

**Approved
December 15, 2008**

**REGULAR MEETING
(CONDUCTED AS A COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE)
OF THE COUNCIL
CITY OF SOUTHFIELD
October 23, 2008**

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MINUTES

October 23, 2008

The meeting of the Council convened at 6:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the Southfield Public Library, 26300 Evergreen Road, Southfield, Michigan, with Council President Joan Seymour in the Chair. PRESENT: Council Members: Donald Fracassi, Myron Frasier, Sylvia Jordan, Sidney Lantz, Bill Lattimore, Joan Seymour and Kenson Siver. ALSO PRESENT: City Clerk Nancy Banks, City Administrator James Scharret and Assistant City Attorney Susan Ward-Witkowski. There being a quorum, Council was in session.

The Regular Meeting (conducted as a Committee-of-the-Whole) was also a joint meeting with the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals. Planning Commission members in attendance included Robert Haisha, Roy Bell, Seymour Mandel and Carol Peoples. Les Weigum and John Petty from the Zoning Board of Appeals was also in attendance.

Mr. Banda stated that the decision making over the years has been as good as any Master Plan. He knew that this would be a different type of Master Plan. A series of meetings were held with the businesses along the major corridors of the City in order to get their input. Meetings were also held with various organizations, including the Zoning Board of Appeals, Cornerstone Development Authority and the City Centre Advisory Board. The Master Plan will be sent out to surrounding communities for input. The Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing. An open house will be held prior to the City Council's public hearing. Once the Master Plan is adopted the City will need to make sure it is kept current. A Master Plan can help the City defend itself in court. He hopes to have the Master Plan in Place by January 2009. He requested a consensus from Council to move forward.

Vern Gustafsson, Jackson Engineering (formerly Carter Burgess), thanked everyone for coming. Jackson Engineering was assisted by Tetra Tek, Five Star Engineering and LSL Planning. Southfield is an experienced and well equipped community to foster current programs and new ones that are recommended in the Master Plan. The City is poised and ready to improve the community on a continuous basis.

Brad Strader, LSL Planning, thanked the many participants. The Master Plan provides a legal basis for zoning. It addresses the needs and desires of residents, businesses and property owners. The Master Plan portrays land use patterns that will diversify the tax base to support City facilities, programs and services and generate revenue. It preserves parks, open spaces and natural and cultural resources. Recommended improvements to transportation and infrastructure are included. It coordinates land use recommendations with land use changes, infrastructure improvements and surrounding communities.

The Master Plan should be used to:

1. Guide new development, redevelopment and future plans.
2. Foster regional coordination discussions.
3. Identify and prioritize city projects and improvements.
4. Assist in review of development proposals.
5. Establish criterion for revenue proposals.

The Master Plan's Governing Principles are as follows:

1. Reuse previously developed land.
2. Support the economic base.
3. Support emerging economic growth sectors.
4. Support private actions that contribute to the public realm.
5. Declare the necessity and secure the future of open spaces.
6. Strengthen neighborhoods.
7. Create and maintain connectivity.
8. Encourage a mix of activities, uses and densities.
9. Take sustainable actions.
10. Create efficiencies in delivery of public services.

Four areas were identified for redevelopment; the Telegraph Corridor, the City Centre, the Southfield Road Corridor and the Cornerstone Development Authority.

The Telegraph Road Corridor, south of I-696, presents a good opportunity to focus on technology. The recommendation was to cluster technology and research & development uses in strategic locations and provide for support uses. Also, work with MDOT to make aesthetic improvements including lighting and landscaping.

The City Centre Area should provide an environment conducive to living, working, shopping and entertainment. It should accommodate a variety of building densities. They met with LTU regarding better ways to link their campus with the City Centre. Make Evergreen Road pedestrian friendly with a boulevard.

The Southfield Road Corridor should be a unique destination consisting of compatible, yet diverse uses and ethnic origins. The plan recommends supporting the Southfield Road median improvement project. Design streetscape, landscape and beautification

improvements to create an identifiable character. Encourage the acquisition, demolition and reuse of properties to its highest economic potential.

The Cornerstone Development Authority completed a Strategic Plan in April 2008. The Plan envisions fully walkable, mixed use plan with retail, services, offices, residential and other uses. Build on the strengths of the health care, higher education and retail sectors with attractive public and private spaces. Increase development, density in under-utilized parking areas, vacant land or obsolete buildings/sites.

The key transportation recommendations were:

1. Maintain and improve the safety and efficiency in the transportation system through asset and access management.
2. Improve the visual appearance of the transportation corridors.
3. Support alternative modes of travel (walking, biking, transit).

The Steering Committee would like to promote a healthy and greener community with bike paths and sidewalks. A meeting was held with SMART regarding transit routes.

Communities that are successful in implementing their plans and achieving the vision are those able to secure:

1. Commitment
2. Give credit where credit is due
3. Involvement
4. Effective guidance
5. Interactive planning
6. Regionalism
7. Evaluation and monitoring
8. Implement Early Successes

The Mayor and City Council as the Stewards of the Plan need to do the following:

1. Establish priorities.
2. Consider funding commitments.
3. Staff requirements.
4. Evaluate need for further study, or programmatic changes – City Codes, Zoning Ordinance amendments and procedures.
5. Offer approval of City projects and costs during the budget process.
6. Ensure that the spirit and policies of the Plan are followed and implement needed actions.
7. Direct the Planning Commission and staff to oversee activities and progress.

The Planning Commission serves as the Plan Facilitators by:

1. Providing management and oversight of the Plan's implementation program.
2. Prepare an Annual Report of Progress.
3. Prepare necessary studies, ordinances and programmatic initiatives.
4. Manage technical teams of City Directors and staff-governance, infrastructure, economic development, planning and livability.

The next step is to make the Plan available for public viewing on the City's website. A hard copy will also be available at City Hall and the Southfield Library. Copies will be distributed to neighboring communities, Oakland County Planning and the utility companies.

The Planning Commission is scheduled to conduct a Public Hearing on November 19, 2008 and then make a recommendation to City Council. An Open House and Public Hearing before City Council is tentatively scheduled for January 5, 2009.

Mr. Banda stated that everything is lining up for the City to move forward. He just received Lathrup Village's Master Plan for input. A fundraising plan is in place. He is honored to be an adjunct professor at LTU and has convinced them to have the architect students a conceptual plan together for connecting LTU to the City Centre area.

Rochelle Freeman stated that she met with Plante Moran recently and was asked what Plante Moran could do to get involved in the City. The Economic Development Corporation has been asked to fund a study on making a technology corridor along Telegraph Road. The City Centre Advisory Board will spend \$70,000 to refine the City Centre Plan based on the results of their meeting with Council. The revised plan will be brought back to Council soon.

Mr. Banda stated that Mr. Waterhouse is working on Parks & Recreation's future plan. The CDA, CCAB, and the P & R Board need to meet with Council on a yearly basis to update Council on their plans. The City needs to continue to work hard to keep its economic core strong. The City is going to seek rezoning of some areas even before the master plan is complete.

Councilman Lantz stated that the City can't afford a master plan given today's economic conditions. The City does not need to hire this group. Mr. Banda replied that the City has spent \$200,000 to develop the plan. Staff will implement the plan. Planning to fail is failing to plan. At the beginning of every budget year the City can look at the plan and determine its priorities.

Councilwoman Jordan stated that Mr. Strader spoke about relaxing the rules for business development. Mr. Banda replied that what Mr. Strader meant was relaxing our zoning classifications so that it is clear what the City wants. The Zoning Board of Appeals asks

for the parking ordinance to be changed every time a business requests a waiver of the parking requirements. In some areas, retail is failing, it may just be in the wrong location.

Councilman Fracassi complimented those who worked on the plan. It gives the City direction.

Councilman Siver stated that he was happy to see the work that went into the plan. He is a big proponent of mixed use and historic preservation of the neighborhoods.

Councilman Frasier stated that this process should have been done a long time ago. He suggested contacting the Engineering Society of Detroit. Mr. Banda replied that Darlene Trudell-Rossman, ZBA, opened that door for us. He encouraged the City to have a seminar with local architects on the City's expectations.

Councilman Frasier stated that houses near park areas are worth 20% more than those not near a park. The City needs to continue to look at developing parks to meet the needs of the community. Mr. Banda proposed making pocket parks within neighborhoods with the HUD funds.

Carol Peoples, Planning Commission, stated that the plan seems to be very thorough. The City needs to think positive and think past the current conditions. She has been in Southfield for 27 years. There are diverse views on Council but they work well together. The members of Council care.

Council President Seymour stated that the process started two years ago. It was a good process because so many people got involved. The plan is not cast in stone. It is a living document. It is a good starting point. She thanked all the committee members for their participation.

Les Weigum, ZBA, complimented the Council on their strict position regarding moving signs. The natural beauty roads need to be protected. He recommended putting more benches in the parks.

Mr. Scharret stated that he is honored to have been connected with this effort. A tremendous number of hours have been put in by volunteers and staff. The City has the potential to receive \$3.25 million from HUD. Fred Zorn is working on a plan to submit to HUD. The timing for this plan is very good.

John Petty, ZBA, echoed the comments of Mr. Weigum. He is surprised by the all encompassing planning that is taking place. He appreciated Councilman Lantz's comments regarding fiscal responsibility. Developers need to be encouraged to do some of the things being done at LTU, such as geothermal roofs, energy saving, etc. Security needs to be enhanced. Northland Mall is practically a ghost town, probably due to security.

Mr. Banda replied that Crime Prevention meets with every developer that wants to build in Southfield. The developers are required to meet the conditions of the Police Department. The crime problem at the mall is more a perception problem than reality.

Council President Seymour stated that she is committed to green buildings and promoting green in the City. LTU did a great job with its new student center. She thanked everyone for their efforts.

There being no further business, the Regular Meeting (conducted as a Committee-of-the-Whole) adjourned at 7:50 p.m., October 23, 2008, until the next Regular Meeting on October 27, 2008, in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, 26000 Evergreen Road, Southfield, Michigan.

Joan Seymour, Council President

Nancy L. M. Banks, City Clerk