

1 **Public Hearing: South 35th Street rezoning**

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3 Ms. Stefforia presented her report, dated September 8, 2016 and incorporated herein by
4 reference, to the Planning Commission. She noted that the request was to rezone 1462
5 South 35th Street, a 2.7-acre parcel, from LM, Light Manufacturing to B-3, General
6 Business District.

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8 She then described the location of the property being northwest of the 35th Street and
9 Interstate 94 interchange on the west side of the street north of Miller Drive. She
10 reminded the Planning Commission that when she introduced the rezoning request to
11 them the previous month for purposes of scheduling the public hearing it had been
12 determined that the Future Land Use Map did reflect commercial and industrial land
13 uses in this area and did not need to be considered for amendment in order to consider
14 rezoning the subject property.

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16 Ms. Stefforia then reviewed the rezoning factors. With respect to the Master Plan, she
17 reiterated that the proposed rezoning was consistent with the Future Land Use Map as
18 well as the policies of the Master Plan. She noted that during the master plan process,
19 the Planning Commission did determine that commercial was not appropriate south of
20 the interchange due to existing land uses and the concern that 35th Street could not
21 accommodate commercial traffic in that area. This site is north of the interchange.

22
23 Ms. Stefforia then identified the uses and zoning abutting the site which was a mix of
24 commercial and industrial and compatible with a proposed rezoning to B-3. She added
25 that the existing public facilities are adequate to accommodate commercial or industrial
26 development of this site.

27
28 Ms. Stefforia then reviewed the intent of both the B-3, General Business District and the
29 LM, Light Manufacturing District.

30
31 Motion by Commissioner Burgess, support by Commissioner Sportel to open the public
32 hearing; motion passed.

33
34 Timothy Shank, the applicant, then addressed the Planning Commission. He stated that
35 he has optioned the property subject to it being rezoned and that the sellers endorse the
36 rezoning request. He then shared that he has been developing in the community for 37
37 years with quality projects. He added that zoning of B-3 gives flexibility with how the site
38 can be developed more so than LM zoning, and that given the proximity to the
39 interchange, the site is more suited to B-3. Mr. Shank noted that the site has sat vacant
40 since 2006.

41
42 There being no further public comment, motion by Commissioner Burgess, support by
43 Commissioner Sportel to close the public hearing; motion passed.

44
45 Commissioner Beister stated that he has had people tell him that the rush hour traffic on
46 35th Street causes back-ups and he is concerned that commercial development of this

1 site may exacerbate it. Commissioner Sportel stated that it is the traffic on the
2 interchange that is causing the problem and until MDOT widens the bridge, it will
3 continue to be a problem at certain times of the day.

4
5 Commissioner Faust noted that there is a traffic signal light at 35th Street which abut this
6 site and development should be limited to taking access off Miller Drive or at the
7 signalized intersection and no driveway to 35th Street should be allowed because of
8 traffic concerns.

9
10 Commissioner Burgess then asked if the other Planning Commissioners felt B-3 zoning
11 was more appropriate than the current LM zoning given the discussion. Commissioner
12 Beister responded that it has sat vacant for 10 years with LM zoning and he does not
13 want it to sit vacant another 10.

14
15 Mr. Shank then noted that the traffic signal serves a warehouse complex and that he
16 would like to see his site have a single access point to 35th Street. He noted that the
17 traffic volume on Miller Drive is low.

18
19 Ms. Stefforia then stated that access to the site will be considered once there is a site
20 plan presented to the Township in the future, noting, however that important points were
21 being made about the potential impact of commercial development of this site upon 35th
22 Street motorists and the concerns of Commissioner Beister are legitimate; she added
23 that these issues will come up again during the site plan review process. Chair Katje
24 concurred stating that access will be addressed regardless if the site develops under
25 the existing or proposed zoning.

26
27 Mr. Shank stated that he is sensitive to access concerns and believes that a single
28 shared access should be allowed for the site which may or may not be divided in the
29 future. He added that being an owner of properties on Gull Road, he is cognizant of
30 traffic concerns. He stated that he is always interested in sharing access especially to
31 minimize curb cuts and he envisions a service drive on this property.

32
33 Commissioner Faust noted that this was not the time to address access as we do not
34 know how the site will develop. He added that it may be split.

35
36 Commissioner Burgess then shared why he thought the proposed rezoning to B-3
37 should be supported being that neighboring properties are zoned B-3, the site abuts 35th
38 Street and Miller Drive as do three B-3 zoned properties that abut the site. He added
39 that the rezoning fits the recently adopted Master Plan which calls for nodes and he
40 believes this is an important node that has been identified for further development. He
41 finds the rezoning to fit the policies of the Master Plan as well, commercial development
42 will not adversely affect the area and the site is better suited for B-3 zoning than LM.
43 Commissioner Burgess then made a motion to recommend to the Township Board that
44 the subject property be rezoned from LM, Light Manufacturing to B-3, General Business
45 District, support by Commissioner Faust; motion passed.

1 **Public Hearing: Landscaping Ordinance and related amendments**

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3 The Planning Commission then turned to the landscaping ordinance and related
4 amendments prepared by Planning & Zoning Administrator Stefforia. Motion by
5 Commissioner Sportel, support by Commissioner Beister to open the public hearing;
6 motion passed.

7
8 Ms. Stefforia gave a summary of the proposed provisions. She described the ordinance
9 as being comprehensive and designed to update and place all existing provisions
10 regarding screening, greenbelts and landscaping in a stand-alone section where
11 presently requirements are found in various areas of the Zoning Ordinance.

12
13 She reminded the Planning Commission that they often modify the existing provisions
14 during the site plan review process as the current provisions emphasize the use of
15 evergreen trees. She opined that the existing provisions were probably designed to
16 have landscaping serve as a screen between incompatible uses where now
17 landscaping is about beautifying the community and enhancing the aesthetics of the
18 commercial corridors. She stated, however, that provisions for screening are still
19 included for use when incompatible uses abut each other.

20
21 She stated that the proposed landscaping ordinance applies to those sites requiring site
22 plan review and lets zoning of the subject property and abutting property dictate the
23 type of greenspace required with the most minimal of greenspaces being a Type A and
24 the most intensive greenspace being a Type E for use when, for example, an industrial
25 site abuts a single family residential zone. She stated that the ordinance is designed to
26 require landscaping along all property lines with all sites having the same type of
27 greenspace type, Type C, required along the road frontage.

28
29 Ms. Stefforia pointed out that parking lot landscaping was modified from the previous
30 draft to encourage islands larger than the minimum 300 square feet. Ms. Stefforia stated
31 that creating larger islands to meet the minimum square footage, rather than more of
32 the smaller islands, will be easier to manage for snow removal and enhance the
33 appearance of large parking lots and commercial centers. She suggested that Planning
34 Commissioners view the 9th Street Walmart Store in Oshtemo Township where larger
35 islands can be found to get an idea of how this looks from off-site.

36
37 Chair Katje stated that the landscaping ordinance fits with the policies of the recently
38 adopted Master Plan and that creating this ordinance is one of the top priorities of the
39 implementation matrix.

40
41 Chair Katje then asked if there was any public comment. Sandy Bloomfield commented
42 that she had read the draft ordinance and thinks Ms. Stefforia did a great job putting it
43 together.

44
45 Being no further public comment, motion by Commissioner Sportel, support by
46 Commissioner Beister to close the public hearing; motion passed.

1 Commissioner Sportel made a motion to recommend to the Township Board that the
2 landscaping ordinance and related amendments be adopted; motion was supported by
3 Commissioner Beister. Motion passed.

4
5 **Any Other Business**

6
7 Ms. Stefforia suggested that the October 27 meeting be cancelled as the Michigan
8 Association of Planning Conference is that week and being held locally this year; she
9 added that there is a meeting the following Thursday so there will not be a significant
10 delay to any potential applicants. Motion by Chair Katje, support by Commissioner
11 Burgess to cancel the October 27, 2016 meeting; motion passed.

12
13 Ms. Stefforia read a note from the Township Supervisor inviting the Planning
14 Commission to attend a meet-and-greet of the Township Superintendent candidates on
15 September 19.

16
17 **Planning Commissioner Comments**

18
19 Chair Katje stated that she supports the approach that the Township Supervisor is
20 taking in reviewing the candidates for the Township Superintendent position.

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23 **Adjournment**

24 The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

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28 _____
29 Jennifer Jones-Newton, Secretary

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31 Prepared by: Jodi Stefforia, Planning & Zoning Administrator
32 Minutes prepared: September 9, 2016
33 Minutes approved: September 22, 2016