

**MINUTES  
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS  
PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING  
FARMINGTON HILLS CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM  
JANUARY 24, 2019, 6:00 P.M.**

Chair Schultz called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. on January 24, 2019.

Commissioners Present:           Brickner, Countegan, Goerke, Mantey, McRae (arrived 6:30 p.m.),  
Schwartz, Stimson, Turner

Commissioners Absent:           Orr

Others Present:                   City Planner Stec; Planning Department Secretary LaBelle; Police Chief  
Nebus, Assistant Chief King; Director of Central Services Monico,  
Information Technology Manager Schultz; Fire Chief Unruh, Deputy  
Fire Chief Olszewski, Fire Marshal Baloga; Special Services Director  
Schnackel; Director of Public Services Mondora, Assistant to the  
Director Gushard, Engineering Manager Cubera, DPW Superintendent  
McCarthy

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Schwartz directed the Commission's attention to the first page of the Capital Improvements Plan, where Act 33 of the Public Acts of 2008, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, was quoted. Chair Schwartz believed the language directed the Planning Commission to look at physical changes in public structures and improvements.

The next paragraph on the 1<sup>st</sup> page of the CIP referred to the City Charter, Sections 3.07 and 6.08, which indicated that the City Manager shall have the responsibility of submitting a Capital Improvements Plan to the City Council. Chair Schwartz said that any capital expense over \$25,000 went into Farmington Hill's CIP, and the Planning Commission had traditionally reviewed all such expenses. However, Chair Schwartz believed the Commission had surpassed their jurisdiction, and it was not the Commission's purview to review all capital expenses, whether or not they related to changes in public structures and improvements.

Chair Schwartz said that a study session would be scheduled regarding how to review the Capital Improvements Plan going forward. Chair Schwartz suggested that tonight the Department Heads for Police, Technology, and Fire give short presentations, and the Commission spend the bulk of its time on Parks and Recreation, as well as the Department of Public Works. Chair Schwartz thought those were the things under the purview of the Commission. However, if the Commission wanted the CIP review to proceed as it had traditionally done so, Chair Schwartz asked for a motion to that effect.

Commissioner Brickner said that he disagreed with the interpretation of the statute as just given by Chair Schwartz. It was valuable for the Commission to look at all expenditures, not just those dealing with property. He believed the Statute was specifically set up for the Planning Commission to take the first look at all capital expenses. If the Commission wanted to make changes in the CIP they could recommend those changes; it was up to the Council to make the final decision.

Commissioner Brickner said that the Department Heads had spent time preparing their portions of the CIP as well as their presentations this evening, and should be allowed to make their full comments. Any

discussion of making a change in how the CIP was reviewed should include the City Attorney.

**MOTION by Brickner, support by Countegan, to proceed with the Capital Improvements Plan review as had traditionally occurred in the past.**

**Motion carried 4-3 (Goerke, Mantey, Schwartz opposed).**

**MOTION by Brickner, support by Countegan, to approve the agenda as published.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**REGULAR MEETING:**

**A. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN 2019 – 2020 THROUGH 2024 – 2025**

**POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Police Chief Nebus and Assistant Chief King were present on behalf of the Police Department.

Accomplishments of the 2018-2019 fiscal year included:

- Electrical upgrades were completed in the dispatch area, including an upgrade of the uninterrupted power supply.
- The Police Department obtained a grant for body-worn cameras through the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Officer of Justice Programs for \$30,200.
- The Police Department will be required to replace the entire police and fire radio system, as part of a county-wide update. The vendor had been identified; money was requested to support that project.
- The Police Department worked with the Department of Public Services to complete the electrical upgrade in the Communications Center. This was funded through forfeiture funds.
- The Police Department purchased and created an Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) unit. Two UAS systems were purchased in 2017/2018 for the support of various City operations needing aerial support.

2019/2020 – Requests:

- Police Access Control improvements, to decrease accessibility to police areas including the west parking lot, and improve employee safety and property security: \$40,000 for the current year.
- Police Department Maintenance: \$25,000 for the current year.
- Request for an advanced digital analysis lab and crime analysis unit: \$50,000.
- Police Department master keying: \$30,000.
- The current Mobile Command Post Vehicle, which was shared with the Fire Department, was near the end of its life. Replacement cost: \$256,000.

Chief Nebus said the Mobile Command Post was normally used during “terrible weather” incidents, where fires or death investigations were performed outside during bad weather.

Commissioner Countegan asked how the Mobile Command Post was different from a typical RV. Chief Nebus explained that the technology in the unit was “plug-in,” therefore the cost did not necessarily reflect added technology. Assistant Chief King said the Mobile Command Post functioned as a rehabilitation center, was used by multiple City authorities, including both Police and Fire, and was more

robust than a normal camper in terms of things like generators, engine components, brakes, etc.

Chair Schwartz thanked Police Chief Nebus and Assistant Chief King for their presentation.

### **TECHNOLOGY/CENTRAL SERVICES**

Director of Central Services Monico and Information Technology Manager Schultz were present on behalf of the Central Services Department.

#### 2018/2019 Accomplishments included:

- Miscellaneous PC and notebook replacements.
- Completed transition to email archival product.
- Implementing network security assessment including penetration testing program.
- Continued implementation of electronic forms product related to Laserfiche which would allow the City to electronically route and automatically archive forms.
- Upgraded infrastructure to support Virtual Desktop (VDI) and Virtual Private Network (VPN). Began deploying mobile devices.
- Enhanced public access to GIS mapping system.
- Enhanced information/data and communications management, including improved mass and targeted notification to residents.

#### Requests for 2019/2020 and beyond:

- Continue to transition from PC's to VDI tech and device replacement.
- Continue to update/expand GIS access to City staff and general public.
- Improved phone system.
- Video surveillance equipment.
- Continue to enhance network security.
- Improve and secure connectivity building to building.
- Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System/Financial software.

Commissioner Mantey was interested in exploring ways the expanded GIS system could help the Planning Commission in their deliberations. Director of Central Services Monico said that the City's GIS specialist would be available to provide training and facilitate a question and answer with the Commission.

Commissioner McRae arrived at 6:30 p.m.

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Fire Chief Unruh, Deputy Fire Chief Olszewski and Fire Marshal Baloga were present on behalf of the Fire Department.

#### Accomplishments of the 2018-2019 fiscal year:

- Fire Department took delivery of a Tower 1 aerial platform truck.
- Updated and renovated kitchens at Fire Stations 1 and 2.
- Transitioning Fire Station 1 at Nine Mile/Drake to a 24-hour station required the construction of a 4-person overnight dorm room.
- Renovate shower area at Station 5: Men's locker room.

- \$9,000 - \$10,000 annually was dedicated to update workout equipment throughout the 5 stations.
- New carpeting at Fire Station 3.
- Took delivery of a new Squad 5 rescue vehicle.
- New Engine 5 is in production; will probably be delivered mid-summer.
- Took delivery of a new Shift Commander vehicle.
- Took delivery of 8,000 feet of 5-inch supply hose and adapters.

#### 2019/2020 requests

- Replacement of mobile computer equipment: \$90,000.
- Replace 2 SCBA Compressors: \$100,000.
- Replace out-of-date extrication equipment: \$27,000.
- Purchase replacement Engine for Ladder #2: \$640,000.
- Replace end-of-life cardiac monitors: \$165,000.
- New ballistic equipment for Battalion Chief and Fire Engines: \$30,000.

Commissioner Mantey asked Chief Unruh to address the \$3 million request for water mains for fire protection lines in subdivisions that currently didn't have water mains. Chief Unruh explained that they had been working with DPS on strategic geographical areas where they felt they needed to add 1 or 2 hydrants.

In response to questions from the Commission, Chief Unruh explained process when fighting a fire where there was not a hydrant close by.

Commissioner Turner asked about any structural needs for the Fire Department buildings. Chief Unruh said that for 2 years the CIP had included funds for building maintenance. During the last calendar year the City had hired an outside consultant to look at all the City buildings, and the City was now prioritizing the needs of all buildings.

Chair Schwartz commented that installing fire hydrants where there weren't any should be the highest priority.

In response to a question from Commissioner Brickner, Chief Unruh said that Stations 1, 2 and 5 were now 24-hour stations. Station 3 was staffed during the work day Monday through Friday, and Station 4 was staffed until midnight 7 days a week.

Chair Schwartz thanked Fire Department Staff for their report.

#### **PARKS AND RECREATION**

Special Services Director Schnackel was present on behalf of the Parks and Recreation division.

Accomplishments of the 2018-2019 year included:

- Completed entire Harrison High School Repurposing Plan with consultant.
- Purchased ice resurfacing machine.
- Completed upgrades at the Ice Arena.
- Replaced Nature Center roof.
- Completed Nature Discovery Trail.
- Purchased Parks and Golf Equipment.

- Completed rehab of Costick Center drives and parking lots A and B.
- Replaced boilers at the Heritage History Center and Spicer House.
- Completed 2019-2023 Parks and Recreation Master Plan with consultant.
- Completed Various HVAC upgrades and improvements at the Costick Center.
- Trail Improvements

Requests for 2019-2020 included:

- Harrison High School Repurposing: Purchase should be complete in June with construction beginning in October 2020. Cost was \$20 million, funded through a 30-year bond.
- Expand activities at the Costick Center for seniors.
- Vehicles and equipment for parks, golf, and ice arena as outlined in the CIP.
- Infrastructure for Costick, Ice Arena, Parks, Heritage Park, Founders Park, and Golf Course as outlined in the CIP, including trail/wayfinding signage, south shelter replacement, playground surface replacement,

Chair Schwartz commented on the positive improvements at Heritage Park.

In response to a question from Commissioner Mantey regarding purchasing further park land, Special Services Director Schnackel said that the City had purchased the dog park. There were approximately 375 users, and the Department would look to those users to help prioritize improvements at the park. The City was always looking for land that might be for sale that would be appropriate for use by the Department.

Commissioner Turner thought the area that recently came before the Commission north of 10 Mile east of Orchard Lake Road would have been a great area for the City to purchase and use as an open space recreation area, especially as it was called out in the Master Plan for open space development.

In response to questions from Commissioner Turner regarding the repurposing of Harrison High School, Special Services Director Schnackel said the City had the opportunity to sell bonds up to a certain amount without asking permission of the residents. This would be the process used for financing the work at Harrison. As a result of the new facility, the Department would have an addition \$2.2 million in yearly expense, and very close to \$2 million in revenue. The rest would come from the General Fund, although the Special Services Department hoped to make up the shortfall.

In response to a question from Commissioner Brickner, Special Services Director Schnackel said as many athletic fields as possible including the football field would be kept at Harrison; they were looking at site plan issues now in terms of meeting parking requirements for the many programs to be held there.

In response to a question from Commissioner McRae, Special Services Director Schnackel said that the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of Harrison High would be brought up to code, and it was the City's intent to pursue partnerships with the business community and others for use of those spaces.

Commissioner Mantey commented that current standards might require too much parking; parking needs were changing with the growth of ride-share companies and the fact that some millennials did not own cars.

Commissioner Goerke complimented the Department on how well maintained the golf course was.

## **PUBLIC SERVICES**

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

Requests listed below were for the 2019/2020 fiscal year, except where noted:

### **2019 MAJOR ROAD PROJECTS**

City projects:

- 9 Mile Road: Hawthorne to Middlebelt, May – September, with completion of sidewalks on both sides of the road.
- Power Road: 10 Mile to 11 Mile, May – September. The shoulders would be paved for 8-foot wide bike paths.
- Halsted Road reconstruction – I-696 to 12 Mile, May – September. This would be an all-weather road, which allowed for extra loads for commercial/industrial vehicles. The cemetery wall and sidewalk along Halsted would be reconstructed, in cooperation with the Historic District Commission.
- Halsted Road mill and fill: Grand River to 11 Mile, May – September.

Road Commission:

- Seeley Drain Culvert Repair Under Haggerty Road – May to September.
- Roundabout at Maple and Middlebelt Intersection, north of the City – May to October.

MDOT:

- Bridge repairs: Drake Road Bridge over M-5 and Grand River Bridge over M-5, April to October.

In response to a question from Commissioner Turner, Engineering Manager Cubera said the repairs on Halsted just south of 14 Mile Road were not yet complete.

Commissioner Turner spoke regarding the lack of synchronization of traffic lights, as well as the differences in left-turn instructions via the light signals. Commissioner McRae said that it seemed that there was a different left-turn pattern for every intersection on Orchard Lake Road. He suggested doing a city-wide study of how many turn patterns there were at intersections, and follow that with a real attempt to provide consistency across the city.

Public Services Director Mondora noted that Consumers Energy would have a project on Middlebelt south of 11 Mile Road.

### **2019 LOCAL ROAD PROJECTS**

Public Services Director Mondora said that because of the successful road millage, there was \$10 million allocated for local roads. The local road projects would start when the frost laws were lifted in the spring. Six neighborhoods were outlined on the map entitled *2019 Local Road Projects*; those projects were out to bid.

In response to a question from Commissioner Brickner, Public Services Director Mondora explained process for those people who currently had active assessments for road improvements. Some residents would receive proportional refunds; others who were making installment payments would see their balance go to zero. Even though the first year there would be about \$1 million going toward bond

payments, the City was still able to commit \$10 million toward the local roads.

In response to a question from Commissioner McRae, Public Services Director Mondora said PACER scores were updated every 2 years. The next update was scheduled for spring 2019.

### **SIDEWALKS:**

Public Services Director Mondora directed the Commission's attention to the document: *Sidewalk Locations, City of Farmington Hills, Michigan*, which showed areas where gaps would be filled in, along with adding shoulders on Power Road.

Engineering Manager Cubera said the only 2 changes from the previous year were: (1) the addition of 300 feet of sidewalk on Halsted south of 9 Mile Road, and (2) the sidewalk was completed on the south side of 13 Mile Road between Drake to just east of Edythe.

Commissioner McRae asked how the elevation of existing sidewalks were matched to new sidewalks. Public Services Director Mondora said sidewalks had to be constructed per engineering design standards; Engineering Manager Cubera added that ADA standards also had to be met.

Commissioner Mantey said that last year the plan was for a sidewalk on the east side of Power Road; now it was going to be a bicycle lane. Engineering Manager Cubera said when they looked at the shoulder they felt it could accommodate the width for a bicycle lane and also allow people to walk in that lane. They thought a bike lane was a good fit for that road which was not high speed or heavily traveled.

Commissioner Mantey said that 45 miles per hour did not lend itself to be a comfortable automobile speed for bike riders or for pedestrians in the street.

Chair Schwartz spoke to the need for a long range non-motorized traffic plan, which was in the CIP but was always pushed back so that the plan was never completed.

Commissioner Mantey mentioned that Michigan State University recently completed a study that found that spending on schools in Michigan had fallen 20% in the last 20-25 years, more than any other state in the country. The CIP noted on page 66 that: *It remains Farmington Hills policy, however, to treat walkways across school frontages as a requirement of the school district.* Commissioner Mantey said that with the changes in funding for the schools (negative) and the City (positive) perhaps this policy should be changed. How could they start a policy change regarding sidewalks in front of schools?

Chair Schwartz commented that the public hearing would be the appropriate time and place to make a motion regarding this and other issues.

Engineering Manager Cubera pointed out that sidewalk construction in the City had been accomplished primarily through requirements for site development. Schools were exempt from the zoning law, and could not be held to the City's site development standards.

Commissioner Mantey still felt that that the policy quoted above should be reviewed and perhaps changed.

Commissioner Mantey commented that the reference to a pathway being 6-8 feet wide along the Rouge River was only a requirement at certain intervals, with the idea that at those intervals people and bikes

could pass each other.

Commissioner McRae also spoke to the need for a non-motorized master plan for the City, and suggested that a joint meeting with Council would be beneficial. The cost for the non-motorized plan (\$125,000) was based on a figure given by the City's planning consultants.

Public Services Director Mondora said that the City had submitted a grant request in the last calendar year to SEMCOG for funds to complete a non-motorized plan. The City did not get the grant, but they would have the opportunity to strengthen the application and submit it again.

Commissioner Brickner commented that the roundabout at 14 Mile/Orchard Lake Road had problems with backups and queuing traffic. He felt signage needed to be added to better instruct drivers how to enter the roundabout.

Commissioner Stimson wondered if there were studies that showed at what posted highway speed bicyclists refused to use the road and instead used sidewalks, so that bike lanes became pavement that no one really used. Cyclists did not feel safe being too close to fast-moving cars. Cones that provided separation might be helpful, or a small curb.

Public Services Director Mondora said that they would talk to the City's engineering consultants about those issues.

Commissioner Mantey asked why the Riverwalk development needed so much, including a water main, sidewalk, etc., when it was such a new development. Engineering Manager Cubera explained that some of the issues regarding Riverwalk stemmed from the new development in Farmington at the old Flanders School location. That development had triggered issues regarding pathway easements and possible paved connections, as well as drainage issues on the Farmington Hills side, and noted that the work was in the CIP as a possible "future project."

Returning to the Power Road issue, in response to a question from Commissioner Countegan, Commissioner Mantey it was common for people to walk on Power Road and he felt there should be a sidewalk there. Also, approximately 500 feet of that frontage was in front of Alameda School, and that related to the policy of not constructing sidewalks in front of schools.

Commissioner Countegan said that the CIP was a planning document, and it was appropriate for the Commission to make motions to change the document.

City Planner Stec noted that Alameda School was actually planning an expansion.

### **DRAINAGE:**

In response to questions from Commissioner Mantey regarding specific drainage projects, Public Services Director Mondora explained that:

- 1) A couple of properties on Park Hill were experiencing significant property damage including flooding inside their home. City Council had directed Public Services to design a solution, especially to water draining from the public road.
- 2) Mirlon Driveway Culvert was a project that benefited one property, but was a bridge that was within the road right of way. Commissioner Mantey said it should be clear why the City was bearing all the

cost of this improvement, instead of asking the single homeowner to help share the cost. Engineering Manager Cubera noted that the project was listed for “future.”

- 3) The Harwich Drive Drainage Improvement impacted 2 properties. The drainage issue there would eventually impact basement walls, and was partly caused by water draining from the road. The City was bearing all the cost.
- 4) Regarding Windwood Pointe Subdivision Drainage, which impacted 3 properties, and for which the City was assuming 50% of the cost, the drainage issued also involved water drained from a public road.

City Manager Cubera said that ultimately Council would decide where the money was allocated.

Chair Schwartz suggested working with the City Attorney to determine the basis for deciding the City’s responsibility vs. what the homeowner’s responsibility was for drainage improvements. Public Services Director Mondora said that they were in the middle of the Storm Modeling and Master Plan Update and Asset Management Plan; those questions would be addressed as part of that process. DPW Superintendent McCarthy noted that often when there was a major failure, even if it was a failure on private property, the City’s infrastructure was significantly impacted and the fix could ultimately be very expensive for the City. Commissioner Mantey suggested that the narrative descriptions for the projects be clear regarding why certain projects were included in the CIP, especially those involving a single home or a few homes.

#### **SANITARY SEWERS:**

Public Services Director Mondora said they were in the middle of the Wastewater Asset Management Project. The City had received a 3-year State grant to address storm water and wastewater issues. With the upcoming Local Roads project, the City had an option to extend sanitary sewer to Kirby from Farmington Road to Cass, and Bridgeman Street as well.

#### **WATER MAINS:**

Public Services Director Mondora said they were replacing water mains in the Villa Capri Subdivision, as well as adding fire protection lines in subdivisions without water mains. Three were under construction currently and were not included in the CIP.

Commissioner Mantey asked about the possibility of saving money by constructing water mains and sewers simultaneously. Public Services Director Mondora said they did discuss that possibility with affected residents, who would need to pay their share to connect with the new water mains.

Chair Schwartz asked if the City could accelerate the added fire protection lines, which were allocated \$500,000 per year. Could \$1 million per year be allocated? Could all \$3 million be completed in one year? Commissioner McRae asked if the 6 years at \$500,000 would complete what was needed.

Public Services Director Mondora said one project per year was scheduled. The Department had a lot on their plate with this being the first year of the Local Road Program. They could leverage their agreements with their consultants if more water main work was desired; the projects did need to be administered. The Fire Department was helping prioritize the areas for water main expansion, in terms of greatest number of homes served, access, topography, logistics of bringing in extra equipment, etc. There were about 10-12 areas that needed additional hydrants, and the entire project would probably take 10 years.

In response to questions from Commissioner Mantey, Public Services Director Mondora said there were

about 1800 homes that did not have hydrant coverage.

Commissioner Mantey thought many residents would not voluntarily hook up to the new water mains.

Commissioner Brickner noted that the CIP was a 6-year planning project, and thanked the Department of Public Services for the planning that they did.

Commissioner Mantey asked how many homes were affected by the Community Well Conversion (4 subdivisions), budgeted for "Future" at \$2,707,000. Engineering Manager Cubera said that the project would affect about 250-300 homes.

Chair Schwartz indicated he was ready to entertain a motion.

**MOTION by Brickner, support by McRae, to set the Capital Improvements Plan 2019/2020 through 2024/2025 for Public Hearing on March 21, 2018.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

Chair Schwartz suggested including a Table of Contents in future CIP documents.

Chair Schwartz suggested that a discussion be held at a study session in February regarding the scope of future CIP reviews as well as a discussion of whether to request a joint meeting with City Council.

The February meetings were set as February 21 (regular) and February 28 (study session).

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Turner said that he felt the Commission's responsibility during Capital Improvements Plan review was to address land use issues. He would like to see the Commission only interact with those departments/issues that dealt with brick and mortar aspects of capital improvements.

Commissioner Brickner thanked Planning Secretary LaBelle for providing the food this evening.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Seeing that there was no further discussion, Chair Schwartz adjourned the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dale Countegan  
Planning Commission Secretary

/cem