would create a canyon effect. A variation in scale and eclectic design such as that planned for Griswold appealed to him.

Gaines: The street needs to offer a glimpse of what Northville offers. It could use the products/design shown along Griswold, or come up with something unique.

Hay: Rendering does not depict what will be real. He does not oppose the proposal as shown for Center Street as much as other Commissioners.

Vollick: Agrees with Salliotte suggestion.

Maise: Agrees with Salliotte and Gaines suggestions.

Tinberg: Wants to come down Center Street and feel that she is now in Northville – more of a downtown look than a modified single family look.

The development team thanked the Commission and indicated they had direction to move forward.

Overall style, proportion, ornamentation (see guiding principles from master plan work)

Barry: To the architects, and referring to slide 71, he would like discussion of providing heavy exterior detailing vs. faux exterior detailing that tries to mimic strong existing statements in the City, such as banding, fascia, headers over the windows, mullions and grills.

Mr. Presley: Agrees with Barry's comments. They are working through the process of designing the homes. They were committed to making the homes look individuated like the homes in the existing neighborhoods.

Kirk: Thanked the developer for hiring Mr. Presley and Mr. Miller.

Gaines: There is something very respectful regarding looking at surroundings and drawing from the City's existing character. What Elkus Manfredi has put forward is complementary to what currently exists, but is also something new for the community to adapt and make their own. The architects have the freedom and the responsibility to come up with a style that is readily adaptable; they are not obligated to try to copy what already exists.

Mr. Presley: Agrees. They are not copying, but drawing inspiration.

Barry: Comfortable with the answers given.

Other tools that should be used to consider compatibility

Hay: Presentation by developer at June 7 meeting was very thorough and informative, and answered a lot of questions. Developer already using many tools. Other tools might include photographs in the archives at Northville Historic Society, Historic District guidelines, Northville history books, etc. He agreed it was important not to copy but to draw inspiration from the past.

Chair Tinberg called a 5 minute break at 9:25pm and reconvened the meeting at 9:30pm.

**Design that promotes walkability and a sustainable community**

Housing types, affordability, and future residents

Commission: This topic has been well-covered.

Minimum code or more, particularly for larger, commercial buildings

Barry: Are the developers looking at LEED standards? Reduction of carbon footprint?

Gaines: The Commission encourages the most sustainable development possible regarding building design, land use, water management, general public well-being. There are different recognition systems for sustainable development. What is the developer’s commitment to these principles, and what strategies will be used?

Mr. Wertheimer: Apartment and Condo buildings will be built to LEED standards, but will not be LEED certified.

Mr. West and Mr. Emerine:

- Sustainability is ingrained in the team’s approach.
- To establish community is part of what sustainability means. Public spaces are key.
- Goal to change a brownfield site to a greenfield site.
- Stormwater mitigation by virtue of the park system, permeability of the site, lack of so much pavement.
- Diversity and compatibility with the region.
- Providing 30% open space, walkability, bicycling. Walkability means people are within walking distance of things. Providing bicycle maintenance area.
- Reduced parking footprint.
- Protect and restore habitat. Water efficiency.
- Build to indoor aspects of LEED or WELL. Provide ventilation, indoor air quality, all aimed at lower energy use and comfort for the residents.
- Achieve and exceed LEED or WELL standards. Will provide specific list as a checklist.

Gaines: Sustainability Team put out a list of items.

Barry: Regarding expectations, especially regarding commercial buildings – Interested in reduction of carbon footprint through proper system selection, utilizing energy programs that will compare and contrast different styles of mechanical systems. New adopted Michigan Energy Code emphasizes third party commissioning, monitoring and periodic recommissioning.

Mr. Martin: Toll Brothers ties to a third party methodology. Utilizes HERS (Home Efficiency Rating System). They test every home and clients are issued a HERS score on every home.

Gaines: The applicants have standards and are willing to state the standards they want to meet. Encourages developer to coordinate with work of the Sustainability Team

Barry: Satisfied with answers this evening.

Permeable pavement solutions

Barry: Would like to defer this discussion to Parks and Open Space discussion.



Mr. Emerine: Working with Wayne County regarding standards for stormwater runoff. Developer team engineers and City engineers need to talk together regarding opportunities for infiltration and low impact design (LID). Currently the site is largely impervious with runoff going directly into the Middle Rouge River and the Johnston Drain. The project to open up 1200 feet of culvert is a great green infrastructure project. There will be soils testing and engineering involved in the design process.

Barry: Agree that what exists on the site now should not be overlooked. Important to do the best possible development without creating maintenance nightmares. Would like to see non-connector roads reduced from 35 feet to about 30 feet curb to curb. Reducing impervious pavement is important.

Creative and workable solutions for grade changes

Hay: Easy to forget there is substantial grade change on the site. As people age, will they be able to traverse the grade changes safely? How will people with disabilities or parents with small children/strollers be accommodated? Will a lot of steps be put in? High points/vistas could be celebrated.

Gaines: Americans with Disabilities Act requires any development to meet minimum grade change standards. Stairs speak to the vitality and fitness of the community. Stairs should be encouraged alongside accessibility opportunities.

Planning Consultant Elmiger: Comments regarding grade change need to be addressed during preliminary site plan review. All of the public sidewalks must meet ADA requirements. Specific areas that require modification should be discussed early on.

Mr. Emerine: Elevation difference north to south is approximately 40-50 feet. All main sidewalks and roads will meet ADA requirements.

Front porches to create connections with people

Commission agreed this had been discussed.

Seasonality issues and whether the site plan works year round.

Commission agreed to defer discussion.

Other items regarding walkability

Barry: Public crossings need to be well defined.

**Street trees, sidewalks, and right of way plantings**

Screening between uses/features

Defer discussion to final site plan review.

Low impact design opportunities in ROW/parking areas

Defer to Infrastructure and/or parks and open spaces discussion.

Yards wide enough for shade trees

Already addressed.

Diversification of Species

Planning Consultant Elmiger: Information regarding tree species will be presented at final site plan. Most important in the preliminary site plan is to make sure there is enough space for street trees within the street environment and design. This has been accomplished.

Alignment with tree ordinance; use of invasives

Defer to final site plan review.

Caliper of trees

Defer to final site plan review.

Mr. Wertheimer: They will plant larger trees.

Overall landscape design

Defer to final site plan review.

**Gateway features at South Center Street and/or River Street**

Reflections on what has been proposed

Salliotte: Slide 107 shows a rendering of the roundabout entryway. The architecture that surrounds the gateway should be further defined and refined as the developers and Planning Commission contemplate the architecture of the entryway street in its entirety and what opportunities might exist. What will this feature look like on day 1 and how will the buildings be treated as they relate to the entryway feature itself? The rendering shows a beautifully landscaped feature. Seeing it further back from Sheldon, to see the roundabout in its entirety as well as the gateway feature would contextualize the roundabout and gateway a little more.

Gaines: The architecture must lead the gateway design. To just provide landscaping and masonry gateway structures carries the danger that it might start to give the appearance of a gated community, which would not be desirable. Let the architecture lead and the landscape support the gateway.

Vollick: Agrees.

Kirk: The Commission hasn't seen any gateway element attached to River Street. Is anything proposed there?

Mr. Wertheimer: They had not yet designed anything; they will create a crosswalk from River Street to Hines Park. They can present landscaping. River Street will be more understated than the entrance at 7 Mile and Center.

Barry: Slide 106 shows the masonry entry element. Materiality could be used to provide an ode to old Northville and the racetrack itself. Use different materials than brick to identify Northville as an older community.

Mr. Wertheimer: Current Northville Downs entrance at 7 Mile and Center has fake stone. They have been in deliberations with the Mobility Task Force as to how to create something different than the fake stone, and that would pay homage to old Northville and Northville

Downs. The rendering showed the level of quality that they would expect; it was not the final design.

Vollick: Use materials recycled from the Downs. Metal arch from Cady cemetery is an example of old Northville.

Gaines: Important to reference the past, whether as part of the entablature of a gateway building, or with a separate element.

Best practices around site lines if there is a roundabout

Tinberg: Per Traffic Engineer Dearing, safe practices regarding roundabouts suggest there should not be clear sight lines from one side of the roundabout to the other. Rather, the center of the roundabout should have some kind of landscaping, structure, or ornamentation that blocks a driver's view across the intersection, forcing them to focus just on the traffic coming at them immediately. This could make the center of the roundabout an excellent location for a gateway feature.

Hay: Roundabout will need to provide clear signage. Decisions will need to be made as to whether it will be one lane or two lanes. Signaling devices will need to be provided for pedestrian system. Would like to see a realistic rendering of the completed roundabout, that meets all the engineering design requirements, and also meets the aspirations and the inspiration of the artists and the designers. The roundabout from day one of its installation, needs to be as safe as it's ever going to be for pedestrians and bicyclists. The whole roundabout package should be presented at one time.

Signage/way finding

Postpone discussion until final site plan review.

Maintenance of plantings over time

Postpone discussion until final site plan review. Discussion will need to relate to the donation of land for the River Park.

Vollick: Requested that arborist Jim Porterfield be part of final discussions regarding tree species and sizes to be planted.

Chair Tinberg closed discussion on *architecture, landscaping and aesthetics*. Public feedback regarding this topic will be taken at the July 5, 2022 meeting.

On July 5 there will be a presentation from the Hunter Pasteur team highlighting the components of the preliminary site plan relative to parks and public spaces, including a potential location for the farmers market.

The next topic will be *parks, public spaces, and farmers market*. If there is time, deliberations will begin on this topic at the July 5 meeting.

**6. OTHER PLANNING COMMISSION BUSINESS**

None

**10. ADJOURN**

**MOTION by Maise, support by Barry** , to adjourn the meeting at 10:35 pm.

**Motion carried by voice vote.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Cheryl McGuire  
Recording Secretary