



# PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

CITY OF NOVI  
Regular Meeting

**February 25, 2026 7:00 PM**

Council Chambers | Novi Civic Center  
45175 Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI 48375 (248) 347-0475

## CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

## ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Pehrson, Member Reddi, Member Dismondy, Member Avdoulos, Member Roney, Member Verma

Absent Excused: Member Lynch

Staff: Barbara McBeth, City Planner; Elizabeth Saarela, City Attorney; Lindsay Bell, Senior Planner, Diana Shanahan, Planner; Rick Meader, Landscape Architect; Humna Anjum, Plan Review Engineer; Kate Purpura, Plan Review Engineer

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Pehrson led the meeting attendees in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Roney to approve the February 25, 2026 Planning Commission Agenda.

**ROLL CALL ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 25, 2026 PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA MOVED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER RONEY. *Motion carried 6-0.***

## AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Chair Pehrson invited members of the audience who wished to address the Planning Commission during the first audience participation to come forward. Seeing no one, Chair Pehrson closed the first public audience participation.

## CORRESPONDENCE

There was not any correspondence.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Committee reports.

## CITY PLANNER REPORT

There was no City Planner report.

## CONSENT AGENDA - REMOVALS AND APPROVALS

There were no consent agenda removals or approvals.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

### **1. JSP25-33 CENTRAL PARK SOUTH**

Public hearing for Preliminary Site Plan, Wetland Permit, Woodland Permit and Storm Water Management Plan. The subject property is zoned RM-2 (High Density Multiple Family) and is approximately 6.6 acres. The applicant is proposing a multifamily development with 106 units in a single 5-story building.

Senior Planner Lindsay Bell stated the subject property is approximately 7 acres and is located on the east side of Beck Road, south of Grand River Avenue in Section 16. The parcel is currently vacant. The property is zoned RM-2 High Density Mid Rise Multiple Family, with the same zoning to the south, RM-1 Low Rise Multiple Family to the east and north, and R-3 One-Family Residential on the west side of Beck Road. To the northwest is zoned Office Service Commercial and contains the Henry Ford Hospital campus. Further south on Beck are single family uses zoned Residential Acreage.

The Future Land Use map indicates Multiple-Family for the subject property and surrounding property on the north, east and south. To the west of Beck is planned for Suburban Low Rise and Office Service Commercial. The recommended density in the Master Plan for Land Use is 20.7 dwelling units per acre for this area. There are wetland and woodland areas on the site, which will be covered in more detail later in the presentation.

Planner Bell noted you may recall that this property previously came before the Planning Commission in 2023 with a proposal for a 5-story building that was a square shape and had 146 units. Although the project was granted approval from the Planning Commission, the applicant later decided to redesign the layout, so a new proposal is submitted for your review.

The applicant is proposing to develop the parcel with a single 5-story L-shaped apartment building with 106 units. The effective density is 16 dwelling units per acre. Parking would be provided under a portion of the building on the ground floor, as well as surface and garage parking on the southeast, northwest and northeast sides. A private street is proposed to connect the development to Beck Road, with a secondary connection to the northeast to the Central Park Estates development. Sidewalks are provided within the development and includes a connection north to the Central Park Estates site. These connections between the properties are enabled because the applicant owns both projects. In fact, the current subject property was originally intended to be developed as "Beck House" in the early 2000's and both properties were included in the original site plan submittal. The applicant indicates there are existing cross-access easements in place for the roads, and that it was intended that the properties both benefit from shared preserved 15 acres of open space that is east of the property and contains a nature trail.

Planner Bell stated in the motion sheet the Planning Commission is asked to make a determination that a portion of the open space on the adjacent site count toward the usable open space required for this project. The site plan approved at that time shows the open space provided greatly exceeded what was required for Central Park Estates.

A separate determination is also requested to permit 8 parking spaces on the Central Park Estates site, which were not required for their minimum parking, be shared with this project. The applicant has offered a shared parking agreement to formalize this arrangement. All 8 spaces are needed to fulfill the minimum parking requirement.

Two landscaping waivers are requested: First for the lack of a greenbelt berm along Beck Road, due to the location of the stormwater detention pond. Staff supports this waiver because there is significant landscaping provided between the building and Beck Road, and the placement of the detention pond avoids additional wetland impacts. The second waiver is for lack of a screening berm between the single-family residential property to the south. Staff supports the waiver as the applicant has provided this exhibit showing the existing vegetation will provide adequate buffer and is already protected by a conservation easement. The landscaping plan for the original Central Park Estates included planting 339 woodland replacement trees for the anticipated woodland removals for the Beck House project, which were

planted and inspected at that time. Since the current woodland removals require only 138 replacements, it appears that no additional replacement trees are required.

Six variances are being requested by the applicant from the Zoning Board of Appeals, which are listed in the motion sheet. Staff supports each of these variances as they help minimize the wetland and woodland impacts, and because of the unique relationship between this project and Central Park Estates to the north, which will offer shared use of the amenities.

The Façade review notes the elevations of the building are in full compliance with ordinance. The materials proposed include a 3-toned brick, simulated wood, flat metal panels, and cast stone. The garage structures will have coordinating materials.

Planner Bell stated plans to reconstruct this area of Beck Road are moving forward, and the applicant has been working with the City to convey the necessary right of way and coordinate utility work. The work is anticipated to begin – potentially next week – and finish in the fall.

Stormwater is to be collected by a single storm sewer collection system and discharged to an on-site detention basin. Wetland areas on the property will be impacted, which has been reduced from the previous submittal. Total impact area proposed is 0.19 acre, which does not meet the threshold to require mitigation. However, the applicant is required to perform environmental enhancement activities for the remaining wetland areas, including removal of invasive species and planting native plants and seed.

Planner Bell stated all reviewers are recommending approval or conditional approval if the requested waivers and variances are granted, with all remaining comments to be addressed in the Final Site Plan submittal. The Planning Commission is asked to hold the public hearing and approve or deny the Preliminary Site Plan, Wetland permit, Woodland Permit, and Storm Water Management Plan. The property owner Blair Bowman is here with his team to further elaborate on their plans. The City's staff are available to answer any questions you may have.

Chair Pehrson invited the applicant to address the Planning Commission.

Mr. Blair Bowman, on behalf of Central Park South stated Ms. Bell did a wonderful job describing the project. It was stated this is the third site plan iteration in the past 20 years , with hopes that the third time is the charm. Not unlike much of the development community when costing out the previously approved site plan program in conjunction with market conditions, the team found themselves wanting to go back to the drawing board. It was stated this resulted in three things occurring, a reduction in density, a reduction in the size of the footprint, and a reduced impact on the natural features of the site. It was noted that the mitigation which was approved to be done in the preserved area is no longer required. The building is now positioned further away from adjacent residential uses and more natural conditions of the site are preserved.

Mr. Bowman stated representatives from the Geis Companies and Spalding DeDecker are in attendance to answer any questions that the Planning Commission may have as they respectively request approval of the revised site plan.

Chair Pehrson opened the public hearing and invited members of the audience who wished to speak to approach the podium.

Ms. Martha Ryznar at 44875 Yorkshire Drive stated she has been a resident of Novi for 23 years. She expressed her concern regarding the overdevelopment of Novi and the natural features on this land. The plan for Central Park South Estates is to cut down 138 large woodland trees. Leveling of the land could compromise additional trees and several at risk trees were identified in the packet. It was requested that all the damaged trees in the development be replaced. Ms. Ryznar stated that the developer says that they have 339 tree credits from a 2001 development, however the problem is that the credits are 25 years old. If the promised credits are based on dead trees, it is not fair to the environment. Mr. Ryznar requested

that an audit be done on the 339 replacement trees and asked that the Planning Commission please stand up for our precious trees before the woodland permit is approved.

Seeing no one else, Chair Pehrson relayed correspondence was received from Jennifer Flowers at 47305 Central Park Boulevard in support.

Chair Pehrson closed the Public Hearing and turned the matter over to the Planning Commission.

Member Reddi stated she had no comment.

Member Dismondy inquired of the applicant whether the shared parking was simply a matter of the spaces not being able to fit on the new parcel.

Mr. Bowman stated the spaces could be accommodated however the resource was already in place. The original design of Central Park, getting into the minutia, was that there was a centralized compacting dumpster system with residents disposing of their refuse themselves. This did not make practical sense therefore was eliminated. There is an existing approach and surfaced area from that, so instead of disturbing additional natural resources it was proposed that a shared parking agreement is put in place.

Member Dismondy requested clarification that the extra spaces are available.

Mr. Bowman confirmed that extra spaces are available.

Member Verma inquired in there will be elevators in the building.

Mr. Bowman confirmed there will be two elevators in a central location. One elevator will be larger in size and be designated for moving in and moving out activities and one will be dedicated to passenger transport. Two elevators allows for redundancy in the event that one elevator is down.

Member Roney inquired what the required number of replacement credits is for the trees being removed.

Planner Bell stated 138 replacement credits are required and 339 were planted.

Member Roney stated it is logical to think that the majority of those trees would be in good shape. He noted the revised design is favorable as it does not appear to look like an apartment as much as the previous design.

In regard to the wetlands, Member Roney noted the reduction of wetland impacts by 40% is very positive. He stated he has no issue with the shared parking. The question was raised regarding the concern surrounding the open space and what that entailed.

Planner Bell stated Mr. Bowman has offered to provide an agreement between the two properties that will be available even if one property should be sold to a new owner so that the use will remain shared.

Member Roney stated he likes the project.

Member Avdoulos stated the project itself is contextual to the area. It was expressed that the reduction in the number of units per acre from 20 to 16, the reduction in the total number of units, and the reduction in the wetland impact are positive. It was stated the replacement trees are going in the right direction and the project is a great improvement. He noted hopefully the third time is the charm, as every time the project comes before the Planning Commission it becomes smaller. Member Avdoulos stated he likes the looks of the project, and it will be a great addition.

Motion to approve the JSP25-33 Central Park South Preliminary Site Plan made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Roney.

In the matter of Central Park South JSP25-33, motion to approve the Preliminary Site Plan based on and subject to the following:

1. A determination that off-site Central Park Estates open space amenities may count toward the total amount of usable open space required, as the original plans for the properties were to share amenities, provided that a formal agreement that the spaces are shared is provided at the time of final site plan in a form approved by the City Attorney.
2. A determination that 8 parking spaces located on the site of the adjacent property may be shared between the developments, as the applicant will provide an agreement to share those spaces. Such agreement will be reviewed by the City Attorney at the time of final site plan approval, and must be recorded prior to approval of final stamping sets.
3. Landscape waiver from Sec. 5.5.3.B.ii & iii. for lack of a screening berm to adjacent Single-Family zoning, because significant existing trees will remain in a conservation easement in between the buildings, which is hereby granted;
4. Landscape waiver from Sec. 5.5.3.B.ii for lack of a greenbelt berm along Beck Road, due to the location of the stormwater pond, and because significant landscaping is provided to screen the building, which is hereby granted;
5. The following will require Zoning Board of Appeals approval:
  - a. Variance from Section 3.8.2.C to exceed the maximum building length of 180 feet by 80 feet (260-foot length proposed).
  - b. Variance from Section 3.6.2.B and 3.8.2.F to allow a 11.5-foot parking setback at the northern property line (20 feet required).
  - c. Variance from Section 5.10.1.B.iv to allow parking spaces within 14 feet of a building (25 feet required).
  - d. Variance from the definition of Usable Open Space, to allow spaces less than 50-foot dimensions (amenity areas and walking path) to count toward the required space.
  - e. Variance from Section 3.1.8.D to allow a reduction in the on-site open space to 14,600 square feet (21,200 sf required).
  - f. Variance from Section 3.8.2.G for the absence of sidewalk on one side of the driveway (both sides required).
6. The findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters and the conditions and the items listed in those letters being addressed on the Final Site Plan.

This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Article 3, Article 4, and Article 5 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance.

**ROLL CALL ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE JSP25-33 CENTRAL PARK SOUTH PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN MOVED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER RONEY. *Motion carried 6-0.***

Motion to approve the JSP25-33 Central Park South Wetland Permit made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Roney.

In the matter of Central Park South JSP25-33, motion to approve the Wetland Permit based on and subject to the findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters, and the conditions and items listed in those letters being addressed on the Final Site Plan. This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Chapter 12 of the Code of Ordinances and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance.

**ROLL CALL ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE JSP25-33 CENTRAL PARK SOUTH WETLAND PERMIT MOVED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER RONEY. *Motion carried 6-0.***

Motion to approve the JSP25-33 Central Park South Woodland Permit made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Roney.

**In the matter of Central Park South JSP25-33, motion to approve the Woodland Permit based on and subject to the findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters, and the conditions and items listed in those letters being addressed on the Final Site Plan. This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Chapter 37 of the Code of Ordinances and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance.**

**ROLL CALL ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE JSP25-33 CENTRAL PARK SOUTH WOODLAND PERMIT MOVED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMEBR RONEY. *Motion carried 6-0.***

Motion to approve the JSP25-33 Central Park South Stormwater Management Plan made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Roney.

**In the matter of Central Park South JSP25-33, motion to approve the Stormwater Management Plan based on and subject to the findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters, and the conditions and items listed in those letters being addressed on the Final Site Plan. This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Chapter 11 of the Code of Ordinances and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance.**

**ROLL CALL ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE JSP25-33 CENTRAL PARK STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN MOVED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMEBR RONEY. *Motion carried 6-0.***

**2. JSP25-34 ARMSTRONG WAREHOUSE**

Public hearing for Special Land Use, Preliminary Site Plan, and Stormwater Management Plan. The subject property is located at 22735 Heslip Drive and consists of approximately 1.31 acres, situated north of Nine Mile Road and east of Novi Road (Section 26). The property is zoned I-1 (Light Industrial). The applicant proposes construction of a 4,000 square-foot warehouse building.

Planner Diana Shanahan stated the 1.31-acre subject site is currently vacant and located on the west side of Heslip Drive within the Novex One Corporate Park. The parcel is zoned I-1 Light Industrial. Adjacent properties to the north, east, and south are also zoned I-1 Light Industrial, while the adjacent property to the west is zoned RM-1 Low-Density, Low-Rise Multiple Family. The future land use map designates the subject property and the adjacent properties to the north, east, and south as Industrial/Office. The property to the west is designated Multiple Family.

The site does not contain any regulated wetlands. Although the City's natural features woodlands map identifies woodland only along the far western portion of the property, site conditions observed during a January 2026 field visit conducted by the City's environmental consultant determined that a majority of the trees on-site meet the criteria for regulated woodland. Pursuant to Chapter 37 (Woodlands Protection), woodland areas may be identified based on factors such as soil quality, habitat quality, tree species composition and diversity, overall health and vigor of the tree stand, understory quality, wildlife presence, and related ecological characteristics. Based on these criteria, the environmental consultant concluded that most of the tree cover on the site qualifies as regulated woodland due to its stand density and its connectivity to regulated woodland areas located west and northwest of the property.

A woodland permit is not required for the proposed project, as no single-stem trees greater than 36 inches DBH are proposed for removal. Woodland replacement trees are also not required. All construction activity will be confined to the eastern 170 feet of the property, and the proposed building will be located outside the regulated woodland area.

Planner Shanahan stated the applicant proposes to construct a one-story building of approximately 4,000

square feet, consisting of 3,000 square feet of warehouse/workshop space and 1,000 square feet of office space. The south elevation will include two 10-foot overhead doors and seven parking spaces. The warehouse/workshop space will be used solely by the applicant for the fabrication of custom millwork and furniture commissioned by private clients. The office area will accommodate administrative and business-related functions. No employees, retail activity, or customer visits are proposed for the site.

Within the I-1 District, manufacturing uses require Special Land Use approval by the Planning Commission when the property abuts a residentially zoned district. The subject property abuts the Saddle Creek Apartment complex to the west, which is zoned RM-1. The factors to consider for Special Land Use approval are listed in the motion sheet, and essentially state that relative to other permitted uses of the site, the proposed use will not cause detrimental impact to public roads, public services, or public facilities, and will be compatible with natural features and adjacent land uses. Based on the submitted materials, the proposed use is not expected to result in detrimental impacts and is considered compatible with surrounding development, particularly given that construction will be confined to the eastern portion of the site and existing woodland will be preserved as buffer.

Stormwater will be managed on-site through an infiltration trench installed in the swale along the north side of the building and a surface infiltration filter installed in the swale along the south side of the parking lot. Discharge will occur via sheet flow to Heslip Drive, which ultimately discharges to the Novex One detention basin.

The applicant is requesting a landscape waiver from the requirement to construct a 10-15-foot-high screening berm along the west property line where the industrial district abuts the RM-1 residential district. Approximately 230 feet of existing woodland along the western property line will be preserved and is expected to provide adequate screening between the proposed development and the adjacent residential property. Staff supports the waiver based on the existing natural buffer.

A Section 9 Façade Waiver is also requested to allow a percentage of metal siding that exceeds the ordinance maximum on the north, south, and west facades. The façade review notes that the west façade has limited visibility from Heslip Drive, and the deviations on the north and south façades are minor. The overall building design is consistent with the intent and purpose of the Façade Ordinance. The Section 9 Façade Waiver is supported.

Planner Shanahan stated the applicant is requesting a same-side driveway waiver due to an approximate 10-foot deficiency measured from near curb approach to near curb approach to the driveway to the north. The constrained frontage width and the location of adjacent driveways limit alternative driveway placement options. Staff supports the waiver under these circumstances.

If the applicant elects not to install required curbing within the parking areas, a Design and Construction Standards (DCS) variance will be required. The proposed site plan complies with all other applicable Zoning Ordinance standards. All reviewing departments recommend approval, subject to additional comments to be addressed at the time of Final Site Plan submittal.

The Planning Commission is requested to hold the public hearing and consider approval or denial of the Special Land Use Permit, Preliminary Site Plan, and Stormwater Management Plan. Representing the project this evening are applicant David Armstrong, Architect Robert Miller, and Realtor William Hanes. Staff is also available to answer questions.

Chair Pehrson invited the applicant to address the Planning Commission.

Mr. Robert Miller with M Architects, stated he is the architect on the project and also resides in Novi on Galway Drive. He noted with him this evening are the applicant David Armstrong and realtor William Hanes both of whom also reside on Galway Drive.

Mr. Miller stated the intended use of the building does not neatly fit into the definitions for the zoning area,

as the proposed building will be for hobby use. He noted Mr. Armstong is a woodworker and is looking to purchase this piece of property in order to build a small building in which he can work on his hobby. It was expressed that there will be no clients coming to the building and there is not much they will be doing in terms of deliveries. The building would be a spot for Mr. Armstong to go and work on his woodworking, so the use doesn't fall under the traditional definitions. For this reason, a Special Land Use Permit is being requested.

It was stated Mr. Armstong would like to maintain as many of the trees on site as possible, being a woodworker, he appreciates the natural environment. For this aim, the building is modest in size and situated toward the front of the property as much as possible. He noted Mr. Armstong prefers this location on Heslip Drive as it is walkable from his home. Mr. Miller stated he is happy to answer any questions.

Chair Pehrson opened the public hearing and invited members of the audience who wished to speak to approach the podium.

Seeing no one, Chair Pehrson relayed two correspondence were received. Mr. David Steuer at 30180 Orchard Lake Road is in support and noted that the building looks nice and the use will be less intense than the use of other buildings on the street. Mr. Joel Patterson with M.J. White and Son Inc. at 22705 Heslip Drive objects as the new construction may increase stormwater runoff due to impervious surfaces like roofs, driveways, and foundations. Mr. Patterson's concerns include flooding, soil erosion, and damage to landscaping.

Chair Pehrson closed the Public Hearing and turned the matter over to the Planning Commission.

Member Reddi stated she had no comment.

Member Dismondy stated the project seems to fit.

Member Verma stated the response letter from Mr. David Steuer listed an address in Farmington Hills. He inquired if Mr. Steuer lives near the project.

Chair Pehrson stated comments are able to be submitted from anywhere in the state.

Member Roney expressed curiosity regarding the use as the packet stated there would be no employees at the building, however the presentation clarified that detail. Member Roney shared he dabbles in woodworking and expressed the wish to do something similar. Regarding the stormwater management objection, clarification was requested on whether every project receives a stormwater management review.

Project Engineer Kate Purpura stated all of the Engineering reviews are done in house and every project is looked at.

Member Roney stated the review has been done and the stormwater management plan is an engineered plan therefore should be very good.

Member Avdoulos stated he likes the fact that the proposed building is located in the upper one third of the property. It was expressed that the building is nicely designed as it is clean and simple. It was noted this will be a handsome looking building. Member Avdoulos inquired if the brick will be dark in color with the horizontal detail being galvalume.

Mr. Miller stated the galvalume is standard galvanized metal. Two complementary accent colors will be utilized, with the red accent being used on the front of the building. The building presentation will include a combination of dark brick, galvalume, and accent features.

Member Avdoulos stated it will be a sharp-looking building.

Motion to approve the JSP25-34 Armstrong Warehouse Special Land Use Permit made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Roney.

**In the matter of Armstrong Warehouse JSP25-34, motion to approve the Special Land Use Permit based on and subject to the following:**

1. **Relative to other feasible uses of the site:**
  - a) **The proposed use will cause any detrimental impact on existing thoroughfares in terms of overall volumes, capacity, safety, vehicular turning patterns, intersections, view obstructions, line of sight, ingress and egress, acceleration/ deceleration lanes, off-street parking, off-street loading/unloading, travel times and thoroughfare level of service. (The proposed use is on an industrial drive, and the number of peak hour trips is low);**
  - b) **The proposed use will cause any detrimental impact on the capabilities of public services and facilities, including water service, sanitary sewer service, storm water disposal and police and fire protection to service existing and planned uses in the area. (No additional impacts on the capabilities of public services and facilities are anticipated);**
  - c) **The proposed use is compatible with the natural features and characteristics of the land, including existing woodlands, wetlands, watercourses and wildlife habitats. (No wetlands or watercourses have been identified on the site);**
  - d) **The proposed use is compatible with adjacent uses of land in terms of location, size, character, and impact on adjacent property or the surrounding neighborhood. (The parcel is adjacent to other Light Industrial properties, and the proposed building will be approximately 265 feet from the nearest residential property);**
  - e) **The proposed use is consistent with the goals, objectives and recommendations of the City's Master Plan for Land Use. (The project reinforces the planned industrial character for the district and supports the economic development objectives and land use framework of the Master Plan);**
  - f) **The proposed use will promote the use of land in a socially and economically desirable manner. (The project contributes to economic development and productive use of a vacant site);**
  - g) **The proposed use is listed among the provision of uses requiring special land use review as set forth in the various zoning districts of this Ordinance. It is in harmony with the purposes and conforms to the applicable site design regulations of the zoning district in which it is located.**

**This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Article 3, Article 4, and Article 5 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance.**

**ROLL CALL ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE JSP25-34 ARMSTRONG WAREHOUSE SPECIAL LAND USE PERMIT MOVED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMEBR RONEY. *Motion carried 6-0.***

Motion to approve the JSP25-34 Armstrong Warehouse Preliminary Site Plan made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Roney.

**In the matter of Armstrong Warehouse JSP25-34, motion to approve the Preliminary Site Plan based on and subject to the following:**

1. **Landscape waiver under Section 5.5.3.A for lack of a screening berm along the west property line adjacent to the residential district (Saddle Creek Apartments) as approximately 230 feet of existing woodland is to be preserved and will provide sufficient screening to the adjacent residential area, which is hereby granted;**
2. **Section 9 Façade waiver under Section 5.15.9 for the overage of ribbed metal siding on the north elevation (50% allowed, 56% proposed), the south elevation (50% allowed, 58% permitted), and the west elevation (50% allowed, 100% proposed) as the design is**

- consistent with the intent and purpose of the Façade Ordinance, which is hereby granted;
3. Same side driveway spacing waiver under Ordinance Article IX, Section 11.216.d.1.d for the deficiency in spacing measured from near curb approach to near curb approach (minimum 105 feet required, 95 feet proposed) as the driveway placement is limited due to the property frontage dimension and existing driveway locations, which is hereby granted;
  4. Design and Construction Standards (DCS) variance approval from the City Council for lack of required curbing in the parking lot;
  5. The findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters and the conditions and the items listed in those letters being addressed on the Final Site Plan.

**This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Article 3, Article 4, and Article 5 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance.**

**ROLL CALL ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE JSP25-34 ARMSTRONG WAREHOUSE PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN MOVED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMEBR RONEY. *Motion carried 6-0.***

Motion to approve the JSP25-34 Armstrong Warehouse Stormwater Management Plan made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Roney.

**In the matter of Armstrong Warehouse JSP25-34, motion to approve the Stormwater Management Plan based on and subject to the findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters, and the conditions and items listed in those letters being addressed on the Final Site Plan. This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Chapter 11 of the Code of Ordinances and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance.**

**ROLL CALL ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE JSP25-34 ARMSTRONG WAREHOUSE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN MOVED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMEBR RONEY. *Motion carried 6-0.***

## **MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **1. JSP26-01 CITY GATE REBUILD**

Consideration for Preliminary Site Plan for a Consumers Energy facility. The subject property is located at 44488 Grand River Avenue and consists of approximately 1.09 acres, situated north of Grand River Avenue and west of Novi Road (Section 15). The property is zoned I-2 (General Industrial). The applicant proposes to demolish and replace the existing regulator building, components, and piping.

Planner Shanahan stated the 1.09-acre site is located on the north side of Grand River, west of Novi Road, within Section 15 of the City. The parcel is zoned I-2 General Industrial. Adjacent properties to the north and east also zoned I-2 General Industrial, while properties to the west and south are zoned I-1 Light Industrial. The future land use map designates the subject property, along with adjacent properties to the north, south, east, and west as Industrial/Office.

The site does not contain any regulated wetlands. Regulated woodlands are located on the northern portion of the parcel. No disturbance to the woodland area is proposed. The existing chain link fence separating the woodland from the developed portion of the site will remain in place. All demolition and construction activities will be confined to the southern portion of the property, outside the regulated woodland area.

Planner Shanahan stated the applicant proposes to demolish the existing Consumers Energy regulator building, associated components, and piping to complete a rebuild of the site. The redevelopment includes construction of a new 789 square foot regulator building, relocation of the existing heater, and installation of new equipment, including a filter separator and reworked piping. The facility is unstaffed, with no employees working on-site daily.

The existing chain link fence along the west property line will be removed. A new gravel drive is proposed to provide maintenance vehicle access within a 15-foot wide, 262-foot-long easement located on the adjacent property to the west. The applicant has secured an easement with the adjacent property owner granting permission for this purpose. For security of the site, the upper portion of this drive will be enclosed by a new chain link fence with an access gate connecting to new chain link fence along the lower portion of the drive along the property line. Site access will continue to be provided from the existing drive on Grand River Avenue.

No dedicated parking spaces are proposed as the site will be accessed only by maintenance vehicles for periodic inspections and equipment maintenance, typically on a weekly basis. The ordinance does not establish a minimum number of parking spaces for utility company uses. The maintenance vehicles will park within the gravel drive located inside the fenced area. ADA spaces are not required for utility uses per the Michigan Barrier Free Code (Section 1103.2.4).

Planner Shanahan stated a Design and Construction Standards (DCS) variance will be required for expansion of the gravel lot. Landscaping improvements are proposed along the ornamental fence adjacent to Grand River Avenue. New site lighting includes a rack mounted light to be installed near the RTU and heater, along with a yard light near the ornamental fence along Grand River Avenue.

The applicant is requesting two landscape waivers. The first waiver addresses a deficiency in required greenbelt landscaping along Grand River Avenue due to existing site conditions which limit the ability to comply. The second waiver relates to insufficient building foundation landscaping due to practical difficulties associated with the parcel's limited size and the operational layout of the site. Staff is in support of both waivers. A Section 9 Façade Waiver is also requested for the underage of brick and overage of fiber cement architectural panels with simulated brick on all elevations. Although fiber cement panels are not currently allowed up to 100% under the Façade Ordinance, the façade review notes that given the utility nature of the building this is an appropriate use of materials. The Section 9 Façade Waiver is supported.

Planner Shanahan stated the proposed site plan complies with all other applicable Zoning Ordinance standards. All reviewing departments recommend approval subject to additional comments to be addressed at the time of Final Site Plan review. The Planning Commission is asked to consider approval or denial of the Preliminary Site Plan. Representing the project this evening are Katelyn Gress with Sidock Group, Angela Trent with Consumers Energy, and Amy Gilpin with Consumers Energy. Staff is also available for questions.

Planner Shanahan noted that the motion sheet was slightly revised and requested that the Planning Commission please use the motion sheet on the table.

Chair Pehrson invited the applicant to address the Planning Commission.

Ms. Amy Gilpin with Consumers Energy stated the Novi City Gate is located at 44488 Grand River Avenue. Ms. Gilpin began by sharing that a City Gate is a step-down facility for lowering the gas pressure to facilitate distribution to your home or business. The gas begins with very high pressure when leaving the storage field after which it goes through a compression station. From there the gas is compressed before heading to the City Gate, from the City Gate it is further compressed and directed to regulator stations. Finally, from the regulator stations the gas is distributed to your home or business.

While at the City Gate the gas is cleaned by using a filter separator to remove particulates. A heater is located at the City Gate for the purpose of heating the gas in order to remove condensation. Additionally, an RTU rack meters the gas usage and sends data to Consumers Energy, this process is continually monitored off site.

Ms. Gilpin stated the site is quite narrow, noting it is 50' with a 15' easement for the additional drive area.

It was stated the existing building will be demolished and a new building will be constructed. Several variances have been granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals related to the building. The building was designed to be slightly larger to allow the majority of the equipment to be stored indoors, prolonging the lifetime of the equipment. Additionally, the larger building footprint is more conducive for crews as they maintain the equipment. Site improvements include relocating a portion of the existing fence, installing a swing gate, relocating the existing heater, installing a filter separator, expanding the driveway to the west, and adding landscaping. It was stated the Michigan Public Service Commission approves the outage dates. The dates of approval for the outage associated with this project are between July 2026 and September 2026 and must be adhered to.

Ms. Gilpin stated there are several site constraints. The first being that the site is very narrow. Variances for the building setbacks were applied for and granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals. Secondly, parking spaces and maneuvering lanes are required to be hard surfaced and curbed. Ms. Gilpin stated the best practice for gas facilities is the use of gravel due to its noncombustible nature. Additionally, gravel holds up to 2" of water which assists with stormwater management and keeps equipment clear of vegetation and roots. Gravel also keeps maintenance costs minimal by eliminating the need for lawn maintenance. With the site restricted in terms access, lawn maintenance would require certification of the company providing the service. As a solution, the interior fenced area will be a 6/8 crushed limestone with the drive area consisting of 6" of a 21AA gravel over fabric. It was stated a Design and Construction Standard Waiver will be requested from the City Council with the Planning Commission's blessing. Thirdly, due to space limitations on site a berm and foundation landscaping are not able to be accommodated. It was noted that typically plantings are not positioned in front of the fence as it restricts the view into the site. However, in this case the team felt shrubs along the ornamental fence would enhance the overall aesthetic of the site. Additionally, the natural hardwood mulch which was requested in the landscape review will be provided. The landscape contractor will warrant the health of the plantings for a period of two years. Lastly, the façade does not meet Region 1 requirements per Section 5.15. It was expressed that an all-brick option for the building is not available in the manufacturer's product line. A custom-built building on site would add a delay to the outage dates approved by the Michigan Public Service Commission as well as increasing cost significantly. As a solution Nichiha siding is proposed and a Section 9 Waiver is requested.

Chair Pehrson turned the matter over to the Planning Commission.

Member Reddi stated it is good knowledge to understand what a City Gate entails. She inquired how the outage will be managed.

Ms. Angela Trent stated some sites can handle a full outage through the use of a bypass. In other situations, a temporary trailer is used. It was stated this particular station will require a full outage.

Member Dismondy stated it is a nice-looking hut.

Member Verma had no comment.

Member Roney thanked the applicant for the detailed explanation of a City Gate.

Member Avdoulos stated it was an excellent presentation.

Motion to approve the JSP26-01 City Gate Rebuild Preliminary Site Plan made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Roney.

**In the matter of City Gate Rebuild JSP26-01, motion to approve the Preliminary Site Plan based on and subject to the following:**

- 1. Landscape waiver under Section 5.5.3.B for lack of greenbelt landscaping requirements along Grand River due to existing site conditions which limit the ability to comply, which is hereby granted;**

2. Landscape waiver under Section 5.5.3.D for foundation landscaping requirements due to practical difficulties associated with the parcel's limited size and the operational layout of the site, which is hereby granted;
3. Section 9 Façade under Section 5.15.9 for underage of brick and overage of fiber cement architectural panels with simulated brick on the north and south elevations (25% allowed, 100% proposed) and the east and west elevations (25% allowed, 60% proposed) due to the utility nature of the building, which is hereby granted;
4. Design and Construction Standards (DCS) variance from the City Council for expansion of the gravel lot;
5. The findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters and the conditions and the items listed in those letters being addressed on the Final Site Plan.

This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Article 3, Article 4, and Article 5 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance.

**ROLL CALL ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE JSP26-01 CITY GATE REBUILD PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN MOVED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMEBR RONEY. *Motion carried 6-0.***

**2. APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 14, 2026 PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

**Motion to approve the January 14, 2026 Planning Commission Minutes.**

**VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 14, 2026 PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES MOVED BY MEMBER RONEY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS. *Motion carried 6-0.***

**CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS FOR COMMISSION ACTION**

There were no consent agenda items.

**SUPPLEMENTAL ISSUES/TRAINING UPDATES**

There were no supplemental issues or training updates.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Chair Pehrson invited members of the audience who wished to address the Planning Commission during the final audience participation to come forward. Seeing no one, Chair Pehrson closed the final audience participation.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn the February 25, 2026 meeting made by Member Roney and all in favor said aye.

Meeting adjourned at 7:54 PM.