

**MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
COMMUNITY ROOM
31555 11 MILE ROAD, FARMINGTON HILLS MI
January 22, 2015**

Chair Topper called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. on January 22, 2015.

Commissioners Present: Blizman, Fleischhacker, Mantey, McRae, Stimson, Schwartz, Topper

Commissioners Absent: Orr, Rae-O'Donnell

Others Present: Director of Planning and Community Development Gardiner, Staff Planner Stec; Public Services Director Mekjian, Assistant to the Director of Public Services Mondora, Engineering Manager Cubera, DPW Superintendent McCarthy; Director of Central Services Lasley; Special Services Director Schnackel, Deputy Director of Special Services Farmer, Facilities Supervisor Hotchkiss; Fire Chief Bartsch, Deputy Fire Chief Panoushek, Fire Marshal Olszewski; Police Chief Nebus, Deputy Police Chief Comini, Police Commander Ciaramitaro, Police Lieutenant Nicholas

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Blizman, support by McRae, to approve the agenda as published.

Motion carried unanimously.

REGULAR MEETING

A. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN 2015-2016 THROUGH 2020-2021

Staff Planner Stec led the discussion on this agenda item, which was a review of the draft Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) for 2015-2016 through 2020-2021. The CIP was not a promise of funding, but was the guiding document for capital improvements and purchases throughout the City. It offered a way to annually track, list, and re-evaluate any capital expenses over \$25,000. Additionally, the CIP helped department heads and others understand how all capital improvements in the City were being requested and prioritized. The role of the Planning Commission was to help prioritize projects during yearly study sessions, to set the CIP for Public Hearing in order to get citizen input, and then forward the CIP to the City Council. Tonight the goal was to set the CIP for Public Hearing on March 19, 2015.

Staff Planner Stec explained that various City personnel would present the portion of the CIP that related to their departments. Assistant to the City Manager Geinzer would not be here this evening; his portion of *Public Facilities* would be covered during the Parks and Recreation review.

CITYWIDE TECHNOLOGY

Director of Central Services Lasley reviewed the accomplishments of the past year as listed on page 32 of the draft document, especially emphasizing the integration of the City of Farmington IT systems

with Farmington Hills, which integration was now almost 100% complete. All of the City of Farmington's servers except one were now located in Farmington Hills City Hall. This had represented a huge, intensive effort and technology staff was looking forward to a more manageable work pace going forward. Funding for this integration was through an EVIP grant; no capital improvement monies were used.

Other accomplishments included:

- An employee time, scheduling and attendance software solution that would especially benefit the Police and Fire Departments was in the early stage of implementation.
- Technology staff had migrated network data storage to a 3Par solution that provided 45TB of raw storage. Costs would be recovered within about 2 years; the storage should meet the needs of Farmington Hills and Farmington for at least 7 years.
- Installation of BS&A.net software for the Building/Zoning divisions provided seamless sharing of data with other City departments.
- Other accomplishments were as listed in the draft CIP document.

Director Lasley noted that all electronic storage was backed up at Fire Station 3.

Items of discussion included:

- The City was about 9 years into the ERP/Eden/financial system. Replacement for this system was estimated at 8-15 years; the system would probably last another few years.
- The City did not use CLOUD storage; security was an issue. The new scheduling package might, however, eventually use the CLOUD.
- Cost to outsource the scanning of old paper documents was estimated at approximately \$1 million. Strategies were being discussed, including using temporary summer help to accomplish this over a period of time.
- Price of storage continued to decrease while the technology involved continued to improve; the storage system now used by the City organized files used most frequently for speed and ease of access.
- The City had well over 100 PCs that badly needed upgrades; they hoped to find a way to move forward with these upgrades this year.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Special Services Director Schnackel, Deputy Director of Special Services Farmer, and Facilities Supervisor Hotchkiss were present for this part of the CIP review.

Referring to page 12 of the draft CIP document, Special Services Director Schnackel reviewed the accomplishments of the past fiscal year, including:

- Baseball and soccer field improvements, which were a constant need based on ongoing use of those facilities.
- Purchase of a 3/4-ton pickup truck with a plow.
- Dredging of the irrigation pond at Hole 13 at the City Golf Course, funded through the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.
- New entry drive at Heritage Park.
- New Driving Range Netting at the Golf Club.
- Archery Range at Heritage Park.
- Rebuilt and repaired two Zamboni engines at the Ice Arena.

Utilizing overhead slides, Director Schnackel reviewed proposed parks and recreation projects as listed on page 60 of the draft document. She pointed out that proposed projects included new trail and way finding signs for all Parks and Facilities throughout the City, an office expansion at the Nature Center, and replacement and/or purchase of needed parks and golf vehicles and equipment. Many of these had reached the end of their useful life. Electric golf carts needed to be replaced.

Ice Arena infrastructure improvements would be made using millage funds.

Other proposed projects included:

- Replacing the HVAC units at the Costick Center. These were originally installed in 1975.
- Founders Park improvements, including replacing an failing irrigation pump station at the pond at Founders Sports Park, and adding lights to the parking lot directly adjacent to the paved lots and the lot next to Riley Skate Park.
- Golf cart replacement.
- Parking lot improvements at the Costick C Lot.
- Parking lot improvements at Heritage Park.
- Acquisition of park land, particularly in the northwest and southeast quadrants of the City.
- Adding a multi-purpose space to the Costick Center, and improvements and expansion of the Costick Center pool.

Discussion included:

- The need for a facility-based master plan.
- The replacement of the HVAC units at the Costick Center was in addition to the general budget allocation for new freon in other HVAC units throughout the City.
- Before any repaving project at the Costick Center began, traffic flow and efficient use of parking and open space should be reviewed.
- The park millage ended in 2019; requests for renewal would go out in 2017-2018. A separate millage to pay for improvements and expansions at the Costick Center might be a possibility.
- Reduced property taxes had significant negative impact on Parks and Recreation funding.
- The rebuilt Zamboni engines at the Ice Arena should last another 6-7 years.
- The use of the Vagnozzi Center for rentals, etc., was suggested. However, this was restricted by the deed giving the property to the City.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Energy and Environmental Sustainability Investments

Facilities Supervisor Hotchkiss referred the Commission to page 34 of the draft CIP document. He explained that there was about \$70,000 in the Energy and Environmental Sustainability Funds. There were 465 luminaries that needed to be replaced at various City facility parking lots at a cost of \$240,000; therefore \$170,000 was being requested from capital funds. This had a 9-year payback at a yearly savings of \$27,000 per year. Other proposed expenditures were listed on page 34, as noted.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Chief Bartsch, Deputy Fire Chief Panoushek, and Fire Marshal Olszewski were present on behalf of the Fire Department.

Chief Bartsch began the discussion by reviewing the Department's staff of career and on-call personnel, and the expansion of staffing hours at Fire Stations 1 and 4, in addition to the 24/7 staffing of Fire Station 5. He explained the difficult recruiting and retaining process, especially for part-time on-call firefighters. Recruiting, training, etc., were ongoing processes within the department.

Chief Bartsch reviewed Fire Department activities, including fire response, EMS calls and transport, Advanced Life Support transport, extractions at vehicle accidents, code enforcement and public education, including education in the schools. The Department used prioritized dispatch, enabling Community EMS to do basic transport when possible, freeing Department personnel and equipment for more extreme emergencies.

Chief Bartsch noted that under Public Act 390 the Fire Department was responsible for emergency management in the City, and did not fall under County jurisdiction in this area. However they did participate in regional mutual aid associations, including the Western Wayne County Urban Search and Rescue Organization.

Chief Bartsch said the number of incidents increased 2.4% last year, the smallest increase in some time. In 2014 the Department had 8,763 runs.

Chief Bartsch reviewed accomplishments of the past fiscal year as follows:

- Fire Station 1 Parking Lot Rehabilitation
- New Medic Unit
- Self contained breathing apparatus compressor installed at Fire Station #4.
- Bid submitted to Council for approval for purchase of new fire engine.

Referring to pages 57-58 of the draft CIP document, Chief Bartsch reviewed proposed fire apparatus purchases as listed. He explained procedures for reducing equipment costs where possible, and policies and procedures for replacing equipment when needed. For instance, acquisition of new apparatus was assigned to Station #5 and older vehicles were rotated to one of the satellite stations, thus extending vehicle life. The Department worked closely with the DPW regarding maintenance of the overall fleet.

Chief Bartsch spoke to the need to have more than one medic unit replacement per year, and the rationale for the requested new rescue units, which going forward would have smaller chassis, making them more economical to purchase and use, and more comfortable for people being transported.

Discussion was had regarding the increased emergency needs of a continually aging population, especially because the Planning Commission was hearing more requests for senior housing. Nationally approximately 70% of EMS runs were for people 70 and older.

Commissioner McRae asked if the costs of new apparatus could be more consistently spread out over time; ladder trucks were especially expensive. Fire Chief Bartsch explained the use, rotation, and replacement requirements for the ladder trucks. Sometimes large purchases such as these could be paid out over a period of 2 years.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Police Chief Nebus, Deputy Police Chief Comini, Police Commander Ciaramitaro, and Police Lieutenant Nicholas were present on behalf of the Police Department.

Deputy Chief Comini reviewed accomplishments as listed on pages 9 and 10, noting that 4 projects would be completed by the end of the fiscal year:

- Police building renovation planning for the next phase of the renovation project, including locker rooms, fitness room, and basement storage.
- Replace long guns with new weapons system in order to create a consistent weapons platform.
- Replacing the existing Emergency Medical Dispatch system with the ProQA computerized dispatch system; this project was already complete and came in under budget.
- Replace west parking lot adjacent to the police building.

Chief Nebus reviewed the proposed locker rooms and interior renovations as summarized in item 9 on page 35 of the draft CIP. He explained that these improvements represented the 3rd phase of ongoing building improvements and were desperately needed. Because the amount requested to complete these renovations was \$650,000, the Department would not request the \$100,000 listed under item 8 for interior updates. The renovations also would bring that area of the building up to ADA standards.

In response to questions from several Commissioners, regarding #11 on page 37, *Notebook Mobile Data Computer Replacement*, Chief Nebus said that Dell had a contract regarding the proposed notebooks in order to lock in the price and provide service for a number of years, at least through the life expectancy of the computers. These notebooks were used by personnel who were not always in a car, and who needed to access databases and software programs in the field in the course of their work.

Regarding #10, *Police Prisoner Van*, Chief Nebus said this van had failed in the last couple of months, and City Council had authorized emergency funds on January 12 2015 to purchase a new one. Therefore this item should be removed from the CIP.

Regarding #12, *Body Worn Camera System*, Chief Nebus said that the request for funds for body worn cameras was for 2016/2017, in order to give manufacturers time to work out problems with the units. He hoped to purchase an integrated system, where a body camera and in-car camera would work on one server with one company.

Discussion was held regarding seeking alternative funding for body cameras, storage retention of the camera records, FOIA requests for film, etc. It appeared inevitable that body cameras would eventually be required for all officers. However, policies needed to be carefully researched regarding the use of body cameras and the availability of the film via FOIA requests.

Regarding #13, *Police Officer Body Armor Replacement*, Chief Nebus said that body armor had an expiration date and had to be regularly replaced. Additionally the Department was planning to transition to an exterior vest carrier system, designed to allow some of the equipment currently being carried on an officer's equipment belt to be distributed on a non-tactical vest, thus improving the distribution of equipment weight.

Regarding #14, *Complete Radio System Replacement*, Chief Nebus said that the current radio system would only be supported for three more years. The hope was that Oakland County would have funding to help with this cost, but there was no guarantee that this would be the case.

Regarding #15, *Mobile Command Post Vehicle*, Chief Nebus said the current mobile command post vehicle was 15 years old and was wearing out. \$300,000 was requested in 2018/2019; \$232,000 would be for the vehicle itself, and \$68,000 would be for technology. The command post would be available for use by the Fire Department and other city agencies, and could be used in nontraditional ways, such as shelter when personnel were working long hours in extreme temperatures at emergency sites, or when family members arrived home to face trauma and were not permitted in their house.

SIDEWALKS, TRANSPORTATION, SANITARY SEWERS, WATERMAINS, DRAINAGE, DPW EQUIPMENT

Public Services Director Mekjian, Assistant to the Director of Public Services Mondora, Engineering Manager Cubera, and DPW Superintendent McCarthy were present on behalf of this presentation.

Director Mekjian referred the Commission to the accomplishments as listed in the draft CIP. Items especially noted by Director Mekjian and his staff included:

- The installation of a 30-inch water main to support the new water tower.
- The creative solution of converting the storm sewer to a sanitary sewer on Pearl Street, where construction of a new sanitary sewer system was cost prohibitive.
- The cost-saving brine making system upgrade at DPW.
- Reconstruction of Farmington Road from Ten Mile Road to Twelve Mile Road.

Discussion included:

- The closing of the northern mile of the Farmington Road reconstruction project long before any work was done there. Director Mekjian and Engineering Manager Cubera explained that the funding, contracts and scheduling for that project was controlled by MDOT.
- Moving the pedestrian bridge on Farmington Road to the east side would be considered by MDOT when the bridge itself was upgraded.
- Action one way or another at the federal level regarding the Federal Highway Trust Fund/Transportation Bill would likely have no impact on the local level.
- Issues regarding Twelve Mile Road, an Oakland County Road, between Orchard Lake Road and Inkster Road might not be resolved for some time. The City could and would try to influence the Road Commission of Oakland County to act more quickly, but there was no guarantee that anything would happen any faster than the work was currently scheduled. The County would continue to use cold patch on the potholes. In the meantime the City needed to decide whether to support a 3-lane or 5-lane reconstruction of Twelve Mile Road at Inkster.
- Eight Mile Road west of Farmington Road, a Wayne County Road, was also in disrepair, and was scheduled by Wayne County for work in 2016.

Drainage

Director Mekjian said that part of the recently passed road millage was targeted toward drainage issues that impacted roadways and right-of-ways, and therefore some projects had been added, including, on pages 17-20:

6. Miscellaneous Major Culvert Replacement and Repair
11. Quaker Valley Road Culvert Replacement
21. Mirlon Driveway Culvert
22. Harwich Dr. Drainage Improvement
23. Windwood Pointe Subdivision Drainage

Discussion was held regarding Project 12: *Woodcreek Hills Subdivision Drainage*. This would not be funded via neighborhood assessment because it involved large culverts in the road system; typically these were capital improvement issues.

Sanitary Sewers

Director Mekjian and Engineering Manager Cubera reviewed the proposed sanitary sewer projects listed on pages 23-24:

- Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Program
- Evergreen/Farmington LTCAP Upgrade – Middlebelt Transport and Storage Tunnel and Utley Area Sanitary Sewer Isolation: this project was beginning now and would wrap up in 2017.
- Dewberry Street Sewer Segment
- Wastewater Asset Management Plan
- Evergreen/Farmington LTCAP Upgrade – Eight Mile Road Storage Tank

Discussion was held regarding how funding was determined for project 2: *Evergreen/Farmington LTCAP Upgrade*, which showed 51% City funding and 49% County funding. Director Mekjian explained that this funding distribution was based on a formula using metered flow rate during a storm event, number of tributaries, and total population served.

Regarding the Dewberry Street Sewer Segment, the project would include the extension of sanitary sewer under Drake Road to Dewberry Street to provide a sanitary sewer connection for properties east of Drake Road. The sewer connection would be stubbed off, but by doing this project now it could be tied in to funding and other work in the area.

Further discussion was held regarding the number of homes on septic systems in the City. These were very expensive for the homeowner to convert to public sewers, and the City was doing what it could do to be proactive regarding these costly projects, such as the work being done with the Dewberry Street project. Public education regarding maintenance of septic systems was ongoing.

Watermains

Director Mekjian and Engineering Manager Cubera reviewed the proposed water main projects listed on pages 27–29. Phase 1 of Project 2: *Grand River Homes, replace existing 4' and 6' with 8"*, was beginning right now. The project would move old small mains from rear yards to the public road right-of-way.

Project 5: *Westbrooke Plaza Water Main Replacement* was new to the CIP this year.

Watermain projects were analyzed by Oakland County with input from the City in order to prioritize scheduling, based on the number of main breaks, age and size of the infrastructure, etc.

Discussion was held regarding work that was being done on 14 Mile east of Halsted. This work would most likely finish toward the end of 2015.

Public Facilities

Public Services Director Mekjian, Assistant to the Director of Public Services Mondora, and DPW

Superintendent McCarthy reviewed the proposed public facility projects as follows:

- Air Conditioner Replacements (p. 32). This project was necessary because of the pending phase-out of R-22 refrigerant.
- DPW Building Systems Upgrade (p. 34), including overhead garage bay doors, fire and access alarm system, and some electrical circuits. These systems were aged and failing.

Sidewalks

Director Mekjian and Engineering Manager Cubera reviewed the sidewalks projects in the CIP (p. 42ff). New projects included 5. *Drake Road, east side, Thirteen Mile to Fourteen Mile (2016/17)* and 6. *Eleven Mile Road, south side, Orchard Lake to Middlebelt (2017/18)*. Both of these roads were on the transportation improvement list, and would be done in conjunction with that work. The CIP showed the funding for these two projects as 100% City; this was in error. Funding should show 80% Federal/20% City for both projects.

Project 13, *Fourteen Mile, south side, Pear Ridge to Clubhouse*, had been moved up in priority because of a drain collapse that occurred in the area, resulting in an easier and timelier process for constructing that sidewalk.

Discussion was held regarding whether commercial property owners and others should be required to clear snow from their public sidewalks. Currently the Zoning Ordinance was silent on this matter.

Commissioner Mantey argued for Ordinance requirements for sidewalk shoveling and/or City personnel devoting some time to clearing sidewalks, and/or equipment purchase for the purpose of clearing snow from sidewalks. Director of Planning and Community Development Gardiner suggested posing this overall question/issue to City Attorney Schultz at a future Planning Commission meeting.

Discussion was had regarding project 12: *Non-motorized Master Plan*. Commissioner Mantey thought the Non-motorized Master Plan should be completed before millions were spent on sidewalk construction and replacement. Commissioner McRae agreed and suggested moving this item to the top of the list.

Motion Blizman, support by McRae, to move Sidewalks Project 12: Non-motorized Master Plan to the 2015-2016 calendar year.

Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion was had as to why certain projects that shared costs with the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds were not scheduled sooner, i.e., projects 16, 17, 18, 20, 22.

Engineering Manager Cubera explained that CDBG funds were finite and prioritized yearly; these could be spent on various projects, including sewers, watermains, and sidewalks. Other considerations also came into play, including the value of the sidewalk to pedestrians in the area. For instance, the sidewalk represented by Project 22 *Folsom, south side, Tuck to Orchard Lake Road* would probably not receive intensive use and was therefore not a priority. Director of Planning and Community Development Gardiner added that this year CDBG funds were used to renovate Waldron Park including sidewalks and playground equipment. Typically the City had \$150,000 - \$170,000 in CDBG funds for capital improvements.

Director Mekjian further explained that many of the sidewalk projects involved filling in gaps along major roads. Others were prioritized according to proximity to parks, schools, shopping centers, trailways, etc.

Commissioner Mantey asked if in the future a map could be provided showing proposed sidewalk project locations.

In response to a request from Chair Topper, Director Mekjian explained the point system by which sidewalk projects were prioritized. One spreadsheet ranked projects by location, as described above. A second spreadsheet ranked fundability, ease of construction, funding resources, etc. Each project was given a total point score and the projects were listed accordingly.

In response to a request from Commissioner Mantey, Director Mekjian said the Rouge River Trail would be added in and listed as project 30 on the CIP.

Transportation

Public Service Director Mekjian said that the recently passed millage was providing funding essential for road maintenance and improvement.

The Engineering Department had done a great job providing information to the public regarding millage issues and had provided pavement evaluation (PASER Rating) for all the roads in the City road network. This data was being analyzed and they were still in the process of finalizing the next 4-5 years of projects. Benefits to the community, as listed on pages 44-45 of the draft CIP, were also considered. As the information continued to be incorporated into the Engineering Department's priorities, the list of proposed projects would grow. It took time to develop plans and specifications for road reconstruction; as this occurred new projects would be listed. However, this season the focus would be on capital maintenance, including concrete panel replacement, large mill and fills for asphalt roads, crack and joint sealing on concrete roads and overbanding.

DPW Equipment

Public Service Director Mekjian and DPW Superintendent McCarthy reviewed proposed DPW Equipment Purchases.

Using the overhead projector, DPW Superintendent McCarthy showed illustrations of recently purchased equipment and equipment being requested for purchase in the draft CIP. He described the requested 10-yard hook truck with attachments, or "swap-loader." This vehicle had one truck chassis that utilized several attachments, which attachments lasted 10-20 years. Therefore two truck chassis represented the equivalent of 6 new trucks.

Other requested items for 2015/2016 included front-end loader replacement, funds to refurbish equipment, a wood chipper replacement, and a sewer vacuum truck replacement.

DPW Superintendent McCarthy noted that the sewer vacuum truck was also used to hydro-excavate around people who might be trapped in closed spaces, and would be used by the Western Wayne County search and rescue team.

As the presentations had ended and there appeared to be no more discussion, Commissioner Blizman made the following motion:

MOTION Blizman, support by Fleischhacker, to set the Capital Improvements Plan 2015/2016 through 2020/2021 for Public Hearing on March 19, 2015.

Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Stimson asked that a Table of Contents be included in the draft CIP in the future.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further comments, Chair Topper adjourned the meeting at 10:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Schwartz
Planning Commission Secretary

cem