

**MINUTES  
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY HALL – COUNCIL CHAMBER  
AUGUST 11, 2025 – 7:30 PM**

The regular session of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Rich at 7:30PM.

Councilmembers Present: Aldred, Boleware, Bridges, Bruce, Dwyer, Knol, and Rich

Councilmembers Absent: None

Others Present: City Manager Mekjian; Assistant City Manager Mondora; City Clerk Lindahl; Directors Brown, Kettler-Schmult, Rushlow, Schnackel and Skrobola; City Attorney Joppich

Mayor Rich opened the meeting by introducing Cody Moore, a Walgreens shift supervisor, to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Recently, Cody intervened when a regular customer attempted to purchase several high-value gift cards after receiving out-of-state messages urging her to do so. Recognizing the situation as a scam, he refused to complete the sale, protecting her from fraud. Resident Becky Ulinski shared the story on social media, prompting the Mayor to honor both Cody and Becky for their actions. Each received a certificate of recognition and family passes to The Hawk.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The pledge of allegiance was led by Cody Moore.

**APPROVAL OF REGULAR SESSION MEETING AGENDA**

MOTION by Bridges, support by Boleware, to approve the agenda as published.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING JIM CUBERA’S RETIREMENT AND YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE CITY**

The following proclamation was read by Councilmember Bridges and accepted by Jim Cubera:

**PROCLAMATION  
Recognizing Jim Cubera  
*On the Occasion of his Retirement*  
August 29, 2025**

**WHEREAS,** Jim Cubera, a pillar of the City of Farmington Hills Public Services team and the longest serving City employee to date, will retire at the end of August 2025, having served the community for more than 48 years; and,

**WHEREAS,** Jim began his career with the City in May 1977, after graduating from the University of Detroit, and quickly established himself as a trusted expert and

valued contributor to the Department of Public Services, Engineering Division, most recently serving as City engineer; and,

**WHEREAS,** Jim earned a master's in business administration, became a licensed Professional Engineer, and earned numerous awards in recognition of his commitment to excellence in civil engineering and public service; and,

**WHEREAS,** Throughout nearly half a century of service, Jim played a pivotal role in shaping the infrastructure in Farmington Hills, from converting dirt roads to pavement and designing sanitary sewer systems, to major improvements, including the Halsted Road drainage project and the Twelve Mile Road boulevard; and,

**WHEREAS,** Jim's technical knowledge was matched by his appreciation for teamwork, and he consistently valued the contributions of his fellow engineers, inspectors and office staff, who helped bring projects to life; and,

**WHEREAS,** Jim's mentorship and guidance were essential to the professional development of many colleagues, yet he remained committed to learning new methods and technologies throughout his career, always striving to make Farmington Hills the best City in the state; and,

**WHEREAS,** The City evolved from rural farmland to a dynamic municipality, Jim's personal and professional growth mirrored that transformation, supported every step of the way by his loving wife, Mary K, their three children and five grandchildren.

**NOW, THEREFORE,** I, Theresa Rich, Mayor of the City of Farmington Hills, on behalf of the City Council, do hereby recognize **Jim Cubera** and thank him for his tireless service, which has had a profound impact on the City of Farmington Hills. After an exceptional 48-year career, we wish him all the best in his well-deserved retirement.

Jim Cubera thanked the Mayor and Council for the proclamation. He introduced his wife of 41 years, and thanked her for her support during his years at the City.

**PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING SEPTEMBER 2025 AS OVARIAN CANCER AWARENESS MONTH**

The following proclamation was read by Councilmember Boleware and accepted by Meredith Arant, Michigan Ovarian Cancer Alliance.

**PROCLAMATION  
Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month  
September 2025**

**WHEREAS,** Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month serves as an important time to recognize the strength and resilience of those affected by ovarian cancer, honor the lives lost, and support ongoing efforts to improve prevention, detection, and treatment; and,

- WHEREAS,** Ovarian cancer is often called a “silent disease” because symptoms can be subtle and easily overlooked, yet increased awareness and education can lead to earlier diagnoses and better outcomes; and,
- WHEREAS,** advances in research, innovation in treatment, and the dedication of healthcare professionals, survivors, and advocates continue to bring hope to women and families across the nation; and,
- WHEREAS,** we stand in solidarity with all those impacted by ovarian cancer and affirm the importance of raising awareness, early detection efforts, and the necessity of research that will bring us closer to a cure; and,
- WHEREAS,** by increasing understanding, we strengthen the community’s ability to respond to ovarian cancer with compassion and informed action; and,
- WHEREAS,** Farmington Hills residents may benefit from access to quality health care resources close to home, supporting early detection, treatment, and ongoing care with trusted health care providers in the community.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that I, Theresa Rich, Mayor of the City of Farmington Hills, on behalf of the City Council, do hereby proclaim September 2025 as **Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month** in Farmington Hills and encourage community members to unite in support, advocacy, and compassion for those affected by ovarian cancer and to support early detection efforts.

Councilmember Boleware disclosed that her mother died of ovarian cancer, and she encouraged every woman to get wellness checks, and also every man to be tested for prostate cancer. Meredith Arant, Michigan Ovarian Cancer Alliance, said that approximately one in 91 women will develop ovarian cancer. As there is no reliable early detection test, it is critical to spread information about this disease and its symptoms.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/PRESENTATIONS FROM CITY BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS**

There were no announcements/presentations.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

As of 4:30pm today, correspondence had been received from the following persons regarding proposed Planned Unit Development 2, 2024, located on the south side 13 Mile just west of Middlebelt Road: Carrie Delgado, Roman Golshteyn, Katie Johnson, Aubrey Lee Jr., Lindsey Matych, Michael Pucher, Douglas Roberson, Douglas Graham, Ursula Kizy, Michael D. Roberson, Mamie Roberson, Rory McHarg, Paul Schultz, Zach Adams, Charles Spiess, J. Meissner, David Meissner, Dr. Beverly Mihalko, Duane Pitcher, Shelby Spiess, , Teresa Spiess, Valerie Watson, Addison Schmidt, Christine Griswold, Sharon Havis, Craig Kellman, Ron Letterman, Eric Schmidt, Kristen Schlaud, Roger Matuz, Chantalle LaPointe, and Craig LaPointe. There was also a letter from Attorney Courtney Agrusa with Foster, Swift, Collins, and Smith, who indicates she has been retained by Lindsey Matych regarding this matter.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

MOTION by Aldred, support by Bruce, to approve the consent agenda items 12 through 20 and 23 as read by Mayor Pro Tem Dwyer.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

MOTION by Knol, support by Aldred, to approve the consent agenda items 21 and 22 as read by Mayor Pro Tem Dwyer.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: BRIDGES

MOTION CARRIED 6-0-0-1.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

There were no consent agenda items for discussion.

#### **COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councilmember Bridges reported attending an Oakland Community College engagement session regarding a potential partnership with Little Caesars to bring an AAA hockey club to the OCC campus in Farmington Hills. The proposal includes plans for a 2,000–3,000 seat arena and has generated significant interest. He noted the potential economic benefits for the city, including increased activity for hotels, restaurants, and retail.

Mayor Rich reported on the following:

- **Walk the Hawk** for those who want to share what is on their mind: Tomorrow, August 12 at 7 p.m.; continues monthly on the second Tuesday (next on September 9, outdoors until colder months).
- **Michigan Association of Mayors Conference:** Attended last week with 60–70 mayors; hosted at the new Portage Senior Center, a public-private partnership supported by a nonprofit similar to Friends of the Library.
  - Highlights: beautiful facility with virtual tour online.
  - Differences from Farmington Hills' needs: no pool, no Meals on Wheels (county-run), no congregate meals.
- **Gibson Center for Parkinson's Wellness:** Nearing opening; community open house this Thursday, 3–6 p.m., 31440 Northwestern Highway, with opportunities to learn more or volunteer.

#### **CITY MANAGER UPDATE**

- **Recognition of Jim Cubera:** City Manager Mekjian congratulated Jim Cubera on his retirement, praising Jim as a dedicated, principled professional who always prioritized residents' interests.
- **Orchard Lake Road Accident:** City Manager Mekjian expressed condolences to the family impacted by the July 23 traffic accident resulting in the tragic loss of a road crew worker, and wished a speedy recovery to those that were injured. He thanked Fire and Police personnel for their quick and professional response to the accident. He urged drivers to slow down and stay cautious, especially near construction zones, to protect workers' safety.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### **CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT 2, 2024 INCLUDING SITE PLAN 56-8-2024, MULBERRY PARK AND THE TABERNACLE MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING, LOCATED ON 13 MILE ROAD, WEST OF MIDDLEBELT ROAD (POSTPONED FROM MAY 12, 2025). CMR 8-25-106**

Director of Planning and Community Development Kettler-Schmult provided an overview of the history of the Mulberry Park and Tabernacle Multi-Family Housing Planned Unit Development proposal. The project had been before the Planning Commission and City Council multiple times, and had undergone a series of postponements and updates. The Planning Commission qualified the proposal in April 2024, and following a public hearing in November 2024, recommended approval. The matter was brought before City Council in January 2025, when it was postponed to March 3, 2025, for further deliberation. At the March meeting, a public hearing was held, after which the item was again postponed to May 12, 2025. After additional discussions and updates at the May meeting, the matter was postponed to the current date of August 11, 2025. In the interim, several study sessions were conducted where the applicant provided Council with updated information and modifications to the plan.

### **Consultant comments**

Planning Consultant Tangari (Giffels Webster) provided an overview of the modifications made to the proposal since it was last presented in May 2025.

- The overall number of units had been reduced from 65 to 63, with the number of buildings increased from 16 to 17, due to the reduction of number of units in each building. Mulberry Park now includes 32 for-sale, three-bedroom townhome units, while the Tabernacle portion consists of 31 ranch-style units for residents age 55 and older, intended as an extension of Baptist Manor. In Mulberry Park, buildings 1–4 at the southern edge are now designed as one-story ranch units, while buildings 5–8 remain two stories.
- Access remains unchanged, with a single driveway from 13 Mile Road and a connection to Baptist Manor.
- Project density, calculated by rooms, has been reduced from 229 to 221 rooms, bringing both Mulberry Park and Tabernacle under the RC-1 district density.
- Setback adjustments were also made: the Tabernacle rear setback remains 83.41 feet, while Mulberry Park's rear setback has been reduced from 85.57 feet to 74 feet, but building-to-building setbacks along the southern edge have increased from 20 feet to 25 feet.

Planning Consultant Tangari noted outstanding items, including questions of whether the proposed landscaping and screening are adequate, and necessary corrections to tree removal statistics.

Councilmember Boleware asked about the 49 replacement trees to be planted off-site. If the residents abutting the southern portion of the site agreed, could the replacement trees be planted on their

properties, enhancing the landscape barrier there? City Attorney Joppich explained that such plantings would require mutual agreement between the property owners and the developer. While Council may include this option as a condition, it should not be mandated, since compliance would depend on property owner consent. Any condition addressing this issue should be carefully worded so as not to create an unenforceable requirement.

### **Applicant presentation**

Aaron Schafer, Schafer Development, presented on behalf of this project. Steven Schafer and Spencer Schafer were also present, along with Brooks Cohen of Pulte Group, the designated home builder for the Mulberry Park portion of the project.

Mr. Schafer outlined key aspects of the revised plan for the Tabernacle Mulberry Park PUD. Regarding tree replacement, Schafer noted that while residents along the southern property line had been open to tree plantings, most preferred more substantial evergreen trees for year-round screening rather than saplings. To address the current deficiency of 49 trees, options include upsizing trees in the southern tree preservation area or supplementing plantings along the Baptist Manor frontage, or a combination of both.

The subject property spans 12.46 acres across seven parcels: four parcels comprising the Tabernacle and three parcels comprising Mulberry Park. Mr. Schafer reviewed plans to demolish an existing duplex to create a direct vehicular connection to the signalized intersection at 13 Mile and Detroit Baptist Drive. He reviewed ownership and transaction history of the parcels involved, including those acquired by Baptist Manor in 2014 and 2016, donated parcels in 2000, and Mulberry Park parcels purchased between 2015 and 2021. Mr. Schafer disclosed that Schafer Development is under contract to purchase the Mulberry Park parcels from the Chaldean Community Foundation for \$900,000, reflecting a \$310,000 surplus to the Foundation after their \$590,000 purchase and more than a decade of holding costs, entitlement expenses, development plans, and taxes. Mr. Schafer emphasized that the Foundation's gain is modest and largely offset by prior investments.

Turning to the revised site plan, Mr. Schafer highlighted three major changes: (1) replacement of all two-story townhouses on the Mulberry Park east side with one-story ranch duplexes no taller than 20 feet, reducing visual impact for adjacent homeowners; (2) an increase of side yard setbacks between buildings from 20 to 25 feet; and (3) a reduced rear yard setback to accommodate larger ranch duplex footprints. Mulberry Park units will be for-sale homes, while the Tabernacle portion will remain age-restricted, 55+ apartments under Baptist Manor. Baptist Manor is preparing a future PUD application to modernize part of its campus, including potential replacement of aging units with a sixplex to offset units lost through demolition. He presented illustrations showing how the southeast quadrant has been modified, with the original 12 townhouse units across three buildings being replaced by eight duplex units across four buildings.

The larger building footprints for the revised ranch duplex units result in slightly greater patio encroachments compared to earlier plans. The Tabernacle portion retains setbacks of 86 and 76 feet, while Mulberry Park adjustments reduce setbacks to 79 feet from building to southern property line or 71 feet from patio edge to property line.

Mr. Schafer suggested eliminating the southern sidewalk to recover an additional five feet of depth, while maintaining pedestrian connections via north-south walkways and the 13 Mile right-of-way. Ordinance setbacks are measured from the building wall; patio dimensions were presented for clarity.

Mr. Schafer highlighted density reductions made since the initial January 2025 submittal. The project has been reduced from 76 units to 63 units across 12 acres, reflecting a 17% reduction in density from the original proposal. He noted that the City's flex residential designation allows increased density when balanced by exceptional open space and maximized setbacks.

Renderings of the proposed buildings on the Tabernacle side showed 31 single-story, 55+ apartment homes, each approximately 17 feet in height, well below the 30 foot ordinance limit. Mulberry Park featured townhouses in a horseshoe arrangement, comparable to the Northville Glades project in Northville Township. In addition, eight new ranch duplex units will be located in the southeast quadrant. This duplex model is a new Pulte Group product not yet built elsewhere in the U.S., though a similar detached single-family version is under construction at Kensington Ridge in Milford Township. Mr. Schafer emphasized their intent to coordinate architectural elements and color palettes between the Tabernacle, townhomes, and ranch duplexes to ensure a unified community design.

Mr. Schafer reiterated his commitment to ongoing communication with residents, inviting them to approach the development team about tree planting opportunities on their properties. He reaffirmed the project's willingness to address the deficiency of 49 trees by upsizing evergreens and enhancing buffers along Holly Hill Farms.

**Council discussion (verbatim)**

Mayor Rich

All right, questions. Dr. Bruce.

Councilmember Bruce

Yes, thank you. Thank you for the information, especially the data on the sales of these properties or how they've been traded back and forth. But I guess it confuses me a little bit more because I remember at the very beginning of this process, I thought that it was represented to us that these properties had been, there was an attempt at some point to sell these properties and these properties were not sellable as RA-1 properties.

And I've not ever seen any evidence that these properties were ever put up for sale and marketed to the general public as RA-1 properties to be built on. So I'm not sure where we're at with this because to me that's a very important distinction or evidence that have these ever been marketed to the general public as RA-1 properties because I think they could be sold to develop that way. And now it looks like they've never been put up for sale in that regard.

They've been traded or they've been bought by you guys or

other people and held on to for several years and never just sold to the general public or attempted to be sold in that regard.

Aaron Schafer                      So prior to MOBI's acquisition of the parcels in 2022, 2021, and 2015, these parcels were marketed by NAI Farbman. I don't know whether they were for RA-1 or what kind of fugazi number they had in mind when they were trying to sell them.

Councilmember Bruce              No for how much, how long they were for sale, anything like that?

Aaron Schafer                      All I know is I'm 28 years old and I cannot recall a time I did not see a for sale sign on most of these properties.

Councilmember Bruce              You haven't seen a for sale sign?

Aaron Schafer                      I have seen a for sale sign. I apologize. I know they've been marketed.

They clearly haven't traded for RA-1. I mean understand that this isn't Telegraph Road and Bloomfield Hills where people are building million dollar McMansions. This is a little different character. But I mean we talked to MOBI. We talked to Baptist Manor and that was the best information we could get.

Councilmember Bruce              So we really don't know if these have ever been tried to be sold.

Aaron Schafer                      Well they had a for sale sign in them so I envision they were trying to sell them. But for what amount and for how much the broker did homework on the underlying zoning and master plan, I can't speak to that.

Councilmember Bruce              You know how long ago it was that they were last put up for sale?

Steven Schafer                      They've been up for sale for about almost three years.

Councilmember Bruce              How long ago? I'm sorry?

Steven Schafer                      How long ago? When they were, right after they were purchased.

Councilmember Bruce              By whom?



- Steven Schafer                      By MOBI. And then they decided to do a development there. They bought it originally as investment parcels. Anybody could have come along and bought it for any reason. So there was a for sale sign. If they wanted to pay the price, it would have been sold. It wasn't marketed as a development or you know anything other than what it was on its face.
- Councilmember Bruce              So these were put up as RA-1 pieces of property and MOBI came in and bought them up in hopes of getting a development later on.
- Steven Schafer                      Yeah but the zoning never changed and it was for sale. So anybody that would buy it, any reasonable person would look at the zoning ordinance and say it's RA-1. Or you'd look at your master plan, well what could you develop here?
- I think what maybe they envisioned was a little bit more aggressive because it's more than half of what we're proposing. But it was always for sale. The one down at the east end has been for sale for 20 years, the broker told me. There's been a sign out there for almost 20 years. So properties have gone up for sale. There have been numerous different brokerages that went up for sale. But nobody ever marketed it as a development parcel or that you can get X, Y, or Z. It's just basically whatever the zoning was on its face that it was being sold for.
- Councilmember Bruce              So for months I've asked for evidence that these were put up for sale and I've just never seen like the actual listings that these were put up for sale.
- Steven Schafer                      I will deliver a letter to you from Farbman. He'd be happy to.
- Councilmember Bruce              Well, I've asked for that for months and I still haven't gotten it.
- Steven Schafer                      Well, I told you I'd get to the background. We just did our best, but I understand.
- Councilmember Bruce:              So how long has MOBI owned these properties now?
- Aaron Schafer                      MOBI has the first one, 29115. They've owned it since November 29th of 2022. The middle parcel, 29915, they bought it on August 25th of 2015. And finally, the one on the easternmost boundary at 29845, they acquired that back in February 17th of 2021. So they've had land holdings from 2015

up to 2021 and have been a taxpayer of the City of Farmington Hills since then.

Councilmember Bruce

I know you probably can't speak for MOBI, but do you know why they've let these homes rot and why they've allowed garbage and boats and cars and construction materials to be put on these properties and to be made so just ugly? Because if you're trying to market and sell properties, I would think you'd want to clean them up and make them marketable so when we're told that these are unsellable as RA-1 and then the properties look like just littered properties, it doesn't add up. It doesn't make sense.

Aaron Schafer

Also appreciate, Dr. Bruce, that the parcels even east of MOBI have been marketed for two decades, three decades. They have not been shown as development parcels other than Cove Creek Phase 2, which didn't go into fruition. I'm doing the best I can.

Councilmember Bruce

I understand that, but just understand my concern here is that I know, living in the city for 40 years, that you can sell anything in this city. You can sell any piece of property here. People do. They buy them up and they develop them as residential homes or whatever else. So to me, if a property is for sale, I go by this place all the time. I don't recall a sign being out there for 20 years, but I don't have any evidence, again, that's been presented to me that says this property was for sale for this price, marketed this way for this many years, and I've asked for that and I've never seen anything like that.

We just keep being told that they can't be sold and developed as RA-1, which I have a hard time believing. And then I see how the condition of these properties have been over the last 15 or more years and not been a very good citizen, not been a very good property owner as far as I'm concerned. If you're a good citizen, well, yeah, you're paying your taxes, but that doesn't mean you allow homes to rot and you store garbage and use them as a dump for the city.

That's not being a good citizen.

Aaron Schafer

Listen, Dr. Bruce, I don't mean to cut you off. I appreciate your frustration. I'm just the developer. I'm not the landowner. I can't speak to what the landowner's intentions were, but if you read between the lines, I think you might understand why.

They've been working on this for quite some time and they had a hard time.

They didn't get their proposal. The gentleman who owns the property contacted my father and said, listen, I know you're the guru in Farmington Hills. You've done a lot in the past.

I know you have two great sons. Pass by this property. It's close to your office.

Do something right here so that we can all walk away without a pitchfork in your you-know-what. If you want to have a meeting with the landowner and the brokers at NAI Farbmán and everyone, just tell you the whole history. I'm more than happy to set that up.

I know it would probably be too late after the fact, but I know that might be something that would go the long way so that you at least understand the full story.

Councilmember Bruce

I wish I would have had the data before and now because I've been asking for months.

Aaron Schafer

I understand. I'm doing the best I can, Dr. Bruce. Thank you very much for your feedback.

Mayor Rich

Mr. Bridges.

Councilmember Bridges

Thank you, Mr. Schafer.

Thank you for coming. We appreciate it. The central question is that Mr. Bruce has asked for this data for some time now. You haven't provided it. It really comes to the point that there is an avoidance of providing the data information that was requested months ago. I'm concerned about that because it has been requested for some time now.

It goes to the central question regarding the marketability of this property as an RA-1 and the fact that there was opportunities to put this RA-1 property on the market. It's a history of putting it on the market as RA-1. You've been asked this data for some time and you've never provided it.

I know you said you could get it after the fact, but that's a central point in regards to are you avoiding the zoning there

because of the fact that it's zoned RA-1. You tried to go with RC-1. That's a substantial change from the previous zoning. That information is critical from the standpoint of understanding the history of the data of the property there.

RA-1 is one of the most restricted zoning that's possible in our city. RA-1, low density. You're going to put in a proposed RC-1, which is going to increase the density substantially in that area. And I've been on this council for 17 years and I've always felt that neighborhoods are very strong in our community and we need to protect it. People move to Farmington Hills because of the rural character, the open space, the wooded lots, and where they're present.

This project will somewhat disturb that in my viewpoint. I know that so the issue regarding can this property be marketed as RA-1 is critical to understanding your proposal. The fact is that without that data that Mr. Bruce had asked for, it could help clear up a lot that there's a history of promoting this project as RA-1. I know you don't own the property, however, one can have a logical conclusion that there's been an effort to try to prepare this property for something other than RA-1 over the years and without you not providing that data, it calls into question that was the plan all along.

Aaron Schafer

Thank you very much for your feedback, Mr. Bridges, and I want to provide some clarity. I'd have to look back at the exact minutes and what was said at the study sessions versus the hearings, but if I recall, it was Dr. Bruce's request that we only show the economics of the property and what it traded for. Understand these have been marketed for 20 plus, 30 plus years.

A lot of brokers I speak with don't even know what the zoning or the master plan is for what they're even trying to sell, so I'm not a broker. I don't want to speak ill of them, but what I want to mention, because this is something that's relevant to all of you, is everyone voted on the master plan here, and the master plan change on this parcel was flex residential, and flex residential understands the fact that there are some challenging parcels in the City of Farmington Hills. This was maybe one of four parcels that had that flex residential moniker, so I think there was an understanding if these sat for 30 or 40 plus years as RA-1, nothing happened, master plan changed to flex residential, and someone saw an opportunity to

do something different here versus traditional run-of-the-mill RA-1 zoning.

You've got Baptist Manor, which is technically considered an RC-3 development, where we ran through the numbers there, and it was like 16 or 17 rooms per acre, because that's how you calculate multi-family density in the community, is by the number of rooms versus the number of units. So I think there was an understanding if the master plan category changed from a residential character that mirrored RA-1 to a flex residential character, that something's broken here, and the flex residential opportunity provides this opportunity to have a dialogue, to do a PUD, to do something creative, to do something innovative, and by the letter of the law stated in your master plan, exceptional open space and rear yard setbacks to adjacent neighbors.

We ran through the exercise, and I wish I would have put it in the plan, where we did two residential layouts, one that had 10 to 12 curb cuts along 13 Mile with no stormwater management that would do nothing to help the stormwater issues that each and every Holly Hills neighbor has expressed, and we said, and we've shown exhibits time and time again, that 90 percent, 85 to 90 percent of the runoff from this development is going to be captured by our stormwater basin, while anything south in that tree preservation area, in an effort to preserve that and create as large of a buffer as possible, do that to help meet the spirit and intent. So I understand the trials and tribulations of the RA-1. I know these properties were marketed, they've been marketed for numerous times.

I can't go into the landowner's heads or the broker's heads if they specifically told interested parties that called is, listen, this is RA-1. You're only going to get six units or eight units or 10 units or do a cluster and maybe get 14 or 20 units, whatever the number is. So I think if these were set for quite a long time, the writing was more or less on the wall that the flex residential provided that category to do something unique.

I wish I could answer your question in better detail, but that's the best I have at this moment.

Councilmember Bridges

Your case would have been a lot more stronger if that data was available, okay?

I just want to ask a question from the planning consultant. Could you give us an interpretation of what flex zoning really means, or what that really means and how that should be interpreted from a master plan standpoint? The master plan also states that we should be protecting our neighborhoods, we should be protecting the character of this community regarding open space, wooded lots, and making sure that we, the master plan says a lot about protecting the character of Farmington Hills neighborhoods as well. How do you interplay those two points regarding flex zoning and this desired goal of the master plan, which is to protect Farmington Hills neighborhoods to keep its character and its natural conditions?

Planning Consultant Tangari

Sure. I know that folks listening don't have the letter in front of them necessarily, but if you go to page seven of the review letter, you'll see a description of the flex residential category that accompanies the future land use map in the master plan.

So, the flex residential category is intended to acknowledge the challenging nature of redevelopment of the designated land and allow for a variety of approaches to future residential projects.

Such approaches may include clustering of detached or attached units, constructing units in a townhome, row house, or cottage court format, duplexes, triplexes, or quadplexes in either side-by-side or stacked arrangements, and with a height of one to three stories. In all cases, density beyond that permitted in the current zoning district should be tied to the provision of preserved open space and especially natural buffers to adjacent established neighborhoods. For more detail on the sites in the city that are identified for this category, see special residential planning areas in the following chapter.

And then that chapter that follows addresses this specific area by saying the flex residential future land use category is applied to this planning area. Redevelopment could occur in a variety of formats from small detached units to attached units built as townhomes, small multiplex buildings, or a mix of multiple styles. This category recommends clustering of units. Where a portion of the site is developed, planning for cross connections to future redevelopment should be integrated into site design and increases in density should be tied to deep buffering from the neighborhood to the south, including

preservation of the natural vegetation to the greatest extent possible.

So those are the two primary descriptions for this area in the master plan. There is a portion of the plan that also speaks to residential density. It has a residential density map. There are some more specific numbers in there. There was some concern about applying a specific number in the master plan to a discretionary approval as if it were a zoning standard, given that the number is meant as guidance for the potential development of a future zoning district or overlay.

Development of a district or overlay is a process that involves its own research and study and depending on what changes or is found in the meantime, the end result might be different from what's found in the plan in terms of specific numbers. The general guidance of the other two plan sections are referenced in the master plan provides guidance that's specific to this site and that's been accounted for during review and also the general guidance speaks to a vision for the city in terms of buffering and how transitions to neighboring properties are handled.

Councilmember Bridges

Thank you, appreciate that. My last comment is to the city attorney. Will this type of decision, we make an affirmative decision to move this project forward, we approve it, how would it be precedent setting for the city going forward in regards to similar projects across the city?

City Attorney Joppich

In the sense that in order to establish a precedent that would bind the city for another project going forward, you would have to get substantially the same project on a property that is substantially the same circumstances. Highly unlikely, very unlikely, every property is very unique, has its own unique characteristics and so on and so forth. So my answer to that would be it'd be highly unlikely to set any sort of a precedent. There is a newer twist with this project that is interesting from your master plan, which is the contemplation of this flex zoning and working through a PUD to implement that. That can also be implemented through a zoning ordinance amendment, which probably would be coming forward at some point in the future. But a PUD legitimately can, I believe, refer to that to some extent in your discretion.

If you look to that as this being a proper property for it and so on and so forth, and you've received some input in that. So in

terms of precedent, that aspect of this could be something that if you look to that flex zoning for this, it could potentially be looked to for other properties, but not necessarily granted. So again, the probability is low there, but that's an added little piece of this that I think is worth thinking about in terms of precedent setting.

Councilmember Bridges

Thank you for your comments. Appreciate it. All set. Thank you.

Aaron Schafer

Thank you, Mr. Bridges.

Councilmember Knol

Yeah, I have a question about square footage. So there's 17 buildings proposed and so far we've been talking about the number of rooms because that's how the density is calculated through the number of rooms. But could you tell me what the square footage, the total square footage of the 17 buildings, what that equates to? So not the number of rooms. I know the number of rooms, but if you just add up the square footage of the 17 buildings.

Aaron Schafer

So the tabernacle side, and we can kind of go through the arithmetic live because I didn't have that prepared for me, but the 31 tabernacle units are roughly, what is it, Spencer? 1,250, 1,300 square feet?

Spencer Schafer

Yeah.

Aaron Schafer

And Brooks, what's your square footage for your two-story towns, like 2,200 to 2,400?

Brooks Cohen

Yeah. (speaking from the audience, unintelligible)

Aaron Schafer

So you do 1,860 times 24. This is just the Mulberry. We'll start with the Mulberry Park side. And then we've got eight units and refresh my memory on what the floor plate is for the, so 1,774, we'll do 1,774 times eight.

So it's 14k, 45k, and then Tabernacle, what did we say the, it's like 1,250 times 31. So give me 45k plus 14k plus 39k. And that's the total number. Plus 45. Okay. 98,000 total.

I hope that provides some clarity Councilwoman Knol.

Councilmember Knol

It does. Thank you.



Aaron Schafer And I can get you the exact numbers.

Councilmember Knol No, that's close enough for my comparison. Thanks.

Mayor Rich Anything else?

Councilmember Knol No. Not right now.

Mayor Rich Anyone else? Okay.

Could you go back please to the one where you showed how long things had been on market? That one. Yep.

So I hear my colleagues about not having details for listings for these three in particular parcels, but I'm also cognizant of what you're showing here about the, thank you, 29701, which was acquired in 1990 for sale for a little over double the value from 1990, which, you know, is consistent with what's gone on with my house that I got in '92. But this has been on the market for 20 years for 295 which is about, it's about the same size parcel just down the street and about the same amount of money that you are all offering to put these properties under contract. And I note that this residence right next to it, the 29711, which was just purchased in 2024, don't know by whom.

Aaron Schafer And I wanted, for the sake of anonymity, I just wanted to show the addresses.

Mayor Rich Yeah, thank you. But that's in ballpark for what Schafer is offering to put these properties right next door under contract. And we don't know how long that was on the market.

Aaron Schafer Which one?

Mayor Rich The 29711. That's an existing residence. It was just acquired a year ago.

Aaron Schafer No, I...

Mayor Rich So we don't know how long that was on the market. Correct. Or Aaron, do you know?

Aaron Schafer There was an individual out of state in California, the mother who I think passed away at like '97, '98, that was roughly two to

three years ago. So that property was likely on the market for plus or minus two years before it was sold.

Mayor Rich

Okay. Thank you. And the other one, it's an existing residence as we know. That was acquired a little over a decade ago. So, I mean, we do know that some of these properties, which are quite comparable, have been languishing at this same price point for a long time. If something's been listed for 20 plus years, that kind of asks and answers the question of, is it something that's marketable?

And then similarly, the one where it's the residence, the 29649, existing residence that was purchased in '96, where they're asking 750, not really a shock that there are no pending offers, right? I mean, that's not really priced for sale. And then Cove Creek, you know, that's supposed to expand, we'll see. But that's been listed for six years for 400 with no pending offers.

So, I mean, I can empathize with the difficulty of doing something with the property as a single, as an RA-1. That was really all I had at this point in time.

So before we open it up to public comment, we're ready for public comment? All right, folks. For those who have not been to public comment before, the rules are that public comment is for three minutes. We'll have the timer going. I will let you know who is going to be speaking and the next two who will be following so that we can keep this moving. As you can see I have a fairly thick stack of people who want to talk about this particular issue and we look forward to hearing from all of you.

#### **Public comment**

Mayor Rich opened the floor to public comment.

Eric Schmidt, Woodbrook Court, opposed this development. He believed the developers stand to make significant profit at the community's expense. He objected to reduced setbacks and the removal of trees. He suggested that eliminating the back row of buildings would resolve setback, drainage, and tree-replacement issues. He questioned the accuracy of reported property values. He thought that approving this project would set a precedent that developers can use to pressure the City into concessions. He acknowledged that development is needed, but not at the expense of the community. He urged Council to reject the proposal unless developers make greater concessions to balance community concerns.

Craig LaPointe, Holly Hill Farms, opposed this development. He was concerned that the development will negatively impact his property value, his privacy, and alter the character of the neighborhood, which he had expected to remain single-family residential when he purchased his home 25 years ago. He was concerned about storm water management and had submitted a video to the Clerk showing flooding after recent heavy rains.

Lindsey Matych, Woodbrook, opposed the proposed development. She emphasized the longstanding residential character of the 13 Mile and Middlebelt area. She argued that landowners have neglected historic homes on the subject properties, turning them into blighted dumping sites in pursuit of profit. She expressed concern that the development would remove a large number of trees, disrupt wetlands, and worsen flooding. She felt traffic and other data had been manipulated. She stated the proposal violates the intent of the master plan and argued that the PUD was being used to circumvent RA-1 zoning, that flex residential was undefined in zoning law, and that the proposal ignored the master plan's intent to protect existing neighborhoods. She urged denial of the project, stating that the community's strong opposition showed the plan was not beneficial to residents.

Katherine Leik, Richmond Hill, opposed the proposed development, citing concerns that the density of the project would fundamentally change the lifestyle of residents in Holly Hill Farms and Westgate. She referenced negative impacts from traffic, tree loss, and the displacement of wildlife. Ms. Leik stated that residents support a smaller-scale development consistent with RA-1 zoning, suggesting 28 to 32 homes on 12 acres rather than the higher density proposed. She also noted that when MOBI acquired three lots, they were marketed only as a package rather than individually.

John Nagoda, Richmond Hill, opposed the proposed development. He stated that RA-1 zoning must remain in place to preserve the character and charm of Farmington Hills. He expressed concern about developers "working around the system," and emphasized that while something could be built on the site, it must be at a reasonable, lower density consistent with RA-1 zoning.

Michelle Nagoda opposed the proposed development, arguing that 60-plus homes on 12 acres do not align with surrounding subdivisions such as Holly Hill Farms and Westgate. Mrs. Nagoda raised concerns about traffic and safety, particularly with ingress and egress near Baptist Manor and across from Westgate, where turning is already difficult during peak hours. While development of the site is inevitable, the proposed density is incompatible with the neighborhood, and she urged Council to protect existing community character by denying the project.

Adam Peploski, Richmond Hill, opposed the proposed development. He raised concerns about traffic congestion on 13 Mile, and asked about the scope and duration of construction, including whether work would occur outside of standard hours or during winter months. He believed the project would negatively impact the community.

Adele Letterman, Richmond Hill, opposed the proposed development. She thought that 63 units on 12.46 acres was too much for this neighborhood.

Thomas Bader, Northbrook, opposed the proposed development. His family had moved to Farmington Hills because of its beauty, and this development would destroy that for their neighborhood. The property is zoned RA-1 for a reason, and the proposed density far exceeds the intent of the zoning

district. Property owners allowed the homes to fall into blight to manipulate the process and required the parcels to be purchased as a package rather than individually, further discouraging single-family use. He was also concerned about added traffic on 13 Mile Road.

Dr. Stacy Nuar, Woodbrook, was concerned about the negative impacts of this development on her family's enjoyment of their home and outdoor space.

Angie Smith, Ramblewood Club, opposed the proposed development, stressing concerns about transparency and honesty from the developers. She questioned statements made about outreach to nearby subdivisions, saying residents she spoke with had not been contacted at the time claimed. She warned that approving 60+ homes would need a long-term construction site that would be very disruptive to longtime residents.

Mayor Rich closed public comment and brought the matter back to the Council.

**Council deliberation and action (verbatim)**

Mayor Rich

Mr. Dwyer.

Mayor Pro Tem Dwyer

Thank you, Mayor. I've also been a resident here in Farmington Hills for 40 years, 40 years here. I understand where the residents are coming from.

Just a little procedural history. We've been working on this for 16 months starting on April 18th of last year when it went to the Planning Commission three times.

It was finally recommended to send the City Council. There's been six separate hearings before the City Council on the issue. This Council has listened to the residents, listened to the developer.

I think that the residents and the developer has gotten together many, many times. And at each hearing that we've had, we've addressed the concerns that the citizens have. We've also had the developers go back to the drawing board and make the changes.

I think, in my opinion, that this is a great development for the City. I think it's necessary. I'm going to make a motion.

MOTION by Dwyer, support by Boleware to approve the application for PUD 2, 2024, including Site Plan 56-8-2024, dated August 21, 2024, and September 4, 2024, respectively, as revised, submitted by Steven Schafer, are approved, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) All outstanding issues identified in Giffels Webster's July 22, 2025, review shall be addressed to the reasonable satisfaction of the City Planner;
- 2) All outstanding issues identified in the City Engineer's July 29, 2025 interoffice correspondence shall be addressed to the reasonable satisfaction of the City Engineer; and;
- 3) All outstanding issues identified in the Fire Marshal's July 25, 2025 interoffice correspondence shall be addressed to the reasonable satisfaction of the Fire Marshal.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Attorney prepare the appropriate PUD agreement stipulating the final PUD approval conditions and authorizing the identified zoning deviations for City Council's consideration and final approval. This motion adopts and includes the findings and conclusions in the July 22, 2025 review report issued by the City Planning Consultant, Giffels Webster, as to how the standards and qualifications of PUD approval has been satisfied.

**Motion discussion (verbatim)**

Mayor Rich

Mr. Aldred.

Councilmember Aldred

Okay. So, I'd like to summarize how I'm seeing this.

In the previous meeting, we had, I think, summarized there were three issues around this development, the traffic, stormwater management and density. And I'm going to say traffic, I think, is catered for reasonably well with the additional join through to Baptist Manor. I think the stormwater management is, again, I'll accept the word of our engineering department that that will be improved through this development.

But that brings us on to density, which has continued to be an issue throughout. And I actually, you know, we had discussions back and forth that had the proposal of, let's make it single story along the back. And I understand the developer has worked hard to make that happen, brought in a new developer to do that.

And that's a benefit. I think there's an additional change you didn't include in this change because an additional change on this plan is not only you've gone down to single story, you've added additional buildings, units in building eight and building five, because the overall has gone down from 65 to 63, not 65 to 61, correct? And that has reduced the size of the pocket park in the middle as well, right?

Okay, so that was an additional change. So that was a good change, welcomed that reduction in height, but, you know, it

came with an offset of reduced setback now down to about minimum, I think, of 66 feet if you include the patio. So now it was like better, but it also had some negatives.

I tell you, where I was at with this proposal was that we are either at the optimum position, right? We've suggested things, the developer's done some things, and they're probably not completely happy because of the additional cost. We're not completely happy because of the density or other reasons.

And it's like, this is either a great compromise, where we've reached this optimal position where no one's completely happy, or this doesn't quite work. That's where I was at. And then it was brought to my attention that on page 62 of the master plan, there is actually a more prescriptive definition of what flex residential is.

And I think the comments that this has been zoned as part of the master plan's flex residential is a perfectly valid comment. It has, right? So therefore, these properties are up for, okay, what could we do here that's going to be beneficial?

But the wording on page 62 in the section on residential density says, in the flex residential and flex residential office areas, permitted densities should generally correspond with RA-4 district. May be increased to RC-1 densities where a third or more of the site is preserved, and setbacks of 100 feet or more are preserved to adjacent neighborhoods. Okay, so it basically says 1/3 preserve or 100 feet setback.

So again, I question planning on that. And I think our planning consultant referenced this, that it was felt that this was, well, this isn't a legally binding document. The master plan is a guidance.

Therefore, let's not include those numbers. But I look at those numbers, and they're in the master plan. There's a definition for flex residential that specifies 1/3 more site for RC-1 density, 1/3 of the site is preserved, and a setback of 100 feet.

So, and I hadn't seen that before. I had, that was not, I had read it, but I did not recall that's what it said specifically. So objectively, from my perspective, this proposal does not meet what is laid out for flex residential.

Whether we like that or not, it doesn't meet it objectively. Okay, but this is a PUD. I understand that.

So it's up to us. Do we think there's sufficient benefit for this proposal as it stands, even if, as it's defined in the master plan, this doesn't quite meet the density requirement of flex residential, as it's specified, as I read it. I could be wrong, but that's how I read it.

So I look at, so it then comes back to subjective. Do we think subjectively this meets, is it a benefit? This is a PUD.

Is it subjectively bringing a benefit to the city from the point of view of an improvement to public health, safety, and welfare in the area affected? And when I look at that, okay, so what's the benefit? The benefit listed in the PUD in one, in three, and seven is the setback.

And the setback is at most now 83 feet, I believe. So it seems odd to argue that an 83 setback is a sufficient benefit to outweigh the fact you don't have a 100 foot setback, right? That doesn't really work.

So then you have to look for what else is the benefit that we have, and what are we getting from it? Well, we have a nicely designed set of buildings. There's a lot of thought put into it.

We have a pocket park. We have some artwork. We have some benefits.

What's listed in the PUD is that it is an attractive for sale community, and it's improved the state of these lots as they are. So that's all good. For me, it is not sufficient.

There's not sufficient benefit to outweigh the fact that we don't even meet our own standard of what flex residential is. I think there is a counter argument in favor of approval, and this has been brought up in previous meetings, and I think even touched on tonight, is that even as RA-1, you could develop somewhere between 20 and 26 homes, something in that sort of area. And if you did that, then you could have as little as a 35 foot setback in this development.

So the question is, if we left the zoning as it is, we didn't rezone, in effect the PUD isn't rezoning, it's just allowing. If we

left it as RA-1, someone could, by rights according to zone, build 20 to 26 homes with a 35 foot setback. Would that be a better solution?

And I say no. It wouldn't be a better solution than this. It would be worse.

But I've come to the conclusion that just because I can imagine a worse outcome doesn't mean I should approve the one that's proposed. I don't think that's sufficient reason. Just because I can think of something worse doesn't mean I should accept what's before us.

So I'm going to vote no on this proposal this evening.

Mayor Rich

Thank you. Anyone else? Dr. Bruce.

Councilmember Bruce

First off, I have no issues with the developer on this. So my comments are to the property owner, not to the developers. They're just trying to do what any other developer would try to do in their position.

I do have an issue with the current property owner who has allowed these properties to deteriorate over many years. They have also used these properties as a dumping ground for old boats, cars, construction materials, and garbage. Statements have been made that the owners have been unable to sell and market these properties, but that appears to be false and even more so with the testimony I've heard here tonight.

First off, if you're trying to market properties, you don't use them as dumping grounds. You clean them up and make them presentable. Second, I've asked for months, as I've stated earlier, that I need some sort of proof or evidence that the present owners have attempted to sell these properties at a reasonable amount.

Trying to package them up and sell them for a million dollars for three properties at a time is not selling them at a reasonable amount as far as I'm concerned. So up to this point, I've been given absolutely no evidence these properties have ever been put up for sale or marketed at any point as reasonable RA-1 properties in terms of the cost, the value, whatever. I've been working with development issues in this city for almost 30 years, and I know when we are being played



by a proponent or property owner, as I've seen it many times in the past, it is not our job to ensure that any property owner is guaranteed the maximum return on their property, whether through a zoning variance or through a development such as a PUD.

However, in this case, I believe that the owners of this property are trying to cash in at the expense of the city and the residents that surround these properties and the proposed development. In my opinion, and from the evidence presented, I believe that these properties and the homes on them have been allowed to rot so that at some point they could be packaged and sold at a premium to a developer to maximize the return on the sale of these properties. I believe that this is a scam and that we are being played.

I do not for a moment believe that these properties could not be sold and developed individually at the RA-1 level, and I think they could be sold without difficulty. I've lived in this city for 40 years, and in my time as a resident and a past realtor and being on the ZBA and council for almost 30 years, I've seen anything that is put up for sale eventually sold in this city. Even during difficult market periods.

I've always joked that you could sell a cardboard box under a viaduct in this city, and I don't believe that as far from the truth. So the underlying premise that we must approve this PUD because these properties cannot be sold and developed as RA-1 homes to be without any evidence or merit, and in fact, the evidence is in the opposite direction. The very basis of this project does not make sense or add up.

The PUD approval is only a vehicle to send a lot of money to the property owners for years of bad behavior which has done damage to the surrounding neighborhoods and to our city. Why in the world would we want to reward this behavior? The people that bought their homes which surround these properties in the subdivisions north, east, and south did so in the belief that this area would remain RA-1.

That is a very reasonable assumption, and it is one that underlines the stability of our neighborhoods and the values of homes that people buy. If they cannot trust the zoning that has been in place for years which is consistent with their properties, then it damages the trust that they have with the

city and the process of how the city approaches development. In effect, it changes the rules in the middle of the game and pulls the rug out from under the residents.

That is why we have received dozens and dozens of emails, letters, and testimonies in person from the people that live around this area. They don't want this development as they correctly see that it is not consistent with the surrounding areas. I have always said that bad development is worse than no development as you cannot change bad development.

Over time, good development will come if we are patient. The RC equivalent development is too dense and will look completely out of place. It is basically a form of commercial development bleeding into residential.

I have always fought to protect the residential character of our neighborhoods because if not, then again you lose the trust of the people and you lower the property values of the homes in our neighborhoods. If we approve this development, it puts every other subdivision on notice that the zoning around them can be changed at any time on the whim of a property owner if they have the patience to let their property rot to extract a development that will maximize a return on their investment at the cost of everyone else. Remember, these seven homes only have seven curb cuts and the amount of traffic that would come in and out of these seven single family homes is absolutely minimal.

However, the traffic that will flow in and out of this dense development will be constant and disruptive to the surrounding areas and will add significantly to the already heavy traffic that traverses this route on a daily basis. Go eastbound in the mornings or westbound in the late afternoons and you can see the lineup of traffic. I have to go through there almost every day.

One of the things that we are supposed to consider in a PUD is a public benefit. I hear this all the time from my fellow council members and rightly so because when they look at a PUD, they are as concerned as I am about the public benefit which makes the PUD worthwhile. Someone please point out the public benefit that counters all the negatives I have already outlined.

I don't see it and I don't see it going forward. While the new master plan does propose that this area is a flex residential, this has not really been completely defined or fleshed out nor does it require that we put in a development at this density level. I'm asking my fellow council members to seriously consider everything that has led up to where we are with this proposed development.

I have nothing against the design of this development. I think there are so many other places or areas in the city that this would look great, but this is not the area. I love the Mercedes-Benz financial headquarters building on Drake and 12 Mile, but it wouldn't look good in this neighborhood.

This is bad development. This is a misuse of the PUD process. As far as I'm concerned, this is almost like spot zoning in my opinion and not appropriate.

I'm voting against this motion because I just think this area should stay the way it is. RA-1, I think these properties can be developed. Again, no evidence that it can't be and that's why I'm not going to vote for this motion.

Mayor Rich

Thank you. Anyone else? Ms. Knol.

Councilmember Knol

Sure.

So first of all, thanks to the residents and the developer for being here once again.

I know it's probably frustrating to have to come to so many meetings. We're here a lot, but I'm sure there's better things you can be doing with your time.

But this is the public process. This is democracy. This is transparency.

So this is the way things work in the city and I'm glad you're all here. And hopefully we can, you know, we've been civil for the most part about this and hopefully we can all still remain civil whatever happens tonight because that's the way we like to be here in Farmington Hills, is civil to each other and all good neighbors. So first of all, I want to say to Schafer, I actually think you're all very nice people and I think you have some great properties out there.

I've seen many of your developments and I do think you are trustworthy and you do a good job. So this is nothing personal, nothing against you. First of all, I want to thank you actually for on the south side turning those eight buildings into one story.

I think that has been a huge benefit. It is for the residents of Holly Hill that back up to that. It is much better to look out at a one-story building as opposed to a two-story building.

So thank you for that. Also thank you for increasing the side setback as well there. So I want to thank you for that.

But I do still have some concerns here. So with RA-1, I think at this point it's probably unlikely that this property is going to get redeveloped with just simply seven homes. Whether it's taking what existing homes are left and fixing them back up or knocking them down and building new ones, I just don't think financially that will happen.

I know there's a difference of opinion on that but I don't think that will happen. Another option with RA-1 is it could be redeveloped with RA-1 smaller homes. As has been said, it could be anywhere from maybe 22 to 26 homes, maybe 20, 26 homes somewhere in there.

Obviously you have to put the infrastructure and the roads in so it's hard to know exactly how many homes. But based on the lot calculation, it's going to be somewhere in there. If you do the square footage, that's why I was asking about the square footage.

If you just for example, let's take 26 homes, kind of the max of maybe what you could put in there with a RA-1 development. Let's just say there are 2,000 square feet, making up a number here that's roughly probably on the small side maybe, but you're looking at 62,000 square feet as opposed to what was calculated earlier as opposed to 98,500. So that's the difference you're looking at is if this were developed as an RA-1 as opposed to as this PUD.

I also did a Holly Hill and this may not be exact, but I took the acreage of this property and tried to overlay it onto Holly Hill directly behind. There's approximately 17, 18 homes in Holly

Hill that correspond to this acreage. I don't know the square footage, but to make things consistent for Holly Hill, I just used 2,000 square feet.

So again, if you're looking at the 2,000 square foot times about 17 homes, you're looking at 30,000 square foot. So again, a big difference between 98,500, approximately 34,000 for Holly Hill, and if this were developed as an RA-1, potentially it'd be above Holly Hill at potentially 62,000, but still well below the 98,000. So we talked a lot about flex zoning, and yes, flex can be allowed.

I think we acknowledge, most of us acknowledge that up here that it is an option, but again, it's in exchange for the setback in the open space. And the open space is where I'm having my issue, and it has to do, again, because of the density of this project, I still don't feel that there's enough open space in this development to really be compatible with Westgate and Holly Hill farms. So for that reason, I'm not supporting it tonight.

Mayor Rich

Thank you. Okay. Anyone else want to speak? Mr. Bridges.

Councilmember Bridges

Just to be brief, Councilmember Bruce's comments were quite representative of the comments I would have made, but he made them in a very elegant manner, so we want to compliment you on your comments there. Councilmember Bruce and I have served on the Zoning Board of Appeals together back before we joined the City Council, and we learned a lot about the residential character of this community. And I just don't think that the relief that the proponent is asking for is enough, is substantial compared to the community benefit to the city.

And I'm also looking concerned about the qualitative impact upon this area if this development goes through. So again, the Shafer's been very, very diligent, and also they've worked with the Homeowner's Association. They've come back to Council on several occasions.

I want to thank the members of the community who have been here for several meetings going through this process. We appreciate your steadfast public involvement on this issue. It's very important to you, and so we appreciate you continue to show your presence on this topic.

But for the reasons that Councilmember Bruce outlined, I just can't see the benefit to the community by offering this type of huge change from RA-1 to RC-1. The benefits don't line up for me to support this, so I would be voting against this proposal. Thank you.

Councilmember Boleware

I came here this evening with the understanding that I would be approving this PUD based upon the fact that we have a housing crisis in this country and that it's a housing crisis at every income level. And I thought that this was a way to address it. But after listening to my fellow council members, who some of them have a greater depth of knowledge in this area than I do, I appreciate the comments that they made, and they were valid.

I do have some concerns, as most of the council members have already spoken, about the density of this project. And I know that in the future, it will not be developed as seven parcels. It will be extremely expensive to do so.

So based upon what I've heard from the residents, because I've read every letter that's come in, email from you, I heard you tonight, I heard you in your previous comment, I am going to join my fellow council members and vote no on this project.

Mayor Rich

Well, I get to speak. Thank you. So as Councilmember Boleware said, we do have a housing issue in this country.

We have a housing issue in Farmington Hills. I like this project. And it is quite clear that this motion is going to fail.

But what I like about the project, I very much appreciate the Schafers listening to the feedback we've given. And I very much appreciate the partnership with Pulte to create something that didn't exist before, hopefully one day will, because that's the kind of housing that's needed. We need somewhere where most of us are 55 and up here.

We need places where we can trade in our 2,400 square foot colonials and go live in a ranch or a ranch duplex. That's a missing piece in our community. It would be great to have, and I've talked about this at Council before, at this dais, it would be great to have a development where a younger family could live in the townhome and grandparents could hypothetically

live in the ranches alongside.

I think that would be super. But it's quite clear that this motion is going to fail. And I hear my colleagues.

I'm not necessarily in agreement. I think that the PUD did show sufficient benefit. But I understand that tonight this is not going through.

So now we'll call the question. This is a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: DWYER

Nays: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, KNOL, AND RICH

Absent: NONE

Abstentions: NONE

MOTION FAILED 1-6.

**Further discussion and action (verbatim):**

Attorney Joppich

Mayor Rich?

Mayor Rich

Yes.

Attorney Joppich

Well, you're at a point where the motion put on the table to approve has failed. And there's been a lot of comments made by those who voted in the negative on that as to the reasons why they were voting to the negative. But there is no motion that has been made yet to deny it where the motion includes the reasons for the denial at this point.

So my legal advice would be to now deliberate over and decide a motion to deny. Again, as indicated previously, that should take into consideration the standards in section 34-3.20.2 of the zoning ordinance to go through those standards. If I can be of any assistance, I'd be happy to do so.

But we're at that procedural step. All right. We're looking for that motion to deny right now.

Councilmember Bruce

Okay. I'd like to make a motion to resolve that the application for PUD 2-2024, including site plan 56-8-2024, dated August 21st, 2024 and September 4th, 2024, respectively, as revised, submitted by Stephen Schafer, are denied because it does not meet all the provisions set forth in section 34-3.20 of the

zoning ordinance and the proposed development will adversely affect the public health, welfare, and safety for the following reasons.

And I would like to submit to the record my comments that I made earlier if that would be sufficient in terms of the several comments that I made in my comments after the first motion was made. Is that good that I just enter it that way or do I have to reread or spell them out?

Attorney Joppich

I think if Council is satisfied that they're sufficiently aware of those comments, those comments are reflected in the record and in the recorded meeting, and you have them in writing. If you submit those with the record, I think that would be sufficient if it satisfies Council.

Councilmember Bruce

I will provide you the record that I wrote.

Mayor Rich

So we have a motion. Is there support?

Councilmember Bridge

Support.

**Motion discussion (verbatim):**

Mayor Rich

We have motion and support. Discussion? No discussion.

Okay. I do have a point then that I do not believe this is a detriment . . . this project is a detriment. And so for that reason, I'm not going to be able to vote for denial.

Councilmember Aldred

I understand. I believe what you're referring to, Madam Mayor, is the line here that says that the proposed development would adversely affect the public health, welfare, and safety for the following reasons.

Mayor Rich

Correct. And I do not believe that this project negatively affects public health, safety, and welfare.

Councilmember Aldred

I have a question for the attorney. Is it necessary to say adversely affect? That implies something negative, whereas I believe the consensus of opinion was there wasn't sufficient benefit.

Attorney Joppich

Well, I believe that is some language from the ordinance itself that it provides sufficient benefit in the judgment of Council. I think one aspect of the motion that's on the table so far,



something it doesn't include, are some of the comments made by Councilmember Aldred regarding similar issues. I think aspects of that were covered relative to no benefit from the setback because of it's not the 100 foot flex and doesn't even comply with the master plan.

If you want to make a motion to amend the current motion to include comments like that, you could elaborate on those and then the maker of the motion could consider whether to add those as reasons.

Councilmember Aldred

I'm happy to add that as an amendment to summarize that. I'm hearing the Mayor's comment and I'm trying to get clarification on whether it requires, this proposed development will adversely affect public health.

Councilmember Bruce

I would add to my motion that the ways that it will adversely affect public health, welfare and safety for the following reasons:

Number one is the increased traffic to this area. I think that it would be a much higher level of traffic coming in and out of that development and the traffic there is already, the road is already almost overloaded many times during the day. I think the density of this development and that amount of traffic would adversely affect this.

I think that it would adversely affect it in terms of runoff from the development. I think that it adversely affects it from the fact that we could damage property values from around this area because of the fact that we're changing zoning next to RA-1 areas and it would make the properties less desirable in those areas. Those are at least, again, some of the points that I made in my previous points that I just wanted to highlight in terms of how I think it will adversely affect this area.

Councilmember Boleware

Yes. I don't believe the development will adversely affect the surrounding neighborhood. I did contact our city assessor to ask in the past for those developments that have gone through the PUD process and the determination was they had not. And those were, so I am opposed to including that statement in the denial.

Councilmember Aldred

As I'm rereading the resolution, I see that it's saying two things. It's saying that it will, does not meet all the provisions

of section 34, which is the PUD and does not, will adversely affect for the following reasons. In other words, they're listing it below the combination of the two things.

So that, so I'm happy to support Dr. Bruce's motion and I would also add an amendment that says that the, referring to the benefit, that there is not the benefit of, the setback is not a sufficient benefit. The setback that was provided is not a sufficient benefit to meet the provisions of Section 34.3.20.

Councilmember Bruce

I would accept that.

Mayor Rich

Yeah. So we have an amended motion. Is there support for the amended motion?

Councilmember Bridges

Second.

Mayor Rich

Okay. So that being the case, I am still going to vote no on this motion because the rationale was negated by our traffic engineer regarding traffic.

The rationale about water runoff was negated by our city engineering department and the rationale about reduction in property value is at best speculation and is not supported, as Ms. Boleware said in conversation with our assessor, that rationale tends to not hold water. So for that reason, I will still be voting no on this resolution. It clearly is going to pass, but that's explaining my vote.

And folks, I know we've had a hundred people come to these things. I'm not voting against you, but I'm voting for everybody else in the community who will need that kind of housing.

Mayor Rich

Okay. Do we need to call the question? This is a roll call vote.

Clerk Lindahl

Madam Mayor, can we just clarify a couple of things here? So Council Member Bruce, your motion on the table right now is the denial. We're still including the adverse effect to public health, welfare and safety and including due to increased traffic and possible damage to property values, making it less desirable.

Councilmember Bruce

Correct.

Clerk Lindahl	And are we including all of your other notes that you're going to provide?
Councilmember Bruce	Yes.
Clerk Lindahl	Okay, perfect. And then Council Member Aldred, we're also including your comments on the setback.
Councilmember Aldred	Yes.
Clerk Lindahl	Okay.
Councilmember Aldred	There is not sufficient benefit from the setback.
Clerk Lindahl	Okay.
Councilmember Aldred:	Outweighs the flex residential definition.
Clerk Lindahl:	Perfect. And then we have a second on that from Councilmember Bridges.
Councilmember Bridges:	Yes.
Clerk Lindahl	With all those changes.
Councilmember Bridges	Yes.
Clerk Lindahl	Okay.
Mayor Rich	Now we're calling the question. It's a roll call vote.

MOTION by Bruce, support by Bridges, that that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby denies the application for PUD 2, 2024, including Site Plan 56-8-2024, dated August 21, 2024, and September 4, 2024, respectively, as revised, submitted by Steven Schafer, because it does not meet all provisions set forth in Section 34-3.20 of the Zoning Ordinance and the proposed development will adversely affect the public health, welfare, and safety for the following reasons stated by Councilmember Bruce and the additional reasons stated below:

*"First off I have no issues with the developer on this, so my comments are to the property owner not to the developers, they are just trying to do what any other developer would do in their position. I do have an issue with the current property owner, who has allowed these properties to deteriorate over many years. They have also used these properties as a dumping ground for old boats, cars, construction materials and garbage. Statements have been made that the owners have be unable to sell and market these properties, but that appears false on its face and even more so with the testimony I've heard here tonight. First off, if you are trying to market properties, you don't use them*

*as dumping grounds, you clean them up and make them presentable. Second, I have asked for months as I've stated earlier that I need some sort of proof or evidence that present owners have attempted to sell these properties at a reasonable amount. Trying to package them up and sell them at 1 million dollars or three properties at time is not selling them at a reasonable amount as far as I'm concerned. Up to this point, I have been given absolutely no evidence that these properties have been put up for sale or marketed at any point as reasonable RA-1 properties in terms of cost, value, whatever.*

*I have been working with development issues in this city for almost 30 years, and I know when we are being played by a proponent or property owner, as I have seen it many times in the past. It is not our job to ensure that any property owner is guaranteed the maximum return on their property, whether through a zoning variance or through a development such as a PUD. However, in this case I believe that the owners of this property are trying to cash in at the expense of the city and the residents that surround these properties and the proposed development. In my opinion, and from the evidence presented, I believe these properties and the homes on them have been allowed to rot, so that at some point they could be packaged and sold at a premium to a developer to maximize their return on the sale of these properties. I believe that this is a scam, and that we are being played. I do not for a moment believe that these properties could not be sold and developed individually at the RA-1 level and I think they could be sold without difficulty. I have lived in this city for 40 years, and in my time as a resident, and a past realtor, and being on the ZBA and Council for almost 30 years, I have seen anything that is put up for sale, eventually sold in this City. Even during difficult market periods. I have always joked that could sell a cardboard box under a viaduct in this City, and I don't believe that is far from the truth. So, the underlying premise, that we must approve his PUD because these properties cannot be sold and developed as RA-1 homes, to be without any evidence or merit, and in fact the evidence is in opposite direction. The very basis of this project does not make sense or add up. The PUD approval is only a vehicle to send a lot of money to the property owner for years of bad behavior, which has done damage to the surrounding neighborhoods and to our City. Why in the world would we want to reward that behavior?*

*The people that bought their homes which surround these properties in the subdivisions north, east and south, did so in the belief that this area would remain RA-1. That is a very reasonable assumption, and it is one that underlies the stability of our neighborhoods and the value of the homes that people buy. If they cannot trust the zoning that has been in place for years which is consistent with their properties, then it damages the trust they have with the city and the process of how this city approaches development. In effect, it changes the rules in the middle of the game and pulls the rug out from under the residents. That is why we have received dozens and dozens of emails, letters, testimonies in person, from the people that live around this area. They don't want this development, as they correctly see that it is not consistent with the surrounding areas.*

*I have always said that bad development is worse than no development, as you cannot change bad development, and over time good development will come if we are patient. The RC equivalent development is too dense and will look completely out of place. It is basically a form of commercial development bleeding into residential. I have always fought to protect the residential character of our neighborhoods, because if not, then again you lose the trust of the people and you lower the property values of the homes in our neighborhoods. If we approve this development, it puts every other subdivision on notice that the zoning around them can be changed at any time on the whim of a*

*property owner if they have the patience to let their property rot, to extract a development that will maximize a return on their investment, at the cost of everyone else.*

*Remember these seven homes only have seven curb cuts, and the amount of traffic that would come in and out of these seven single family homes is absolutely minimal. However, the traffic that will flow in and out of this dense development will be constant, and disruptive to the surrounding areas, and will add significantly to the already heavy traffic that traverses this route on a daily basis. Go eastbound in the mornings or westbound in the late afternoons, and you can see the lineup of traffic. I have to go through there almost every day.*

*One of the things that we are supposed to consider in a PUD is a public benefit. I hear this all the time from my fellow council members and rightly so, because when they look at the PUD they are as concerned as I am about the public benefit which makes the PUD worthwhile. Someone please point out a public benefit that counters all of the negatives I have already outlined. I don't see it, and I don't see it going forward. While the new master plan does propose that this area is a "flex residential," this has not really been completely defined or flushed out, nor does it require that we put in a development at this density level.*

*I am asking my fellow council members to seriously consider everything that has led up where we are with this proposed development. I have nothing against the design of this development, I think there are so many places or areas in the city that this would look great, but this is not the area. I love the Mercedes Benz Financial Headquarters building on Drake and 12 Mile, but it would not look good in this neighborhood. This is bad development, this is a misuse of the PUD process, as far as I'm concerned this is almost like spot zoning in my opinion and not appropriate."*

And for the following additional reasons:

- 4) The increased density and traffic to the area would adversely affect the public and this area. The density would create a much higher level of traffic coming in and out of the development and the traffic and road are already almost overloaded many times during the day.
- 5) Runoff from the development.
- 6) It could damage property values from around the area because of the fact we are changing zoning next to RA-1 areas, and it would make the properties less desirable in those areas.
- 7) The setback that is provided is not a sufficient benefit to meet the provisions of Section 34-3.20.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BRIDGES, BRUCE AND KNOL

Nays: DWYER, BOLEWARE AND RICH

Absent: NONE

Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 4-3.

Mayor Rich called a break and 10:00pm and reconvened the meeting at 10:09pm.

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF ENACTMENT OF ORDINANCE C-5-2025 TO AMEND THE**

**FARMINGTON HILLS CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 34, "ZONING," ARTICLE 2.0, "DEFINITIONS," SECTION 34-2.2, "DEFINITIONS," TO ADD DEFINITIONS RELATING TO ARTISAN MANUFACTURING AND LIVE/WORK UNITS; ARTICLE 3.0, "ZONING DISTRICTS," SECTION 34-3.1-22, "OS-4 OFFICE RESEARCH DISTRICT," TO REVISE PERMITTED AND SPECIAL APPROVAL USES AND CERTAIN HEIGHT, AREA, AND BULK STANDARDS; ARTICLE 3.0, "ZONING DISTRICTS," SECTION 34-3.5.2, "NOTES TO SCHEDULE OF REGULATIONS," TO REVISE THE APPLICABLE CHART OF NOTES TO DELETE NOTE P AND RE-LETTER; ARTICLE 3.0, "ZONING DISTRICTS," SECTION 34-3.9, "OS-1, OS-2, OS-3 AND OS-4 DISTRICT REQUIRED CONDITIONS," TO AMEND THE CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO THE DISTRICT; ARTICLE 4.0, "USE STANDARDS," TO ADD NEW SECTION 34-6.61, "PARKING STRUCTURES"; AND ARTICLE 5.0, "SITE STANDARDS," SECTION 34-5.2, "OFF-STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS," TO REVISE AND/OR REARRANGE VARIOUS PARKING STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS; AND SUMMARY FOR PUBLICATION. CMR 8-25-107**

Director of Planning and Community Development Kettler-Schmult explained that this is the second reading for the zoning text amendments. Modifications since the first reading included:

- Include additional uses that were requested by Council: vocational and tutoring centers, and indoor recreation with a maximum of 3,300 square feet in area.
- Removal of the bonus height provision that previously allowed an additional 20 feet of building height in the OS-4 district in exchange for a 15 percent public open space set-aside. This item will be revisited with a future text amendment with additional information and options for how this might be addressed.

Director Kettler-Schmult said that with those modifications, this was the second reading. If approved this evening the text amendments would go into effect in 21 days.

MOTION by Aldred, support by Boleware, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the ENACTMENT of Ordinance C-5-2025 to amend the Farmington Hills Code of Ordinances, Chapter 34, "Zoning," Article 2.0, "Definitions," Section 34-2.2, "Definitions," to add definitions relating to artisan manufacturing and live/work units; Article 3.0, "Zoning Districts," Section 34-3.1-22, "OS-4 Office Research District," to revise permitted and special approval uses and certain height, area, and bulk standards; Article 3.0, "Zoning Districts," Section 34-3.5.2, "Notes To Schedule Of Regulations," to revise the applicable chart of notes to delete note p and re-letter; Article 3.0, "Zoning Districts," Section 34-3.9, "OS-1, OS-2, OS-3 And OS-4 District Required Conditions," to amend the conditions applicable to the district; Article 4.0, "Use Standards," to add new section 34-6.61, "Parking Structures"; and Article 5.0, "Site Standards," Section 34-5.2, "Off-Street Parking Requirements," to revise and/or rearrange various parking standards and requirements; and summary for publication.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPEAL OF A FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUEST DATED MAY 15, 2025.**

City Attorney Carlito Young provided information regarding the pending FOIA appeal filed by Mr. Charles Blackwell. This appeal was distinguished from a prior appeal as it centered on a different basis for disputing the fees associated with responding to FOIA requests. Attorney Young clarified that case law and precedent do not consider the city's overall budget or operating costs, but rather the actual costs of

producing the records, including staff time and administrative burden. He emphasized that Mr. Blackwell's assertion that the costs were unreasonable was a matter of opinion and not consistent with established precedent. Attorney Young recommended that Council affirm the \$51 cost estimate for production of text messages between April 1 and May 15, 2025, as reasonable and consistent with statute.

Councilmember Boleware asked whether the FOIA review pertained to city-issued or personal phones. Attorney Young clarified that the content of the records, not the device, determines whether the records are subject to FOIA. As such, both city and personal phones would need to be searched, contributing to the costs involved. Because the request involved communications between the City Manager and Assistant City Manager, review must be conducted by high-level officials due to the sensitivity of employee information and potential attorney-client information. Consequently, the hourly rate applied reflects the Assistant City Manager's salary. This was cited as the rationale behind the \$51 cost estimate being reasonable and consistent with FOIA provisions.

Mayor Rich noted that Mr. Blackwell was not in attendance this evening.

MOTION by Bruce, support by Knol, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby upholds the City's deposit request, fee for cost reimbursement set forth in its Itemized Fee Schedule, and denial of fee waiver request, relating to Mr. Blackwell's May 15, 2025, FOIA request for the following reasons:

1. The fee amount and deposit request comply with the City's publicly available procedures and guidelines and section 4 of the Freedom of Information Act;
2. FOIA Section 4 (1)(a) permits the City to seek the costs associated with preparing and responding to a FOIA Request;
3. FOIA Section 4 (3) permits the City to seek reimbursement for FOIA responses that would pose "unreasonably high costs" to the City.
4. FOIA Section 4 (2)(a) does not apply as the requestor has not provided the necessary documentation required for a cost reduction of \$20.00;
5. The fee waiver request under FOIA Section 4(2) is permissive, no basis has been provided supporting approval of a waiver in this instance, and the decision on a fee waiver request is not listed under FOIA Section 10a as being subject to appeal or challenge; and
6. FOIA Section 1(a), (d) and (g) allows the City to redact information that would infringe upon an individual's privacy rights or disclosed privileged material. Finally, disclosure of the exempt material would not provide any beneficial information to the public should it be disclosed.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF AUTHORIZATION OF A PURCHASE AGREEMENT WITH DETROIT EDISON ELECTRIC COMPANY TO UPDATE AND INSTALL STREET LIGHTING AT THE 12 MILE ROAD AND ORCHARD LAKE ROAD INTERSECTION. CMR 8-25-108**

Senior Engineer Mark Saksewski presented an overview of proposed lighting improvements at the intersection of 12 Mile and Orchard Lake Road. The project will enhance nighttime visibility for both motorists and pedestrians and elevate the area's visual character. The proposed lighting project will modernize and expand street lighting, with a net installation cost of \$47,746 and anticipated completion by late fall 2025.

The project includes:

- One existing overhead Cobra-style streetlight will be replaced with a modern 206-watt LED fixture.
- One new overhead light of the same type will be installed.
- Seven new underground-fed 206-watt LED fixtures mounted on black decorative posts with banner arms will be added on the east side of Orchard Lake Road.
- Installation is scheduled for completion by late fall 2025, in coordination with the Road Commission for Oakland County's ongoing project at the intersection.
- DTE quoted an installation cost of \$60,387, with a three-year revenue credit of \$12,641. The city's net installation cost will be \$47,746.
- Ongoing annual operating and maintenance costs are estimated at \$4,213.

MOTION by Dwyer, support by Bridges, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves entering into a purchase agreement with DTE Electric Company for work order #75200945, to furnish, install, operate and maintain street lighting at the 12 Mile Road and Orchard Lake intersection.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF REQUEST FOR THE 13 MILE ROAD SANITARY SEWER PAYBACK EXTENSION. CMR 8-25-109**

Senior Engineer Tammy Gushard, Department of Public Services, presented information regarding a request to extend the sanitary sewer payback installment plan for the 13 Mile Road Sanitary Sewer Payback District.

- On December 2, 2019, City Council adopted a resolution establishing the sanitary sewer payback district and allowed property owners the option to pay back costs over 10 years if they entered into an agreement within five years (by December 2, 2024).
- Recently, a property owner within the district requested to enter into the installment plan due to a failing septic system. However, the five-year period had expired, and the owner was informed that the full payment would be required at the time of connection. The owner expressed concerns about their financial hardship and inability to pay the full cost upfront, requesting reconsideration of the installment plan. After consultation with the City Attorney, it was confirmed that City Council has the authority under City Code Section 33-203 to modify the previously approved time period.
- Recognizing this situation, and the potential that other property owners in the district may wish to connect and utilize the installment plan, staff recommended amending the resolution to extend the payment plan option from five years to seven years. The proposed extension would allow property



owners until December 2, 2026, to opt into the installment plan. If approved, the city will notify all benefiting property owners in the district of the change.

MOTION by Knol, support by Aldred that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves an amendment to Amended Resolution R-199-19 to change the “five (5) year” period to a period of “seven (7) years” for a property to exercise the option of entering into an agreement to pay its proportionate share of the improvement costs with installment payments over a period of years, and to further resolve that Amended Resolution R-199-19, except as specifically amended hereby, shall remain in full force and effect as written.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF THE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH OAKLAND COUNTY FOR HERITAGE PARK. CMR 8-25-110**

Director of Special Services Schnackel presented the proposed interlocal agreement with Oakland County regarding the operation of Heritage Park. She explained that following the passage of an increased parks millage in the fall of 2024, city staff engaged in discussions with the county to formalize a long-term partnership. The proposed agreement is structured as a 30-year renewable contract, with a \$4 million payment to the city from the county after a six-month planning and transition period concluding on March 31, 2026.

During the transition period, the county and city will jointly develop a comprehensive park action plan. This plan will include community engagement, existing conditions analysis, strategic planning, a capital improvements plan, and an operations and maintenance plan. The final plan will be submitted to City Council by March 31, 2026, for review, approval, and recommendations.

Director Schnackel emphasized that this partnership would provide substantial benefits to the community, including enhanced capital investments, upfront and ongoing financial support, and increased service levels for residents and visitors.

MOTION by Knol, support by Bruce, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager and City Clerk to sign the Interlocal Agreement with Oakland County for Heritage Park and authorizes the City Manager and Director of Special Services to finalize the terms of the agreement in consultation with the City Attorney.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENT OF VOTING DELEGATE AND ALTERNATE VOTING DELEGATE FOR THE MICHIGAN MUNICIPAL LEAGUE ANNUAL MEETING TO BE HELD ON SEPTEMBER 17, 2025.**

MOTION by Bridges, support by Dwyer, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby designates Councilmember Boleware as the voting delegate for the Michigan Municipal League Annual Meeting to be held on September 17, 2025.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENTS TO VARIOUS BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS.**

MOTION by Boleware, support by Aldred, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby confirms the Mayor's recommendation to appoint the following individuals to various City Boards and Commissions:

**Beautification Commission**

	<b>Length of Term:</b>	<b>Term ending:</b>
September Twanetta Ingram	3 years	February 1, 2029

**Innovation, Energy & Environmental Sustainability Committee**

	<b>Length of Term:</b>	<b>Term ending:</b>
Matthew Strickfaden	3 years	February 1, 2029

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF THE TENTATIVE AGREEMENT AND MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH COMMAND OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN. CMR 8-25-111**

MOTION by Aldred, support by Bruce, that that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager and the Assistant City Manager to sign the Tentative Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding with Command Officers Association of MI (COAM), ratified by the parties and outlined herein, being City Manager's Report CMR 8-25-111, dated August 11, 2025.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF THE 2025 HIGH INTENSITY DRUG TRAFFICKING AREA OAKLAND COUNTY SUBRECIPIENT AGREEMENT. CMR 8-25-112**

MOTION by Aldred, support by Bruce, that that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the City Manager to execute the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Oakland County Subrecipient Agreement and any associated documents or agreements.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED ADOPTION OF THE AMENDED PLANNING COMMISSION BYLAWS AND RULES OF**

**PROCEDURE. CMR 8-25-113**

MOTION by Aldred, support by Bruce, that that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the amended Planning Commission Bylaws and Rules of Procedure.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF AN AGREEMENT WITH MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR COST PARTICIPATION FOR A JOINT STORM SEWER PROJECT ON GRAND RIVER AVE BETWEEN CORA AVE AND TUCK RD, MDOT CONTRACT #24-5382. CMR 8-25-114**

MOTION by Aldred, support by Bruce, that that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves entering into agreement No. 24-5382 with MDOT to address the cost sharing responsibilities for the Grand River Joint Sewer Project.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF AUTHORIZING THE ROAD COMMISSION FOR OAKLAND COUNTY TO COMPLETE PAVEMENT REPAIRS ON CITY MAINTAINED ROAD APPROACHES TO HAGGERTY ROAD, IN COORDINATION WITH THEIR UPCOMING HAGGERTY ROAD MAINTENANCE PROJECT. CMR 8-25-115**

MOTION by Aldred, support by Bruce, that that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby authorizes the Road Commission for Oakland County to perform pavement repairs at the approaches of Heatherbrook Drive, Geneva Drive, and Glenbrook Drive.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED ADOPTION OF TRAFFIC CONTROL ORDER TM-109-2025 – LEFT TURN RESTRICTION AT HILLSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. CMR 8-25-116**

MOTION by Aldred, support by Bruce, that that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby adopts Traffic Control Order TM-109-2025 to prohibit left turns—except for school buses—from westbound 11 Mile Road into the Hillside Elementary School driveway during the following time

periods on school days only:

- From 30 minutes before the start of classes to 30 minutes after the start
- From 30 minutes before dismissal to 30 minutes after dismissal

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH

Nays: NONE

Absent: NONE

Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FOURTH QUARTER FINANCIAL SUMMARY REPORT AND QUARTERLY INVESTMENT REPORT.**

MOTION by Aldred, support by Bruce, that that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby acknowledges the fourth quarter financial summary and quarterly investment reports.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH

Nays: NONE

Absent: NONE

Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF A SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT FOR ISKCON LORD KRISHNA BIRTH FESTIVAL TO BE HELD AUGUST 15 THROUGH AUGUST 17, 2025.**

MOTION by Aldred, support by Bruce, that that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves a Special Event Permit for ISKCON Farmington Hills to hold the Lord Krishna Birth Festival Friday, August 15, 2025, through Sunday, August 17, 2025, from 9:00am to 10:00pm at ISKCON Farmington Hills located at 36600 Grand River Avenue, subject to the following terms and conditions:

- There will be twenty-four (24) 10x10 tents onsite used for seating and for vendors selling merchandise
- There will be a stage setup for live music and applicant was advised about loud music local ordinance
- The applicant is expecting 1000 people each day, which will be open to the public
- Both entrances will be open for emergency vehicles in case the need arises
- The applicant has not asked for assistance from the police department
- No parking within 20' of any tent. Further, the west drive shall remain clear from Grand River to Lochdale for emergency vehicles
- Egress from the facility shall not be restricted
- Fire lane shall not be blocked or restricted
  - Temporary "NO PARKING FIRE LANE" signs shall be put up along Lochdale and Independence Office Drive from 8/15/25 – 8/17/25

- Cooking/open flame devices shall not be used under tents
- Any electrical equipment is approved by the City Electrical Inspector
- Proponent must contact Fire Prevention prior to beginning event to schedule a site inspection
- Event shall comply with the minimum Fire Prevention Code requirements
- Required electrical permit for Fairs/and Festival safety inspection
- ISKCON Farmington Hills has received permission from Middela LLC to use their two parking lots for visitors

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF RESCHEDULING THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 29, 2025 TO SEPTEMBER 22, 2025.**

MOTION by Aldred, support by Bruce, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby reschedules the regular City Council meeting of September 29, 2025 to September 22, 2025 with the Study Session beginning at 3:00pm and the Regular Session beginning at 5:00pm.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MINUTES OF JULY 14, 2025.**

MOTION by Knol support by Aldred, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the City Council study session minutes of July 14, 2025.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: BRIDGES

MOTION CARRIED 6-0-0-1.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION MINUTES OF JULY 14, 2025.**

MOTION by Knol support by Aldred, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the

regular session minutes of July 14, 2025.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: BRIDGES

MOTION CARRIED 6-0-0-1.

**RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL JOINT STUDY SESSION MINUTES OF JULY 21, 2025.**

MOTION by Aldred support by Bruce, that the City Council of Farmington Hills hereby approves the special joint study session minutes July 21, 2025.

Roll Call Vote:

Yeas: ALDRED, BOLEWARE, BRIDGES, BRUCE, DWYER, KNOL, AND RICH  
Nays: NONE  
Absent: NONE  
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

**ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

There were no additions to the agenda.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Sharia Davis, Wicklow Court, raised concerns regarding utility vendors working in her neighborhood. She explained that following a large water main project last year, her lawn was only recently restored, and it is now being disturbed again by contractors installing fiber optic lines. Contractors often enter her property without identifying themselves, without providing notice or a clear timeline of work, and with little regard for the noise and disruption caused. Her primary concern is safety and communication. She requested that contractors be required to clearly identify themselves and notify residents before beginning work. She noted that older residents in her area are particularly affected and stressed the importance of ensuring all residents know who is on their property, the purpose of the work, and the expected duration.

Mayor Rich asked Assistant City Manager Mondora to speak with Ms. Davis regarding this matter.

William Stieber, Dundalk, raised concerns about subdivision road repairs, noting that residents were previously promised upgrades following extensive water and sewer work. Also, following up from his comments last month, Mr. Steiber continued to object to the city's minimum water usage charge of 16 units per household, urging that billing be based on actual usage. Mr. Stieber suggested restructuring the billing system to include separate categories for capital costs while ensuring revenue stability and questioned why the city relies on the Water Resources Commission instead of handling billing internally. He highlighted the case of a senior resident billed for nearly triple her actual usage under the current

system, stressing that seniors on fixed incomes should not be penalized. He called for immediate changes instead of waiting for next June to make changes.

Pea Gee, city taxpayer, thanked Councilmembers Bruce and Aldred for attending the police event, *The Dangers of Synthetic Drugs Community Forum*, held in Southfield on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. She thanked everyone who made this deeply meaningful event possible.

**CITY ATTORNEY REPORT**

Written report submitted to Council.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The regular session of City Council meeting adjourned at 10:45PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carly Lindahl, City Clerk