



**MASTER PLAN AND ZONING COMMITTEE**  
**City of Novi Planning Commission**  
**August 22, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.**  
**Novi Civic Center – Mayor’s Conference Room**  
**45175 W. Ten Mile, Novi, MI 48375**  
**(248) 347-0475**  
**DRAFT MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m.

**1. Roll Call**

Present: Member Anthony, Member Avdoulos, Chair Pehrson  
Not Present: None

Staff Present: Barb McBeth, Sri Komaragiri, Tom Schultz, Hannah Smith

**2. Approval of Agenda**

Motion to approve by Member Avdoulos, seconded by Member Anthony.

**3. Audience Participation and Correspondence**

There was no audience participation or correspondence.

**4. Discussion Items**

**A. Rezoning Request from I-1 (Light Industrial) to I-2 (General Industrial) with Planned Rezoning Overlay (PRO)**

Review and provide comments on the rezoning request for a 7.61-acre property South of Grand River Avenue and east of Taft Road (Section 15)

Planner Komaragiri explained that the applicant, Keford Collision & Towing is seeking to rezone the property from I-1 Light Industrial to I-2 General Industrial, which is not supported by the Master Plan. Uses would include their auto body collision shop in the large building (already existing on the site), an accessory use of car rental requiring minimal space, a related but not yet determined use in the smaller building (already existing on site), and an enclosed yard for storage of towed vehicles in the rear yard.

Planner Komaragiri indicated that there were no major comments from staff and consultant reviews of the PRO Concept Plan, other than Planning. Most deviations are relative to Landscaping on the site. Staff had a pre-application meeting with the applicant in June 2018, where the applicant was proposing asphalt millings in the tow yard as a form of alternative paving material. With this submittal of the PRO Concept Plan, that has been eliminated. The plan also includes a face lift to the façade of the front building.

Chair Pehrson asked if there are changes proposed to the photometrics of the site?

City Planner McBeth said the back part of the site is currently not paved, so the applicant would be adding lights in the back.

David Landry, with Landry, Mazzeo & Dembinski PC and representing Keford Towing, said one of the goals of the Master Plan is to maintain current businesses. Keford has been in the City of Novi for years and are losing their lease at their Grand River space. The City has a contract with Keford Towing and has for many years and it is required that they have a main spot. In terms of screening, nothing can be seen in the rear from Grand River. To the west and east is industrial and to the south, it is zoned residential but is owned by the City and is used for detention. This is not a major zoning change, just from I-1 to I-2 and they are proposing to use a PRO Agreement so that this is the only I-2 use that can be done here. They don't need the office so will leave the building, and plan to do a small car rental operation. The building in the back has very high electrical power to it, so a small tool and die shop would be a perfect use for that building, as it is not needed by Keford Collision & Towing.

Chair Pehrson asked the square footage that the business has now compared to what it would be with this site?

Tom Herrington, with Keford Collision & Towing, said they currently have 16,000 square feet. With this site, they would have 23,500 square feet.

Mr. Landry said the building on this site is currently jammed with machinery that will all be cleaned up and there are no volatiles in the ground. They did find arsenic and chromium in the soil at the level of DEQ residential standards.

Member Anthony said those can be broken down to be below standards.

Chair Pehrson said it is a great space and he sees no issue with modifying the zoning because it's not a big jump from I-1 to I-2. Keford Towing is a valued business in the City. He asked for them to explain more about the car rental operation.

Mr. Herrington said they don't do it currently, but it would be a possibility with this site. They haven't marketed it yet but it would be the perfect spot for it. It would only require ten cars that are new cars that agencies have. Operations like this are usually run with two or three people in the office, so it would not have a big impact on traffic or the space that they need. It would be a natural fit.

Chair Pehrson asked if they will leave the rear building vacant for the time being? He asked City Attorney Schultz how unlisted uses are written in PRO Agreements?

City Attorney Schultz said it depends on how much the applicant is willing to limit the use. It may require that they have to come back and amend the PRO. The applicant has to agree to the list of allowed uses.

Chair Pehrson said he appreciates that the applicant is coming to the Committee with openness to amending the PRO. The view here is positive and he doesn't think the Planning Commission will have issues with the intent of this project. He suggested that the applicant work with the Planning Staff as much as possible to limit and mitigate deviations. He said he pictures this as being a lot better looking than what is there now.

Member Anthony said he agrees on a lot of this. It's not a big change from the current zoning. In terms of the car rental, compared to the operation of the towing company that is a subtle use. In terms of the screening to the south with the residential there, when it's green it will be a good barrier but in the winter, it becomes more open and

the sound will travel. He agrees with staff that there needs to be some level of screening there, and they will see that across the Planning Commission.

Mr. Herrington said on the storage itself, they have proposed to put screening on the fence itself.

Mr. Landry said and that is a security thing, so that nothing can be seen through the chain link.

Chair Pehrson recommended working with the staff.

Member Avdoulos said he agrees. There will probably be residents that come out to the public hearing and there will be concern. He said he likes that the building itself will be enhanced, as it is consistent with improvements that the Commission is always seeking on Grand River. They have a good architect that he is sure will work in harmony with Staff. They would like to keep good, solid businesses within the City limits. He thanked the applicant for doing what they are doing.

Chair Pehrson asked if they have standard hours of operation right now?

Mr. Herrington said their general hours are 7:30am-6pm. Towing is 24 hours a day, but those are the office hours.

Chair Pehrson asked so there are trucks coming in in the middle of the night?

Mr. Herrington said after midnight, there are usually only about two or three calls per night.

Member Avdoulos said the PRO really helps with these decisions, the Committee and Commission don't like spot zoning so it's helpful to have the PRO where things can be written in to accommodate requests. It provides a lot of comfort in making decisions.

City Planner McBeth said on the noise issue, landscaping or a berm might help. With the body shop, are the doors kept close while work is being done?

Mr. Herrington said it varies, but generally they are closed.

Member Anthony said the outbuilding may bring in other uses, so the noise might be something that they'd want to consider there, too. For example, if it were a tool and die shop.

Mr. Landry said they are not wedded to tool and die, it might just be a natural fit. They could also use it for themselves.

Member Anthony said I think this will be a better location for the business than the existing one.

Mr. Herrington agreed. It will be easier for the business to function there.

Member Avdoulos said it is also a bonus to get those types of businesses off of busy intersections.

Chair Pehrson asked if notices were sent to the neighbors?

City Planner McBeth said Staff suggests that the applicant meet with the neighbors to notify them. They might have suggestions that would help with the required conditions portion of the Ordinance.

Chair Pehrson asked City Attorney Schultz about issues on the legal side?

City Attorney Schultz said he hasn't heard a lot about legal conditions.

Mr. Landry said they have a placeholder PRO Agreement. They are offering to limit it to this single I-2 use and will call out potential uses for the back building. If this I-2 use were to ever cease, it would float back to the I-1 zoning.

Member Avdoulos asked about the timeline of needing the rezoning?

Planner Komaragiri said staff can get them on the September 26 Planning Commission meeting.

Mr. Landry said they just need approval of the rezoning by October 30.

Planner Komaragiri said to confirm, tool and die falls within I-1. In terms of parking, if they were to lease it to office space, the parking count would need to be higher.

City Planner McBeth said if the project does go rezoning to Planning Commission on September 26, the signs need to be installed soon.

Planner Komaragiri said they need to be installed fifteen days prior to the public hearing at the meeting.

Planner Komaragiri said everything else is pretty minor. The only thing is that Fire would need access to the back lot.

Chair Pehrson said and it must allow trucks to get in past the gate after hours.

Mr. Herrington said yes, they have talked to the Fire Department about that.

**B. Approval of June 27, 2018 Master Plan and Zoning Committee meeting minutes**  
Motion to approve made by Member Avdoulos, seconded by Member Anthony.

## **5. Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn made by Member Avdoulos, seconded by Member Anthony.  
Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.