

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
CITY OF SOUTHFIELD  
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2011**

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**REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
CITY OF SOUTHFIELD  
NOVEMBER 16, 2011**

The Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Huntington, at 6:30 p.m., in the Council Study, 26000 Evergreen Road.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was taken by the Recording Secretary and a quorum for the meeting was established.

**PRESENT:** Commissioners: Bell, Culpepper, Griffis, Huntington, Leitner, Peoples  
Terry Croad, Planning Director  
Jeffrey Spence, Planner  
Connie Mays, Recording Secretary

**Chairman Huntington** – We need to approve the agenda.

**PC-49-11 MOTION by Commissioner Culpepper and seconded by Commissioner Peoples to approve the agenda.**

**AYES: 6**

**NAYS: 0**

**Motion carries.**

**Chairman Huntington** – Are there any announcements or communications?

**Planner Spence** – There are no announcements at this time.

**Chairman Huntington** – The next item on the agenda is the Amendment to the Southfield Master Plan. This would include a non-motorized transit study which is located in Chapter 9 of the Master Plan. Chapter 10 is just circulation. Mr. Croad, do you have a presentation for us?

**Planner Croad** – Tonight is an open public comment as part of a process in amending and updating the amendment. The specifics we are looking at are sidewalks, pathways and public transit facilities within the City of Southfield. This is part of an on-going process. As you recall, the Planning Commission held two workshops, one in October and one in November to prepare a preliminary outline of the transportation study. However, we are encouraging the public in an open forum to give us comments for or against the good, bad and the ugly with regard to pedestrian facilities, pathways and public transit facilities within the City tonight. Then in January we will have a draft plan prepared in working with the Planning Commission and will give the public an opportunity to view and comment on that draft plan. We will have another additional study session and a second public hearing. At that time, our Planning Commission will make a recommendation to City Council. We foresee this plan being brought before City Council in February, 2012 with request for their input and possibly adoption. There will be at least three opportunities that the public will have to give comment on the plan. Tonight is the first of the three public hearings. What I'm going to suggest to the public is give everyone at least five minutes. Please give your name and address and give us

your concerns, wishes and desires with regard to public transit and non-motorized facilities whether they be sidewalks or bike paths within the City. After the public comment period, you have a couple of maps that will be available to the public with some yellow sticky notes and some pens. We encourage the public to come up and make their comments about the proposed plan and where they would like to see additional pathways, where there are gaps, and where there are conflicts. We will take that information into consideration as we go through the plan.

**Chairman Huntington** – I would like to open this portion of the meeting to the public. If you have any questions or concerns, please step forward.

**Walter Mison** – My name is Walter Mison. I live at 22030 Rougewood right across from the Beechwood Recreation Center. We have a non-motorized path from Shiawasee to Nine Mile Road. It is used very frequently by people who are walking, bicycling and walking dogs, maybe their children. I think there is almost no time within the daylight hours that there isn't somebody using that path. We are happy to see that, but we are not happy that there is no way for them to go from Nine Mile to Ten Mile to access the beautiful Carpenter Lake Park. The only way that they can get to the park is by motorized vehicle. This is an area between Nine Mile and Ten Mile on Beech. We are definitely in favor of the proposal I see on the map. If there is any way for the City to put that path way in, my vote is for it. Thank you.

**Planner Croad** – I just want to encourage, before any of the citizens leave, to come and give us their name and contact information and we will make sure to specifically invite you to our next workshop in January.

**Stephanie English** – My name is Stephanie English. I live at 28735 San Carlos. I am with the Green Peace Homeowners Association, which is in the Twelve Mile/Lahser area. My concern of where and how I would like to see better access is the Twelve Mile point between Telegraph and Lahser. I believe that particular piece from Meijers until where the bridge is over the river is heavily used by pedestrians and I don't think that the City realizes how dangerous it is, but it is heavily used. There are residents from the Bell Road area, from Chanticleer that walk, I believe a lot of them are our younger people that may be using our mass transit areas. I've almost hit people, I'm a very good driver, but at night if they are walking in dark jackets or dark jeans, they have back packs on and you just can't see them. As you pass the bus shelter by Avis Ford that area is literally is pitch black. I've lived in my home for sixteen years and I can say, and I have two children, they used to walk from our home to the Meijers location when it was first built. I happen to be a bike rider, but I was very much concerned and had to ask my teenage son, even though he was big, that I was not comfortable actually walking with his friends from Meijers back home even though it was less than a mile away. I believe that I don't really have the expertise to even tell if it is feasible because there is a bridge and it is over the river, but again there is a need based on the traffic. We can't determine if they are all residents. I do feel that some are using it as transportation or a way to get from Telegraph or Lahser. It seems like a lot of them might be actually bus riders and I do want Southfield to be one of the suburban cities that are friendly to people that need mass

transit. I feel that that would be one of the areas. The other thing I would like to see is more shelters built. I happen to be a pro-active neighbor and I was concerned about those pathways that we have now where trees have overgrown them. Some of the neighbors don't even know that there is a path. That would be a public works or whoever is in charge of cutting trees actually looking at the road. Some people don't know that it has been active. Before we build more, we need to tend to the ones that we actually have. The last thing I would like to recommend is that we add more shelters to encourage walking, more exercise, more outdoors. I travel in Seattle. They have places just to sit, almost like Central Park. You can walk down any street and there is an enclosed area with a bench. They are rest stops so if you want to sit down you can sit down. They are built into the sidewalk. They call them pit stops. I think that would encourage walking activity also.

**Commissioner Peoples** – Can you please point to that area?

**Stephanie English** – For the Twelve Mile issue? That is on Twelve Mile between Telegraph and Lahser. As you pass the apartment complex, there is a dark area between Meijers and Bell Road. They do need a sidewalk there. You see kids walking on the curb and it just ends. There are a tremendous amount of young teenagers that use that route.

**Commissioner Culpepper** – Are you talking about the shelters that they have for the bus stops?

**Stephanie English** – Yes, it is just a recommendation to add. I think Ferndale has some. I would really like to benchmark and make our community more user-friendly and more walk-able. They don't have to be identified as bus shelters, but I would like them just identified as shelters.

**Gwendolyn Owens** – My name is Gwen Owens. I live at 22310 Leewright Avenue. I brought an issue from my newly organized Leewright Woods Association. I'm not sure if this is the forum that I should be bringing this up in. I have a question pertaining to old business and I'm not sure if this is old business or new business. It is concerning traffic along Leewright, Nancy, Carlton accessing McArthur School.

**Chairman Huntington** – No, this is not really the time for that. We are talking about non-motorized transit.

**James Bertram** – My name is James Bertram. I live at 21791 Carlton. I like Walter's approach to getting up to Carpenter Lake because that is a problem, but I'm also concerned that anything new that goes in that adequate consideration is made for maintenance. Now, I refer to the existing bike path along Nine Mile. It is not particularly good, it is bumpy and in some places, particularly west of Beech the trees hang over the path. It just needs attention. I would like to see that whatever is done there is a plan made to take care of the new paths.

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**Chairman Huntington** – Are you talking about the entire Nine Mile stretch or just a certain section?

**James Bertram** – Yes, but it is particularly troublesome west of Beech. We are bike riders and we do take advantage of those paths, but it would be nice to get up to Carpenter Lake.

**Chairman Huntington** – Any more comments?

**Rene Palmer** – My name is Rene Palmer. I live at 22250 Leewright Avenue. In regards to the bike path along Nine Mile, our street is off Nine Mile from Telegraph to Beech and then Beech to Inkster. In the section from Telegraph to Beech there are areas that the bike path is non-existent because it was right up to the gravel part of the road and it has since eroded. You can't even walk and be on the designated bike path. That area is used a lot for the children that are walking to the middle school. We just had some trees that were maintained at the end of our street because you couldn't have good vision at the stop sign. Also, someone utilizing the bike path could get hit so the City was nice enough to clear that out. There was talk at a certain point that it was on hold because the whole Nine Mile corridor was being addressed. It has kind of gone away. We had planning meetings. They had proposals and then nothing happened. Do you know anything about that?

**Planner Spence** – That was a project that was looked at around 10 years ago.

**Rene Palmer** – No, it was within 4 years.

**Planner Spence** – I think it was a little longer than that, but obviously part of that project and where that stood with the real estate market we could not put it together so it was shelved.

**Rene Palmer** – I would encourage you to take a look at that area because of the schools that are there. I know on our street we don't have sidewalks. They don't have much choice. I find that when I leave for work in the morning the bike path is on the south side of the road. Leavy is on the other side, so all the kids are walking on the dirt path on the side of the road on the other side. They are not utilizing the bike path because it is not adequate for them. I would appreciate it if you could take a look at that.

**Planner Spence** – I have a letter to read into the record from Mr. Ari Kresch. (Please see Attachment A)

**Commissioner Culpepper** – I would like to mention to the audience. Please do not forget, as Mr. Croad said, before you leave tonight take a look at the map and place a yellow post it note on the areas of concern.

**Planner Croad** – We did hand out a link. We have hired Freeway Collaborative to assist us in this plan. On their website, under projects, under Southfield, under Southfield

Vision, the public can go to the link and review all the study sessions, the power point presentations and all the draft maps so that you can be informed on the direction we are going. We will have all that information updated as we go through the process. We will have the information for public review in January. I would like to suggest, if nobody else has any specific comments, I would like to ask that we give the public the opportunity to come up and place their comments on the maps. Then, we will be available for questions and then we can officially close the public hearing and go on to other business.

**Commissioner Peoples** – I would like someone to address the lady that came up with the concern about the traffic at the charter school. What meeting does she need to show up to? I would also like to add for anyone here tonight to please join us in our other meetings as we discuss this particular subject because it is important that we get your comments and thoughts, even when it goes to City Council.

**Planner Croad** – We will cover this under Old Business.

**Merrie Carlock** – I am the park planner and am just here to say that we are in strong support of a non-motorized plan and particularly connections that bring people without their cars to our parks and enjoy parks and treating the whole city as a park kind of like Disney World where the whole place is a park. Whether you are not in a park and are just in a community and places where people go on vacation, they are always non-motorized and pedestrian. There is no reason why we can't make those improvements here.

**Planner Croad** – While you are here, do you want to give the Commissioners an update on Carpenter Lake Nature Center?

**Merrie Carlock** – It changes hourly, but on Monday night Council looked really closely at our finances. We have been very conservative in both the City savings for capital improvement projects and P&R and our capital improvement projects. We had about \$800,000 in grants that will expire soon. We are looking at all the pluses and minuses, plus support from Planning Commissioners and Council people. They voted to improve the project to go out to bid, so we are out to bid as of today. It doesn't have a basement so we'll be just dealing with piers that are underground, otherwise we will be under construction over the winter.

**Linnie Taylor** – My name is Linnie Taylor, 29221 Somerset Drive. As a former council person, this plan is going right along with the Master Plan. What you are looking at right now, I think was put together about five years ago. It's great to see that they are finally coming to fruition. In addition to some of the things that you see there, we were also looking at doing some smaller bus routes that would take you from Tel Twelve to Northland and/or Providence or over on Telegraph to maybe your bank. I am very happy to see that this is beginning to come to fruition. I am in support of this bike route because they are building your health and we know that Southfield is a healthy city. We look forward to doing things to encourage family fun and riding bikes is one of the things that we do.

**Ken Peterson** – My name is Ken Peterson. I live at 5000 Town Center. I happen to live on the third floor which gives me a unique perspective overlooking Civic Center Drive and the intersection with Evergreen Road all the way down to Central Park Boulevard. What I'm here to add is completion of the sidewalks, specifically on the north side of Civic Center Drive. We talk a lot about having a walk able city. We want to encourage pedestrian traffic to restaurants, the Library and other facilities. One shortcoming that we have currently is the sidewalks and I would like to see that completed. Thank you.

**Chairman Huntington** – Thank you, anyone else?

**Hassan Joad** – Good evening, Hassan Joad. I live at 26595 Evergreen Road. I am here to voice my support for the non-motorized transit study. I would like to see the further development of the sidewalks and bike trails, especially in our city center area. Specifically a clear path from LTU to the city center area for the students as well as one of the other schools that we have here, which is Specs Howard further down Nine Mile. I would like to see a clear path down Evergreen for both walking as well as bike paths, a continuation of the sidewalks would be nice to see. The implementation of bike racks at various establishments, businesses and office buildings to promote again a more healthy living style as well as an alternative to motorized vehicle travel in the area ultimately increases pedestrian traffic activity.

**Chairman Huntington** – If there is nobody else, we will close this portion of the meeting and open it up to the Commissioners for comments.

**Planner Croad** – I just want to make some final comments. I appreciate the public coming out and we welcome your comments and your partnership throughout the process. As I stated, we have given you the link for additional information. Feel free to contact our office for updates and if you haven't signed in, please make sure you do. We will send you an invitation to our future meetings. In closing, we are working on this for many of the reasons that have been stated here, but we want to encourage an active and healthy life style, to reduce fossil fuel energy consumption and provide more pedestrian friendly and accessible environment, to produce safety for pedestrians, to link destinations by non-motorized pathways and foster economic development, to increase the use of public transit facilities, to increase the quality of life for residents, businesses and visitors of Southfield, to leverage State and Federal funding sources, to offer mobility options for seniors, persons with disabilities and their families and finally to create a sense of community by encouraging pedestrian interaction. So for these various reasons, is why we are updating our Master Plan and it will only be truly successful if we have your participation and support. Again, thank you for coming out tonight.

**Chairman Huntington** – Do any of the Commissioners have any comments?

**Commissioner Bell** – I have a question. In redoing this proposed Master Plan map, the proposed walking path, trails and pathways in solid red are around the Lawrence Tech property. Has input been gotten from Lawrence Tech as far as providing that as a public

walkway?

**Planner Croad** – Through the Chair, as you know during the process of reviewing their dormitory site plan review, we had made a connection from the dormitory to Civic Center Drive. We talked about having a path right along Northwestern from Civic Center Drive to Ten Mile. There is an existing sidewalk along Ten Mile Road. Hopefully, even though it is shown as a triangle, there is a circular pathway throughout their whole campus that connects into Civic Center, Northwestern and Ten Mile. Representatives from Lawrence Tech have been invited to each of our workshops, but due to conflicts they have not been able to attend. There are distribution lists for this information. We are working closely with them on their overall pathway.

**Commissioner Bell** – The only reason I bring this up is because of a concern I have. I know they have many walkways through the complex already. By designating this as a public pathway, it seems to me that would be a lot more than just the college students being allowed to go through the campus on a regular basis. Is this the type of thing that we and they are trying to encourage?

**Planner Croad** – Through the Chair, we already have worked with them on some easements to allow us to have a pathway on some of their areas of the campus, but this is a draft plan. It is a work in progress. It might not be exactly the way it is shown in this draft map, but we are working in partnership with them.

**Commissioner Culpepper** – Through the Chair, I just want to say thank you for coming out again. We got the message loud and clear about the neighborhood routes. We will be looking at this very closely and, as Terry said you will be contacted to come back to make sure that you have a voice and viable part of this. I think this is great and is going to do a lot of things, but we are not trying to have a shortcut through your neighborhood. This was not designed to do this. It was designed to make it easier to get around the City without having to get in your car. You will be involved in all those decisions.

**Commissioner Peoples** – I would like to thank you all for coming out because this is what helps us do our jobs. We need your input. This is all of our city. It doesn't belong to just one or two of us. We're all one whole package. I was really pleased when I started seeing the people coming in. You have helped me see some things that I wasn't clear on.

**Chairman Huntington** – In closing I just want to say thank you for coming out. We appreciate the turnout. This plan is a long ways from being over. It is going to be a long process so just stick with us and together we can put together a really good plan. Thank you for coming. Next on the agenda is Old Business.

## **Old Business**

**Planner Croad** – Since one of the citizens raised this issue regarding the neighborhood surrounding McArthur School, in October, 2010 the City in partnership with the school

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district called a neighborhood meeting to address traffic circulation issues. We instituted some plans for circulation issues with Police Enforcement. Now that a year has gone by, we have re-scheduled a follow up meeting with the residents and neighbors at McArthur School Tuesday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. with representatives of the City, myself, the Police Department, Traffic Engineering, as well as representatives of the school district will be open to hear comments and concerns from the neighborhood association adjacent to McArthur School. The meeting will be held at McArthur School. I will bring back a report to the Commission.

**Chairman Huntington** – Any other business?

**NEW BUSINESS –**

**Planner Croad** – We don't have any at this time.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES –**

**PC-50-11 MOTIION by Commissioner Leitner, supported by Commissioner Culpepper to approve the October 5, 2011 Study Meeting Minutes and the October 19, 2011 Study Meeting Minutes.**

**MISCELLANEOUS –**

**Planner Croad** – I will be around after the meeting for a few minutes if any citizens have additional comments.

**Commissioner Bell** – The only thing I wanted to add is the number of training opportunities that are available to planning commissioners in the surrounding area. We need to make sure that we take advantage of these. Every time I go to one of these, I learn something. There are also Web training sessions that are free. All you have to do is just sign up for them. I am taking one this Friday and one of the issues that will be taken up is how to handle controversial meetings.

**Planner Spence** – I just want to remind you that we are not having a Planning Commission meeting because of Thanksgiving. We do have a meeting scheduled for November 30<sup>th</sup> where we will be discussing the Sustainable Energy Ordinance.

**PC-51-11 MOTION to adjourn.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

  
Secretary, Gary Leitner

1.25.12

Date

**See Attachments from this Public Hearing**

**Attachment A – Letter from Mr. Ari Kresch**

**Attachment B – Residents Sign in Sheet**

ATTACHMENT A

**From:** Ari Kresch [<mailto:akresch@1800lawfirm.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 16, 2011 6:26 AM  
**To:** Croad, Terry  
**Subject:** Non-Motorized Pathways

Dear Mr. Croad,

I wanted to commend and support your efforts to make Southfield more friendly to bicycle traffic. As you know, I am a big proponent of non-motorized transportation for many reasons. It promotes better health, community, reduces pollution, traffic congestion and allows us to be in closer touch with the natural beauty of our environment. I applaud your efforts to make non-motorized traffic "regular" and safe by designating specific paths that will promote its use.

As you know, I've chosen Southfield to be the future national headquarters for 1-800-LAW-FIRM. Part of our business culture is to be environmentally conscious as well as health conscious. Our intention is to promote bicycle use by providing bicycles to our employees for use during the day. If there were non-motorized paths within the city center area, I am confident, many of our staff would use them to dine in one of the many eateries on Evergreen. Additionally, ITT Tech will be sharing the building with us and they too will be installing bicycle racks for use by their students. Please let me know if there is anything that we can do to further support your vision to make Southfield a truly progressive city.

**ARI KRESCH**



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## ATTACHMENT B

11/16/11

Planning Commission Public Hearing  
 Non-motorized Transit Study

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE #
WALTER MISON	22030 ROUGEMOOD	248-358-5435
Rita Rousseau	21955 Carleton Av	248 354 2542
JAMES BERTRAM	21791 CARLETON	248 357 0186
HARSH JAWAD	26595 EVERGREEN	248-356-4960
MERRIE CARLOCK	CITY OF SOUTHFIELD PH12	
BOB PERSOON	5000 TODD @ Net 3300	248-356-4471
Linnie Taylor	29221 Somerset Dr, SFLD, MI 48076	248-569-7613
Stephanie English	28135 San Carlos SFLD, MI 48076	248-799-9216
Gwendolyn OWENS	22310 Leewright Ave SFLD 48033	248-352-4233
KATHLEEN GRASS	22265 LEEWRIGHT SFLD 48033	248-420-5168
René Palmer	22250 Leewright Ave	7-637-4532
Clude Arik	21770 Maplewood dr.	248-354-3551
Don E. Wilbur	24410 Fredrick	248.352.3047
Delores Wilbur	24440 Fredrick	248 352-3047