

**CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
31555 W ELEVEN MILE ROAD  
FARMINGTON HILLS, MICHIGAN  
MARCH 19, 2026, 7:30 P.M.**

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

The Planning Commission Regular Meeting was called to order by Chair Trafelet at 7:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Commissioners present: Brickner, Countegan, Grant, Lindquist, Mantey, Stimson, Trafelet, Ware

Commissioners Absent: None

Others Present: City Planner Mulville-Friel, Staff Planner Mellem, Staff Engineer Alexander, City Attorney Schultz, Planning Consultant Auerbach (Carlisle Wortman)

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION by Ware, supported by Brickner, to approve the agenda as published.**

**Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**A. SPECIAL APPROVAL 53-3-2025**

LOCATION: 29372 Grand River Avenue  
PARCEL I.D.: 22-23-36-301-002  
PROPOSAL: Renovate and expand the existing gas station with a convenience store within the B-3: General Business District  
ACTION REQUESTED: Special Approval Use  
APPLICANT: Hatem Hannawa  
OWNER: Grand Fuel Property LLC

**Planning Consultant review**

Referencing the 03-07-2026 Carlisle Wortman memorandum, Planning Consultant Auerbach provided the background and detailed review for this request for a special approval use, in order to renovate and expand an existing gas station with a convenience store within the B-3 General District, located at 29372 Grand River Avenue.

A gas station is permitted as a special approval use in the B-3 district provided that the site is used as a gas station as of 12/31/2024, and is subject to the standards of Section 4.28.

The applicant proposes to expand the existing 990sf convenience store and gas station with a 1,175sf addition. In addition, the applicant proposes to add a pump canopy. The current gas station has nine fueling pump islands and no full canopy (there is a small canopy between the pumps). The plan would reduce this to six pump islands under a canopy. Other site improvements include landscaping, lighting, new curbing, circulation and access improvements, and vehicular and pedestrian striping.

Land uses surrounding the site include single-family residential to the north, the fire station to the east, a restaurant across Middlebelt Road, and commercial property across Grand River Avenue to the south.

There are currently three access drives to the site. The applicant proposes to close the westernmost drive on the south side near the intersection and narrow the eastern drive, thus improving site access and safety.

Outstanding issues included:

Missing or incorrect information

- Lighting plan calculations and details
- The canopy and setback dimensions shown on Sheet SP100 and Sheet C-3 are not consistent.
- Missing canopy dimensions to Middlebelt
- Corner clearance dimensions

Non-conformities

- Front yard open space will be made less noncompliant, but not fully compliant
- Minimum parking setback and circulation encroaches into a 10-foot minimum parking setback
- The landscape area abutting the Grand River is less than 10 feet in depth

Variances

The dimensions shown on the engineering site plan (Sheet C-3) are inconsistent with the dimensions on the architectural site plan (Sheet SP100). Sheet C-3 dimensions were used for review purposes. Actual dimensions need confirmation.

The Plan needs the following variances:

- Building Rear setback: 20 feet required, 0.37 feet proposed (dimensions need to be confirmed).
- Building Side Setback: 10 feet required, 1.18 feet proposed) (dimensions need to be confirmed)
- Canopy: 25 feet required: 12-feet from Grand River and 5-feet from future Middlebelt ROW (dimensions need to be confirmed)
- Transparency: 60% required, 19.8% on Grand River and 19.3% along Middlebelt
- Parking: parking is within the Middlebelt future ROW
- The existing dumpster enclosure is located in the front yard. The applicant is improving with masonry screening; however, a variance is required to allow the dumpster in this location.
- Deficient by one canopy tree in the parking lot

Public Art requirement

The site is located within a special planning area under the Master Plan and may be subject to the public art requirement if the value of site improvements is \$2 million or greater.

**Applicant presentation**

Haytem Hannawa and Jeff Yono appeared on behalf of the application.

In response to questions, Mr. Hannawa provided the following information:

- The project would cost less than \$2 million.
- The applicants had reviewed the planner's report. They would be able to address all of the deficiencies.

Mr. Hannawa explained that the current 990sf building was too small to support a retail operation. The proposed design was shaped by existing conditions on the site, including underground fuel tanks to the west and the canopy area to the south, which limited where expansion could occur. The proposal would improve the site along Middlebelt Road by reducing the amount of driveway area, adding landscaping, and creating a more attractive streetscape with a mix of shrubs, plants, and trees. They had worked with the Engineering Department to address drainage issues where water currently drains into the road; the revised plan includes catch basins along the sidewalk and a quality control structure tied into the storm system. They had worked hard to make modifications that would beautify the site and improve its quality.

In response to additional questions from the Commission, Mr. Hannawa provided the following further information:

- Regarding fuel deliveries, the plans showed a tanker truck turning path, with the truck entering from Grand River Avenue, traveling through the site, and exiting onto Middlebelt Road. Path simulations were also prepared for dumpster service.
- The new building includes a small kitchen area, allowing them to offer limited food items such as pizza.
- Regarding the 60% transparency requirement, the elevations had been revised to include additional glass. The project would still not meet the 60% requirement, with the revised design providing approximately 25% transparency. The reduced transparency was due in part to the building's small size and the need to place coolers and liquor shelving along the walls.
- Portions of the façade would use spandrel glass to maintain the appearance of glazing, while clear glass would be used above the coolers to allow natural light into the building.
- The project budget was approximately \$450,000.
- Responding to a question regarding the canopy's ability to withstand strong winds, Mr. Hanawa explained that canopy failures generally occur when the structure is not properly attached. On his projects, third-party inspections are used in addition to standard inspections to review footings, welding, bolting, and bolt torque. These additional inspections are intended to ensure the canopy is safely constructed and secure. City Planner Mulville-Friel noted that the canopy material was a required material consideration under the special approval review.

### **Public hearing**

Chair Trafelet opened the public hearing. As no members of the public came forward to speak, Chair Trafelet closed the public hearing and returned the matter to the Commission.

### **Commission discussion and action**

Commissioner Mantey pointed out that the property abuts a uniquely shaped City-owned parcel containing both a fire station and a community center. Did the City have any comments on this request? City Planner Mulville-Friel responded that City departments, including the Fire Department, had reviewed the proposal and had raised no objections.

Commissioner Mantey noted that the 60% transparency requirement on street-facing facades serves an urban planning purpose by encouraging pedestrian-friendly development and avoiding long stretches of blank wall. However, the adjacent City-owned building may itself not meet the 60% standard, and the building's small size could be a factor in considering the request.

City Planner Mulville-Friel clarified that the 60% transparency requirement does not come from the general design standards, but from the gas station use standard specifically. The Planning Commission does not have the authority to waive that requirement, and a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals would be required.

**MOTION by Countegan, supported by Mantey, that the application for Special Approval Site Plan 53-3-2025, dated February 10, 2026, submitted by Hatem Hannawa, BE APPROVED, because it meets the standards for Special Approval Uses set forth in Section 34-6.3:**

- a) **The proposed use is compatible and harmonious with surrounding land uses and/or the orderly development of the surrounding neighborhood, because the use is compatible, an improvement to the area, and represents positive economic development in the area and neighborhood.**
- b) **The proposed use will not make vehicular and pedestrian traffic more hazardous than is normal for the district, because the proposal eliminates a curb cut, thereby improving circulation off of Grand River to Middlebelt.**
- c) **The proposed use will not unreasonably impact surrounding property in terms of noise, dust, fumes, smoke, air, water, odor, light, and/or vibration and aesthetics, because there has been no demonstration of a negative impact in plan review or in public comment. With the site improvements, there may be an improvement in aesthetics and other components listed.**
- d) **The proposed location and height of buildings, structures, walls, fences, and landscaping will not interfere with or discourage the use of adjacent land and buildings or unreasonably affect their value, because the project will be an improvement of an existing use in the B-3 District, and may encourage more redevelopment and improvement in the area.**
- e) **The proposed use is harmonious with the physical and economic aspects of adjacent land uses, because the approximately half-million-dollar investment in the site will serve as an example to other property owners and encourage them to also invest in their properties, resulting in physical and economic improvement in the area.**
- f) **The proposed use is designed, located, and planned to be operated so that the public health, safety, and welfare will be protected, for all the reasons already stated. The health, safety, and welfare will be protected with the proposed development.**
- g) **The proposed use will not cause substantial injury to the value of other property in the neighborhood and will not be detrimental to existing and/or other permitted land uses in the zoning district, for all the reasons already stated. The enhancements, economic development, and investment in the site will serve as a positive example and will encourage development in the area.**
- h) **The proposed use will not impair, pollute, and/or destroy air, water, and/or other natural resources, because no such negative impact was indicated in tonight's presentation or the public hearing, and there was no anticipation of any kind of such negative impacts to the site. City standards will be met per site plan development review by the building department and the engineering department.**

- i) The proposed use will not unreasonably burden the capacity of public services and/or facilities, because after review by Police, Fire, Engineering, and other departments within the city, no negative impact or undue demand on city services has been noted.**
- j) The proposed use is designed with architectural elements that are harmonious to the design characteristics of area development, because Planning Commissioners have reviewed the elevations attached to this proposal and do not find them to be objectionable.**

**This approval is subject to the following conditions and determinations:**

- 1) All outstanding issues identified in Carlisle Wortman Associates' March 7, 2026, review shall be addressed to the reasonable satisfaction of the City Planner;**
- 2) All outstanding issues identified in the City Engineer's March 6, 2026, interoffice correspondence shall be addressed to the reasonable satisfaction of the City Engineer; and**
- 3) All outstanding issues identified in the Fire Marshal's March 2, 2026, interoffice correspondence shall be addressed to the reasonable satisfaction of the Fire Marshal.**
- 4) The Commission permits the following existing non-conformities to remain:**
  - a. Front yard open space may be less than 50%.**
  - b. Parking spaces and circulation encroach into 10-foot minimum parking setback.**
  - c. Landscape area abutting the Grand River is less than 10 feet in depth.**
- 5) The following variances are required from the Zoning Board of Appeals. The applicant must confirm all proposed dimensions to determine actual variances required.**
  - a. Building - rear setback: 20 feet required, 0.37 feet proposed.**
  - b. Building - side setback: 10 feet required, 1.18 feet proposed.**
  - c. Canopy – front setback: 25 feet required from Grand River right-of-way, 12-feet proposed.**
  - d. Canopy – side street setback: 25 feet required from Middlebelt Road future right-of-way, 5-feet proposed.**
  - e. Building transparency: 60% required, 19.8% proposed on Grand River, and 19.3% proposed on Middlebelt.**
  - f. Parking and circulation areas: 10 feet required from Middlebelt Road's future right-of-way, 27-foot encroachment proposed**
  - g. Dumpster enclosure: placement in rear or interior side yard required, proposed in front yard.**
  - h. Off-street loading space: required to be placed in rear or interior side yard, proposed in front yard.**
- 6) Three (3) large deciduous type canopy trees are required to be planted, and two (2) are proposed. The applicant must address the deficiency or provide money into the public tree fund for deficient trees.**
- 7) The Commission deems that the canopy constructed of fabricated steel without architectural embellishments is architecturally consistent with the principal building.**
- 8) Site is in the Grand River Corridor/M-5 Interchange Special Planning Area, and public art is required if the renovation project construction cost \$2 mil or more. The applicant indicated during tonight's hearing that the construction cost will be approximately one-half million dollars, so no public art is required.**
- 9) Signs are not approved with the site plan and are subject to standards in Section 34-5.5 (SIGNS) of the Zoning Ordinance.**

**Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

**B. SPECIAL APPROVAL 67-10-2025**

LOCATION: 27900 Orchard Lake Rd  
PARCEL I.D.: 22-23-11-351-013  
PROPOSAL: Construct a new fast food restaurant with a drive-through within the B-3: General Business District.  
ACTION REQUESTED: Special Approval Use  
APPLICANT: Brewtopia Michigan, LLC  
OWNER: Farmington Hills Beef Company

**Planning Consultant Review**

Referencing the 03-07-2026 Carlise Wortman memorandum, Planning Consultant Auerbach gave the background and detailed review for this application for a special approval use in order to construct a new fast food restaurant with a drive-through within the B-3 General Business District, at 27900 Orchard Lake Road.

Planning Consultant Auerbach highlighted the following:

- The Planning Commission reviewed this proposal in December 2025 and did not grant approval at that time because the zoning ordinance requires a drive-through restaurant use to include an indoor dining area of at least 1,100 square feet. The applicant subsequently obtained a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals to allow the restaurant without indoor seating, subject to conditions that limited the approval to the specific restaurant proposed, required Planning Commission review and compliance with all ordinances, and required that the structure be built in the location and configuration shown on the approved plans.
- The applicant proposes to demolish an existing 2,769sf commercial building (previously occupied by Arby's) and construct a new 510sf coffee drive-through business, with an additional 335sf building to house the cooler. The parking lot is proposed to be redesigned in a manner that accommodates two drive-through lanes with bypass and six parking spaces.
- The property is zoned B-3, with surrounding zoning and land uses as follows: OS-2 and a medical office to the north, a multi-tenant retail establishment to the south, the Orchard 12 Plaza shopping center and nearby B-3 and B-4 zoning to the west, and B-3 zoning with a parking lot use to the east.
- The proposed drive-through building would be located near the center of the site, with the detached cooler nearby. The site would include two drive-through lanes, an escape lane, and an interior circulation lane along the south side, providing access to parking spaces.

Outstanding issues:

- Although the applicant had received a variance for no indoor seating, required outdoor seating was not provided. The Planning Commission has discretion to waive the outdoor seating requirement under Section 34-4.35.C, and the applicant had submitted a narrative stating that outdoor seating would be impractical and inconsistent with the business model.
- Required off-street parking and drive-through parking had been provided, but the plan was deficient in required loading space. A loading area of 157sf would be required based on building frontage. While loading is ordinarily required in a rear yard, the Planning Commission could allow it in a side yard if satisfied with the applicant's explanation of delivery vehicle operations and site circulation.

- Eight parking lot trees were required. Three large deciduous trees were provided around the parking lot perimeter. The applicant has also counted 5 existing trees towards the minimum tree requirement, but they are evergreen trees. The Planning Commission shall determine whether these trees may be used to satisfy this requirement, where it would be in the best interest of the city and would not interfere with visual clearance. It should be noted that the existing trees are grouped in the rear of the parking area and not distributed throughout the paved area.

The Planning Commission, therefore, should discuss the following:

1. Outdoor Seating Waiver: The Planning Commission should review the plan to determine if outdoor seating should be provided or if a waiver is granted.
2. Loading Space:
  - a. Size and location on Site Plan: Location not indicated on plans, and confirm if size is sufficient.
  - b. Waiver: Planning Commission may allow in the interior side yard if screened from view from any public street. If located in the side yard, it shall be screened accordingly.
3. Landscaping:
  - a. Existing Landscaping: Planning Commission shall determine whether evergreen trees may be used to satisfy the required onsite tree requirements.
  - b. Landscape Location: Planning Commission should determine if additional landscaping should be added south of the pedestrian sidewalk.
4. Special Use Standards. Planning Commission shall consider if the development is in compliance with Special Use Standards set forth in Section 34-6.3.

The public art requirement applies to this site if the anticipated cost of construction is \$2 million or greater. The applicant should provide the cost estimate during the meeting.

### **Applicant presentation**

Reid Cooksey, Stonefield Engineering and Design, Birmingham, was present on behalf of this application for special approval use.

Mr. Cooksey highlighted the following:

- The proposal was for a 510sf 7 Brew coffee kiosk. The business model was a fast, modern, beverage-only operation with no indoor customers, no menu boards, and ordering conducted either through the app or by employees using iPads outside.
- Since this item was before the Commission in December, the applicant had addressed Commission and staff comments, particularly those related to traffic. The traffic study had been revised, and the proposal now eliminates left turns onto Orchard Lake Road, which had been a primary concern. The site has access to 12 Mile Road through a rear access easement, which would help circulation in the congested area.
- The loading space requirement is approximately 150 square feet, which is smaller than a standard parking space. Deliveries would be made by small vehicles rather than semis or box trucks and would typically occur during off-peak hours. Delivery vehicles could either pull into a parking space or stop near the trash enclosure, from which goods would be walked directly to the cooler.
- With respect to landscaping, the applicant proposed to count the existing evergreen trees, which are in good health, toward the landscaping requirement. Landscaping was not proposed in part of the frontage area because a water main and an existing storm drain run through that portion of the

site, and an easement is being placed there in consultation with City staff. Most parking is located to the rear and screened by landscaping along Orchard Lake Road.

- Regarding outdoor seating, pedestrians can walk up to the building and order coffee, but the business model is overwhelmingly vehicle-oriented, and customers generally do not remain on site. Approximately 95% or more of customers are expected to be served by car. Outdoor seating is not practical for the operation.

### **Commission Questions**

In response to questions, Mr. Cooksey gave the following further information:

- The building would be a prefabricated structure that would be delivered largely complete, with many interior furnishings pre-installed, allowing for rapid construction. The total project cost would be approximately \$1 million, below the threshold that would trigger the public art requirement. The exterior would include thin brick siding and metal materials, and the building would meet ordinance requirements. The front glazing exceeds 60%, and the calculation could be added to the plans.
- Walk-up and bicycle customers would not enter the building. Such customers would order and receive their drinks outside the building.
- Regarding traffic flow, the revised plan restricts left turns onto Orchard Lake Road and adds a “pork chop” island to physically prevent that movement. Signage internal to the site could be added to direct motorists toward 12 Mile Road. On-site signage already shown on the plans would restrict left-out movements.
- The existing Arby’s building is approximately 2,300sf. The proposed 7 Brew building would be about 500sf, or roughly 25% of the size of the current structure. The new building would be moved closer to Orchard Lake Road than the current building in order to create better stacking and internal circulation
- The six parking spaces are intended for employees only and not for customer use.
- The business’s average throughput time is less than three minutes from order to delivery. The site is designed with 21 stacking spaces, although peak demand is expected to require only 15 spaces. The two-lane system and the ability to deliver drinks directly to cars allow vehicles to leave quickly and prevent backup, particularly because the business does not serve food.
- Business hours would be 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Commissioner Mantey stated that, given the presence of two hotels across the street, he believed even minimal outdoor seating, such as a picnic table, could be useful. Mr. Cooksey responded that the applicant is generally hesitant to include outdoor seating because the use is so heavily vehicle-oriented that walk-up customers typically do not want to remain outside while cars are circulating through the drive-through lanes.

Commissioner Mantey’s larger concern remained whether the Commission could make the finding required for special approval that the use would not make vehicular or pedestrian traffic more hazardous than is normal for the district. He recalled prior concerns that commuters traveling south on Orchard Lake Road in the morning might need to cross traffic and then circle back toward the freeway.

Commissioner Grant was concerned that prohibiting left turns out of the site might prompt motorists to turn right onto Orchard Lake Road and then immediately attempt other turning movements in an already congested morning traffic pattern in order to reach the expressway. Mr. Cooksey acknowledged that illegal turning movements are always a concern, but the site’s rear access to 12 Mile Road provides

an alternative route. Motorists would be able to exit through the rear access, turn right onto 12 Mile Road, and proceed to the traffic signal.

Commissioner Grant requested that the applicant walk the Commission through how vehicles would circulate from the drive-through to the 12 Mile Road access. Mr. Cooksey explained that the site would operate in a normal counterclockwise drive-through pattern. Customers would receive their drinks at the stop bars in either of the two lanes, then recirculate to the east side of the site and exit through the eastern curb cut. The stacking plan allows vehicles to bypass the service points and continue circulating without blockage. The expected queue would remain within the two designated lanes.

Commissioner Lindquist noted that vehicles exiting east would have the option to turn onto 12 Mile Road. He asked whether motorists would still be able to access the site with a left turn in from Orchard Lake Road despite the addition of the "pork chop" median. Mr. Cooksey explained that left turns into the site from southbound Orchard Lake Road would still be permitted. The traffic study found those movements acceptable because existing signal gaps allow the movement without materially affecting the level of service on Orchard Lake Road. The "pork chop" feature would only restrict the left-out movement from the site.

Commissioner Lindquist asked if left-turn traffic onto 12 Mile Road from the rear exit had been included in the traffic study. Mr. Cooksey responded that all traffic patterns were analyzed. The rear entrance is an existing access point associated with the gas station property, and the applicant does not have substantial control over turn restrictions at that location.

Commissioner Countegan asked for clarification regarding the loading and unloading requirements. Mr. Cooksey reiterated that deliveries would be made by small vehicles during off-peak hours. They would typically stop near the trash enclosure or in a parking space, unload boxes, and carry them directly to the cooler. Planning Consultant Auerbach clarified that the required loading area would still need to be shown on the plans. The Planning Commission could permit loading in a side yard through the special approval process.

### **Traffic Study Review**

Commissioner Stimson asked whether the City had reviewed the traffic study. Staff Engineer Alexander responded that the study had been reviewed and that the primary issue identified was the left egress movement on Orchard Lake Road. The proposed "pork chop" treatment addressed that concern and satisfied the study.

Commissioner Grant asked what would happen if the project were approved based on the traffic study, but traffic problems later developed, and site circulation did not function as anticipated. Planning Consultant Auerbach responded that, in some communities, a condition of approval could be imposed, stating that the finding regarding traffic impacts was based on the submitted study and that, if traffic volumes later exceeded what had been projected, the City could require an additional traffic study, mitigation measures, and potentially revocation of the special use permit.

Commissioner Ware pointed out that revoking an approval after the business had already opened would be a poor way to treat a business operator. Consultant Auerbach acknowledged that such an approach would not be ideal, but stated that special land uses give municipalities greater discretion to impose and enforce conditions to ensure compatibility with surrounding uses.

City Attorney Schultz noted that, while the planning consultant's description was technically accurate in the right circumstance, the City had not previously used that type of approval condition. He suggested that if the Commission was not comfortable with the information presented, postponement for more information would be preferable to approving the project while reserving the right to revoke it later.

Commissioner Stimson remained concerned about the traffic aspects of the proposal. Motorists exiting toward 12 Mile Road would still face difficulty crossing traffic to reach the left-turn lane, which is often backed up, and this remained a concern. On the other hand, it may be that south traveling drivers would simply use the Starbucks across the street.

Commissioner Countegan stated that the market would ultimately determine where customers choose to buy coffee. The Commission had previously expressed circulation concerns, referred the issue to consultants and the Engineering Department, and received what he viewed as a reasonable solution. He was comfortable relying on that review and noted that another commercial use on the site might have generated left-turn traffic without receiving the same level of scrutiny.

Commissioner Brickner said that the site had functioned for many years as an Arby's with the same driveway arrangement, with vehicles entering and exiting the site, including access toward 12 Mile Road. He questioned why the proposal now raised so much concern. Commissioner Mantey responded that the distinction was the expected morning rush associated with coffee use, which differs from a fast-food restaurant focused on other times of day. Commissioner Grant added that the stacked two-lane concept suggested a larger volume of vehicles than the prior use.

Commissioner Countegan stated that it was the specific site concept and volume of stacking shown on the plan that caused the Commission to ask for a more detailed analysis. It was reasonable to more closely examine circulation for a different kind of drive-through operation, and he felt the applicant had returned with a workable response.

Commissioner Mantey recalled that the December 2025 discussion involved a very high anticipated customer turnover during rush hour. Had these concerns been resolved either in the traffic report or the engineering review?

Staff Engineer Alexander stated that the Engineering Department had reviewed the traffic study, had provided comments, had received updated materials from the applicant the previous week, and was satisfied with the revisions and was comfortable with the traffic analysis.

Commissioner Grant asked how many cars the applicant expected to have lined up in the two drive-through lanes. Mr. Cooksey stated that 7 Brew has studied operations at more than 500 locations nationwide and that the highest queue observed on the busiest days is about 15 cars total, or approximately seven to eight vehicles in each lane. On a normal day, the site would typically have three or four cars in each lane during the morning rush and one or two cars in the afternoon.

### **Public Hearing**

Chair Trafelet opened the public hearing.

David Elkus, Baron's Wholesale Clothiers, and Abe Bazzi, Abe's Fine Tailoring, Gateway Building, 27888 Orchard Lake Road, pointed out that the City's planning direction was against drive-through uses that focused on vehicles and do not contribute to community interaction. Regarding traffic, if left turns out of the site were prohibited, customers would likely attempt alternative maneuvers that could create traffic conflicts. He expressed concern that customers could cut through his parking lot to access a left turn onto Orchard Lake Road, increasing vehicle conflicts and making it more dangerous for pedestrians moving between parked cars and storefronts. Unlike the former Arby's, this proposal was specifically designed as a high-volume drive-through business and therefore could create a substantially different traffic impact.

In response, Mr. Cooksey said that he did not see a rational reason for customers from either the gas station or the proposed 7 Brew site to cut through the neighboring business parking lot, because both sites already have dedicated access to Orchard Lake Road and the 12 Mile Road entrance.

In a sidebar conversation, Commissioner Ware suggested the Commission discuss traffic patterns in the City in a future study session. Commissioner Countegan thought such a session could be useful if it explained the legal and practical criteria used to evaluate site access, traffic safety, and development review, including what Planning Commissioners should consider when reviewing site-specific traffic studies and access proposals.

Commissioner Countegan asked for clarification regarding ownership and access to the Gateway Building.

Mr. Elkus explained that he owns the Gateway building and the parking spaces, but not the driveway area behind the property. There is a cross-easement allowing all of the parties to travel through the rear drive area. His concern was that customers leaving the proposed 7 Brew site could turn right, then enter his property, cut through his parking lot or the shared easement, and use his Orchard Lake Road access point to make a left turn or otherwise avoid the intended circulation route.

Chair Trafelet closed the public hearing and brought the matter back to the Commission.

**MOTION by Countegan, supported by Ware, that the application for Special Approval Site Plan 67-10-2025, dated January 22, 2026, submitted by Brewtopia Michigan, LLC, BE APPROVED, because it meets the standards for Special Approval Uses set forth in Section 34-6.3:**

- a) **The proposed use is compatible and harmonious with surrounding land uses and/or the orderly development of the surrounding neighborhood, because the use is similar to surrounding uses in that zoning district.**
- b) **The proposed use will not make vehicular and pedestrian traffic more hazardous than is normal for the district, because after the planning commission had a concern, the proposal was referred back to staff, and a traffic study was done, with subsequent alterations made to the site to address the concerns of the planning commission. There is no safety hazard that can be anticipated per the information received.**
- c) **The proposed use will not unreasonably impact surrounding property in terms of noise, dust, fumes,**

**smoke, air, water, odor, light, and/or vibration and aesthetics, because this use is for a 500 square foot building that will not unreasonably impact surrounding property.**

- d) The proposed location and height of buildings, structures, walls, fences, and landscaping will not interfere with or discourage the use of adjacent land and buildings or unreasonably affect their value, because there is no height or screening issue, and the location of buildings and landscaping will not have a harmful effect on other property and property owners.**
- e) The proposed use is harmonious with the physical and economic aspects of adjacent land uses. This proposal represents an investment in a very active area, and the City encourages development and investment in the community.**
- f) The proposed use is designed, located, and planned to be operated so that the public health, safety, and welfare will be protected, because the project has provided provisions to ensure public safety and welfare.**
- g) The proposed use will not cause substantial injury to the value of other property in the neighborhood and will not be detrimental to existing and/or other permitted land uses in the zoning district, because with the modifications discussed at this meeting, the development will fit in with surrounding uses.**
- h) The proposed use will not impair, pollute, and/or destroy air, water, and/or other natural resources.**
- i) The proposed use will not unreasonably burden the capacity of public services and/or facilities. The Planning Commission took special interest in this proposal as it relates to traffic and circulation, and has determined that, based on the best advice after further study by the engineering division and planning staff of the traffic study, the traffic elements of this plan will be compatible with the area.**
- j) The proposed use is designed with architectural elements that are harmonious to the design characteristics of area development, because what is proposed results in an attractive building fitting in with the area, with acceptable materials and design.**

**This approval is subject to the following conditions and determinations:**

- 1) All outstanding issues identified in Carlisle Wortman Associates' March 7, 2026, review shall be addressed to the reasonable satisfaction of the City Planner;**
- 2) All outstanding issues identified in the City Engineer's March 3, 202[6], interoffice correspondence shall be addressed to the reasonable satisfaction of the City Engineer; and**
- 3) All outstanding issues identified in the Fire Marshal's March 2, 2026, interoffice correspondence shall be addressed to the reasonable satisfaction of the Fire Marshal.**
- 4) Minimum indoor seating requirements under Section 34-4.35.1.B have not been met; however, on February 10, 2026, the Zoning Board of Appeals granted the use variance from Section 34-4.35.1.B to permit a zoning lot in a B-3 General Business Zoning District to be occupied by a drive-through restaurant where the proposed restaurant does not have a minimum 1,100-square-foot area with indoor seating for at least twenty (20) people, as otherwise required by the Zoning Ordinance, because the petitioner did demonstrate that an unnecessary hardship exists in this case.**

- 5) An outdoor space for seating accessory to the drive-in restaurant, comprised of at least six (6) seats, shall be provided per Section 34-4.35.1.C. The Commission waives this requirement entirely, finding that the location makes outdoor seating unlikely or difficult to utilize, and unique circumstances make providing the seating undesirable. Given the business model of this use, providing outdoor seating does not make sense.
- 6) Loading space must be shown on the plans and be sufficient to meet the needs of the business. The loading space shall be provided in the rear yard or interior side yard if screened from the view of any public street.
- 7) Signs are not approved with the site plan and are subject to standards in Section 34-5.5 (SIGNS) of the Zoning Ordinance.
- 8) Eight (8) large deciduous type canopy trees are required to be planted in and around paved areas serving motor vehicles on this site. The Commission determines that it would be in the best interests of the city to permit five (5) existing evergreen trees to count towards the minimum number of canopy trees required and that such existing evergreen trees do not interfere with clear vision of sight distances.
- 9) The parking lot south and east of the pedestrian pathway is sufficiently screened from public thoroughfare as required per Section 34-5.14.5.
- 10) The six (6) parking spaces provided are adequate for the use proposed.
- 11) Principal and accessory buildings meet commercial design standards in Section 34-5.20.
- 12) The site is in the Orchard Lake Road (12 Mile to 13 ½ Mile) Corridor Special Planning Area, and public art is required if the renovation project construction costs \$2 million or more. The developers indicated that construction would be approximately \$1 million, so this requirement does not apply.

**Roll call vote:**

**Ayes – Brickner, Countegan, Grant, Lindquist, Stimson, Trafelet, Ware**

**Nays – Mantey**

**Motion passed 7-1**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**A. CLUSTER SITE PLAN 59-4-2019**

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| LOCATION:         | 29150 Farmington Rd   |
| PARCEL I.D.:      | 22-23-10-101-002  |
| PROPOSAL:         | One-family cluster option subdivision (10 units) in RA-2, One-Family Residential District |
| ACTION REQUESTED: | Set item for Public Hearing   |
| APPLICANT:        | Cedar of Farmington, LLC (Ayman Rida)   |
| OWNER:            | Cedar of Farmington, LLC  |

**Planning Consultant Review**

Referencing the 03-07-2026 Carlisle Wortman memorandum, Planning Consultant Auerbach gave the background and detailed review for this request to set Cluster Site Plan 59-4-2019 for public hearing, in order to construct a one-family cluster option subdivision (10 units) in an RA-2, One-Family Residential District, at 29150 Farmington Road. The site was south of 12 Mile Road on the east side of Farmington Road at the former Kendallwood Swim Club site. The former swim club structures are no longer present, and the site is currently rough graded.

Planning Consultant Auerbach explained that the proposal was formerly known as “McKenzie Green” and had been reviewed and approved in 2019 with conditions, but had never been developed, and the Planning Commission approval had expired. During the prior review, the Planning Commission found the development qualified for cluster development, and the project did not need to requalify. The developer has since changed, but the project remains largely the same, and the request before the Commission was to set a public hearing on the preliminary site plan for a future meeting.

Planning Consultant Auerbach highlighted the following:

- The applicant proposes 10 cluster lots (a density of 2.61 units per acre), arranged along a short cul-de-sac street. The street, which is proposed to be a private road, is aligned with Oak Point Drive across Farmington Road. Approximately 1.61 acres of the development (42.0%) is set aside as undisturbed and unprogrammed open space. All proposed units are detached. During the cluster qualification process in July 2018, the Planning Commission cited standards 34- 3.17.2.B.ii., iii, and vi. as conditions for approval with a maximum density of 3.1 units per acre. The current proposal is 2.61 units per acre.
- The site configuration meets applicable dimensional requirements, including front, side, and rear setbacks. However, elevations for the typical building designs had not been included with the submission; these should be provided, including a general material palette and maximum building height.
- The site contains landmark trees, defined as desirable species with a trunk diameter of six inches or greater. The total diameter at breast height of trees to be removed is 53 inches, and the proposed replacement trees would provide an equivalent total diameter.
- The tree replacement analysis is based on a 2022 tree survey, and the Commission may wish to direct the applicant to prepare a new survey because of the time that has passed and because an accurate tree survey is required for a cluster development.
- The majority of the vegetation is located along the south side of the site, where it serves as a buffer to adjacent single-family homes. No buffer is required to the north, adjacent to the detention basin; utility conflicts exist there.
- A small portion of several lots, though not the building footprints, extends into the floodplain area along the south side.
- The Commission could consider directing the applicant either to provide additional plantings or additional confirmation that the existing vegetation provides an adequate southern buffer, or, alternatively, to shift the road slightly north to create more separation from the southern property line, although that would be a more intensive revision because the road has already been engineered.

Planning Consultant Auerbach summarized that the action requested was only whether to schedule a public hearing for a future meeting to consider the preliminary site plan. The primary topic for Commission discussion was whether the existing vegetation along the southern lot line provides an adequate buffer. Other outstanding detail items, including building elevations, could be addressed through an updated submittal.

### **Commission questions and discussion**

Commissioner Mantey asked about a statement in the staff report indicating that the buildable area of Lot 4 was impacted by the 100-year flood plain. Based on the presentation, he understood the floodplain encroachment to affect only the southern end of the lot and not the actual buildable area. He noted that even if the buildable area were affected, construction could still occur if the lot were filled or elevated to one foot above the 100-year floodplain, which the Building Department would address if necessary.

Planning Consultant Auerbach acknowledged that if the report stated the floodplain encroached into the buildable area, that was likely inaccurate. The floodplain appears to overlap only with the southern portion of the lot line rather than the building area.

In response to comments, Staff Engineer Alexander confirmed that staff had already completed the engineering review and that EGLE permits had been obtained. The earlier road layout was very similar to the current plan.

**MOTION by Stimson, supported by Ware, that the application to amend Cluster Site Plan Approval 59-4-2019, dated February 18, 2026, as revised, submitted by Cedar of Farmington Road LLC, BE SET FOR PUBLIC HEARING for the Planning Commission's next available regular meeting agenda.**

Commissioners discussed whether to require a new tree survey. Jared Prather and Patrick Cleary of Boss Engineering, Howell, Michigan, addressed the landscaping and tree survey questions.

Mr. Cleary explained that Boss Engineering had not prepared the original tree survey, but only 14 trees are proposed to be removed under the current plan. The remaining trees, estimated at roughly 70 to 80 along the southern property line, would remain undisturbed. Resurveying the entire site might not provide substantial benefit. He proposed instead that only the 14 trees within the work area be reevaluated. If any of those trees had grown enough over the last several years to change their caliper totals, that could result in the need for one additional replacement tree or a similar minor adjustment.

Commissioner Mantey is suggesting adding an extra replacement tree rather than requiring a new survey. Commissioner Countegan stated that, if the area of encroachment had not changed and the same 14 trees were still being removed, he did not see the need for a full new survey.

Commissioner Stimson pointed out that the site could have changed significantly because of extensive construction activity and storm events in the area over the last few years.

Mr. Cleary responded that, from his understanding, prior demolition activity had been limited to already paved or previously developed areas, and he was not aware of significant changes to the southern screening vegetation. He did not believe another survey was necessary outside the limits of disturbance.

City Planner Mulville-Friel stated that tree loss from storms and general die-off in recent years could affect whether there is still adequate buffering between Lots 4 and 5 and the residential properties to the south.

Mr. Cleary responded that the prior plan included not only standard landscape materials but also approximately 90 seedling trees, or “whips,” to be planted along the south boundary to strengthen the buffer. This feature has been retained in the current proposal. Those plantings would be interspersed among the existing trees and brush in the floodplain area south of the lots and outside the grading area, and they would serve as a contingency to reinforce and improve the southern buffer over time.

The Commission reached consensus not to require a new tree survey.

**Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

**B. SITE PLAN APPROVAL 52-2-2026**

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| LOCATION:         | 31130 Orchard Lake Rd   |
| PARCEL I.D.:      | 22-23-02-103-025  |
| PROPOSAL:         | Expansion of existing building and parking lot for restaurant use within the B-3: General Business Zoning District and P1: Vehicular Parking District |
| ACTION REQUESTED: | Site Plan Approval  |
| APPLICANT:        | Bret Hart, Priority Engineering LLC   |
| OWNER:            | Hannawa-Lahser Road Development LLC   |

**Planning Consultant review**

Referencing the 03-11-2026 Carlise Wortman memorandum, Planning Consultant Auerbach gave the background and detailed review for this application for site plan approval, in order to expand an existing building and parking lot for restaurant use within the B-3 and P1 District. The applicants propose an approximately 1,400sf addition to the existing building, two outdoor seating areas, expansion of the parking lot to the east, relocation of the dumpster, installation of an underground stormwater detention structure, and other related site improvements.

Planning Consultant Auerbach highlighted the following:

- The existing building contains approximately 7,700sf and was formerly occupied by a pet supply store, but has been vacant for several years. The building appears to be a one-story structure, although it includes what looks like an ornamental second-story element at the southwest corner, and City records suggest the building may previously have had a second story.
- The western portion of the site is zoned B-3, and the eastern portion is zoned P1 Vehicular Parking District. The parcel is bordered by RA-4 residential zoning to the north, office zoning and commercial uses to the east, parking and retail uses to the south, and the Orchard Place shopping center to the west.
- One outdoor seating area is proposed along the Orchard Lake Road frontage on the west side of the building, and a second outdoor seating area is proposed on the north side of the building. The addition is proposed on the east side of the building; the dumpster enclosure would be shifted east onto a new concrete pad, the parking lot would be expanded to the far east, and the underground detention structure would be located in the southeast portion of the site. The two existing access drives would remain.

Several variances would be required for the project because of the existing site configuration.

- The proposed building addition encroaches into the required 20-foot setback and would leave an approximately two-foot gap between the addition and an existing masonry screening wall near the north lot line. Staff recommends that the applicants reconfigure that area to avoid creating a narrow space likely to collect debris and create maintenance issues.
- The relocated dumpster would require a variance because it would remain within 20 feet of a residential lot line. Because the applicants propose to reuse the existing dumpster enclosure material, staff recommends a condition requiring inspection by City staff to ensure that adequate screening is maintained.
- A variance would be required for the parking lot expansion because the proposed new parking area would be approximately 8 feet from Mulfordton Street, where a minimum setback of 10 feet is required from any right-of-way.
- With respect to the outdoor seating areas, the northern seating area would require a variance because outdoor seating may not be located within 200 feet of residential property unless it is separated by a building or otherwise meets ordinance exceptions. The west seating area along Orchard Lake Road could be considered allowable in relation to the residential separation requirement because the building separates it from the homes to the north, but it would still require a variance because it eliminates the required frontage open space.

The Commission would need to make several determinations as part of site plan review:

- The ordinance requires 113 parking spaces based on the floor area and outdoor seating areas, while only 73 spaces are proposed. The Planning Commission has the authority to approve a reduction in parking based on factors such as walk-up customer activity, transit availability, or unique operational characteristics, but the Commission could also require a parking demand estimate or traffic study if not comfortable making that determination.
- A loading space has not been shown on the plan and will need to be identified on an updated submittal. If the loading area is located in a side yard, it would require Planning Commission approval.
- A pedestrian walkway connection from the public sidewalk to the principal building has not been shown, although such a connection is normally required. The Commission could waive that requirement based on practicality and the way the building will function.

Further outstanding issues:

- Shrubs and trees are proposed around the west, south, and east edges of the site, but the ornamental grasses proposed south of the building would need to be replaced with shrubs to meet ordinance requirements. The applicants would also need to identify clear vision areas on the plan because trees near the Orchard Lake Road drive may obstruct visibility.
- With respect to lighting, the photometric requirements appear to be met, and the proposed pole-mounted lights and wall pack fixtures are shown as fully shielded. However, the locations of the wall lights are not shown on the plans or elevations. The applicants need to provide that information. Outdoor fixtures must include reflective shields, and the applicants need to confirm whether the selected fixtures provide that feature.
- The elevations identify the proposed exterior materials but do not provide percentage calculations. Facades facing public rights-of-way are required to contain at least 60% approved material types, such as masonry, timber, fiber cement, or glass. The upper portions of the Orchard Lake Road facade appear to use EIFS, and the south elevation likely also contains predominantly EIFS, which may not satisfy the material coverage standard. The Planning Commission may approve deviations

from these material requirements if the alternative materials serve a specific architectural design purpose and are compatible with surrounding buildings.

- The ordinance contains minimum window transparency requirements for facades facing major thoroughfares, including 60% at the ground floor and 35% for upper portions. The Orchard Lake Road facade does not appear to meet the upper-level percentage, and the south elevation likely does not meet either requirement. The Commission may waive those fenestration requirements if there is an architectural design reason, surrounding-building compatibility, or a practical difficulty in providing additional windows.
- The public art requirement may also apply to the project, depending on the total construction cost; this would need to be clarified by the applicant.

A full list of necessary Planning Commission determinations and site plan outstanding issues was included on pages 19-22 of the Carlisle Wortman memorandum.

Planning Consultant Auerbach summarized that the Commission would need to consider several waivers, including a reduction in parking, whether a pedestrian connection should be required, possible deviations from material standards, and possible deviations from fenestration standards. The public art question also remained open. If the Commission were otherwise comfortable with the proposal, several outstanding detail items could be addressed administratively by staff.

#### **Commission questions and discussion**

Commissioner Mantey commented that it seemed inconsistent to potentially reduce the parking requirement on the basis that the site might attract pedestrians while also considering a waiver of the pedestrian access requirement. He also noted that the ordinance-required parking count appeared very high, but he would need more information about the restaurant's seating and operations before reaching a conclusion on parking demand. He pointed out that based on prior master plan discussions and the substantial residential development approved nearby, the City is hoping to encourage more walkability in the area, which made him inclined to support pedestrian access to the site.

Planning Consultant Auerbach stated that staff have already raised broader questions about reducing parking requirements and noted that, in his experience, the current ordinance standard of one parking space per 85 square feet of floor area is somewhat high compared to other communities.

Commissioner Stimson asked whether parking lot islands and internal parking lot landscaping were required. The site appeared to have a sizeable parking field without islands or trees. Planning Consultant Auerbach responded that if islands are provided and planted, minimum size requirements apply, but he did not believe the ordinance requires parking lot islands or breaks in parking rows.

#### **Applicant Presentation**

Members of the development team present this evening included:

- Bret Hart and Teon Sujak, Priority Engineering, LLC, 49494 Galeno Court, Macomb, Michigan,
- John Janviriya, Bloomfield Hills, builder/designer
- Nick Hannawa, owner

Mr. Hart addressed the question of internal landscape islands. The existing parking count had been maximized due to ordinance requirements, but if the Commission were willing to permit some leniency

in parking, the applicant would be willing to add internal landscape islands for aesthetic purposes. Additional landscape islands could help offset the encroachment into the 10-foot buffer requirement on the east P1 parcel.

Commissioner Countegan asked how many parking spaces the restaurant would actually need. Mr. Janviriya believed the realistic parking demand would be closer to 60 spaces, because customers would generally arrive in groups averaging approximately two and a half persons per vehicle. The proposed restaurant would be a fine dining, family-oriented establishment.

Commissioner Ware asked how many people the building would accommodate. Mr. Janviriya said that the restaurant would accommodate approximately 200 people, with a variety of table sizes, including tables for six, larger combined tables for eight or ten, and a banquet room for parties and events.

Commissioner Countegan commented that the applicant's own assessment of parking demand could help the Commission evaluate whether fewer parking spaces, more green space, and potentially internal landscape islands would be more appropriate than a larger paved area.

Mr. Hannawa said that the Orchard Lake corridor between 12 Mile Road and 14 Mile Road has lost many sit-down restaurants, and he wanted to offer a family-oriented dining use. He is working with the owner of Zarzoor restaurant in Sterling Heights to establish a new restaurant at this site called Zarzoor Prime, which would be a casual but higher-end family restaurant with a beer and wine liquor license, a private room for small events, and a concept intended to serve families and gatherings. He stated that customers from Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield, Novi, and surrounding communities already travel to the existing Zarzoor restaurant and have expressed interest in seeing a west-side location.

Mr. Hannawa stated that he had been carrying this vacant property for several years and had resisted pressure to sell it for other uses that he did not believe would benefit the community. The proposed restaurant would be a positive use for the site and a benefit to the area. He acknowledged that the project would require numerous variances and requested the Commission's support. He pointed out that his family owns the adjacent Taco Bros restaurant that could potentially provide additional parking if needed.

Mr. Hannawa said that he was proud to bring the restaurant concept to Farmington Hills and believed it would be an asset to the community.

Commissioner Grant asked about the size of the banquet room. Mr. Hannawa stated that the banquet room would accommodate approximately 70 people.

Commissioner Ware asked whether the building was two stories and whether any second-floor seating was planned. Mr. Hannawa responded that the building is not two stories and that no upper-floor seating is proposed. The upper architectural element is a remnant from the former Pier 1 building, where it functioned as a display mezzanine.

Commissioner Countegan asked whether the Sterling Heights restaurant has 200 seats and how many parking spaces it has. Mr. Hannawa responded that the Sterling Heights location did have about 200

seats, with fewer than 60 parking spaces. That restaurant uses valet service to help manage parking demand.

Commissioner Ware observed that valet service does not eliminate the number of cars coming to the site. She asked where the overflow vehicles would go if valet service were needed at this location. Mr. Hannawa responded that the valet operator would need to arrange any off-site parking through a lease or agreement with adjacent property owners. His family owns nearby property, and additional spaces might be available if needed.

Commissioner Countegan said that the proposed parking should be adequate for the intended operation because many patrons will arrive in groups rather than each person arriving in a separate car.

Commissioner Stimson initiated a discussion regarding the exterior building materials. Planning Consultant Auerbach noted that exterior material changes trigger compliance with current building design standards.

Commissioner Stimson asked the development team to clarify the proposed exterior materials. Referencing the elevation drawings, Mr. Sujak explained that the vertical piers on the front west elevation would be clad in porcelain slabs designed to resemble stone, and that the infill areas would be EIFS. He pointed out that the upper window area could not extend much higher because the joists are located at approximately 12 feet, and raising the windows further would conflict with the roof structure.

Commissioner Mantey observed that the lower portion of the front elevation appeared to provide substantial glass at the pedestrian level, which he considered most important from a streetscape perspective. Mr. Sujak estimated that the lower portion would be approximately 75% glass.

Commissioner Brickner said that the City had previously tightened material standards related to EIFS use because EIFS is vulnerable to damage. Mr. Sujak responded that on the south elevation, the lower portion would be face brick, with fiberboard used in the vertical design elements and EIFS used above that level. The EIFS would be elevated sufficiently so that it would not be exposed to the typical damage concerns associated with impacts near ground level.

Commissioner Brickner reiterated that his concern was avoiding putting EIFS too low on the building because of maintenance and damage issues. Mr. Sujak stated that, if necessary, the brick base could be extended higher.

Commissioner Lindquist asked whether the elevated architectural element on the Orchard Lake Road elevation would be usable space. Mr. Cleary explained that the front had been squared off to enlarge and regularize the appearance of the facade, but the upper portion was not intended as usable or display space. He stated that the purpose of the feature was to create curb appeal and a greater visual presence.

**MOTION by Countegan, supported by Mantey, that the application for Site Plan Approval 52-2-2026, 31330 Orchard Lake Road, dated January 23, 2026, submitted by Bret Hart, Priority Engineering, LLC, BE APPROVED, because it meets all applicable requirements of the Zoning Chapter. The APPROVAL is SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS and DETERMINATIONS:**

- 1) All outstanding issues identified in Carlisle Wortman Associates' March 11, 2026, review shall be addressed to the reasonable satisfaction of the City Planner.
- 2) All outstanding issues identified in the City Engineer's February 24, 2026, interoffice correspondence shall be addressed to the reasonable satisfaction of the City Engineer; and
- 3) All outstanding issues identified in the Fire Marshal's February 20, 2026, interoffice correspondence shall be addressed to the reasonable satisfaction of the Fire Marshal.
- 4) The Commission permits the following existing non-conformities to remain:
  - a. Minimum parking space setback: 10 feet required, 4.6 feet proposed for the existing parking area abutting Mulfordton Street.
  - b. Landscape yard abutting a street: 10 feet required, 4.6 feet proposed for the existing parking area abutting Mulfordton Street.
  - c. Maneuvering Land Width: 20 feet required, 17.7 ft. proposed for existing lane width from Orchard Lake Road.
- 5) The following variances may be required from the Zoning Board of Appeals. The applicant must confirm all proposed dimensions to determine actual variances required.
  - a. Building - side setback (north) adjacent to residential: 20 feet required, 2.09 feet proposed.
  - b. Front yard open space: 50% required, unknown % proposed.
  - c. Off-street loading space: 660 sf. required to be placed in the rear or interior side yard, no loading space proposed.
  - d. Landscape yard abutting a street: 10 feet required, 8.05 feet proposed for new parking area abutting Mulfordton Street.
  - e. Outdoor space near residential: 200 feet of separation required, approximately 10 feet proposed.
  - f. Floor area of outdoor space: maximum allowed 50% of usable floor area (3,675 sf.), unknown proposed.
  - g. Outdoor use in required setbacks: allowed if no permanent structures and not in required open space or landscape areas, outdoor seating with canopy structure proposed in the setback areas.
  - h. Dumpster setback from residential: 20 feet required, 12 feet proposed.
- 6) A pedestrian connection between the building entrance and Orchard Lake Road is required.
- 7) The applicants must modify the layout to eliminate the 2.09 foot gap between the proposed addition and the adjacent screening wall.
- 8) The site is in the 14 Mile/Northwestern/Orchard Lake Road Special Planning Area, and public art is required if the renovation project construction costs \$2 million or more. The developers indicated that the construction would be over \$2 million, so this requirement will apply.
- 9) Exterior modifications are proposed, and the building must be brought into compliance with the City's design standards, as included in Section 34-5.20.4. The Commission grants a waiver from the building material requirements and finds that the following apply:
  - i. The waiver will achieve a specific architectural objective or purpose.
  - ii. The proposed building materials are compatible with the surrounding development.
- 10) Exterior modifications are proposed, and the building must be brought into compliance with the City's design standards, as included in Section 34-5.20.7. The Commission grants a waiver from the fenestration requirements and finds that the following apply:
  - i. The waiver will achieve a specific architectural objective or purpose.
  - ii. The proposed building materials are compatible with the surrounding development.
  - iii. Compliance with the standard will result in a practical difficulty.

- 11) Signs are not approved with the site plan and are subject to standards in Section 34-5.5 (SIGNS) of the Zoning Ordinance.**
- 12) 113 parking spaces are required; 73 are proposed. The Planning Commission determines that the 73 proposed parking spaces are acceptable because the restaurant will have walk-up (foot traffic) customers.**

**Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.**

#### **DISCUSSION**

The Commission discussed the Legislative Analysis provided by the Michigan House Fiscal Agency relative to proposed Zoning and Land Division Amendments. City Attorney Schultz will provide further written information on this matter.

#### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

**MOTION by Trafelet, supported by Countegan, to nominate and elect Erik Lindquist as Chair, Danielle Ware as Vice Chair, and Tanji Grant as Secretary.**

**Roll call vote:**

**Ayes – Brickner, Countegan, Grant, Lindquist, Mantey, Stimson, Ware, Trafelet**

**Nays – None**

**Motion passed 8-0.**

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Planning Commission Special Meeting, February 19, 2026

Planning Commission Regular Meeting, February 19, 2026

**MOTION by Countegan, supported by Stimson, to approve the February 19, 2026 Special and Regular meeting minutes as submitted.**

**Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

#### **COMMISSIONER/STAFF COMMENTS**

Commissioner Mantey thanked Chair Trafelet for his service.

Commissioner Brickner reported that he and Commissioner Lindquist had met with Planning Consultant Ben Carlisle earlier today; the conversation was worthwhile, and the time was well spent. Planning staff was arranging these meetings.

Commissioner Lindquist expressed interest in learning more about the development in the Northwestern/Orchard Lake area.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION by Grant, supported by Stimson, to adjourn the meeting.**

**Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

The meeting ended at 10:50 pm.

/cem