Planning Commission Minutes

Tuesday, October 20, 2026 at 7:00 PM
27400 Southfield Road, Lathrup Village, Michigan 48076

1. **Call to Order 7:03 PM**

2. **Roll Call**

   Hillman, Robinson, Grewer, Nordmoe, Clarke

   Grewer/Robinson for Hammond absence.

   Chairman Hillman announces the resignation of Commissioner Sharon Abraham, stating the new schedule the Commission is aiming for will interfere with her schedule.

3. **Pledge of Allegiance** 7:07

4. **Approval of Agenda** 7:07

   A motion is made to amend the agenda to add item 9A from 7A. Master Plan is now 9B. Motion is made by Robinson. Seconded by Nordmoe. Passes unanimously.

5. **Public Comment for Items on the Agenda** 7:09

   John Terra- praises the work on the Master Plan regarding Village Center to residential. Wants to address the Master Plan in general terms- Page 52 of the MP (105 of the Packet), cites a Farmer's Market that we do not have anymore. Adds that the document is excessively lengthy and should be reduced.

   Leslie Ballium- Really enjoyed the community open house, thanks Giffels Webster for their work. Read the presentation prepared for today's meeting, and has questions: Mostly regarding transportation, specifically Bike Paths. Additionally, questions implementation of the Plan. Cites 2012 ordinances that allows for up to 5 story buildings. Also wants to see the 3 historic buildings in the city be identified. Wants to see the green spaces stay green spaces. Parks and Rec had 59 responses that cited this as their own.

   Diane Anderson- Cites the new 501©4 founded "out of anger" for the work being done around the city, blames Giffels Webster. Does not believe the Master Plan reflects the city of Lathrup Village.

6. **Approval of Meeting Minutes** 7:20

A. Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes September 15, 2026

Commissioner Nordmoe identifies third bullet under 9B: Quote taken wasn't specific enough to what was said/meant. Referred to the homes, not the entirety of the Village Center.

"Commissioner Hillman proposed sections of the area currently identified as Village Center be identified as Residential Housing"

Nordmoe Moves. Seconded by Robinson.

Yay: Robinson, Nordmoe, Hillman, Grewer.
Nay: Clarke.

Commissioner Clarke identifies the later parts of that same discussion. Agrees with the point being made, but respects her point as been defeated.

7. **Public Hearing** 7:25

A. 28939 Southfield Road Special Land Use Application

Eric Pietsch from Giffels Webster presents. At the August 2026 meeting, the PC reviewed the first SLU for 28939 Southfield Road, and recommended Denial. City Council considered this, and agreed with the PC decision, citing the lack of demonstrated need. Applicant was advised to resubmit, which they did, and now we are back to discuss the SLU. Additionally, the applicant wants to extend their operating hours. Typically this is a variance request, however, the 2013 Special Land Use approval cited they had to operate from 7 AM to 11 PM. The SLU will essentially override the 2013 SLU. Eric reminds the Board that regardless of decision, this will go to City Council in November.

Hillman asks two procedural questions. One about recommendations and one about Public Comment. Is advised to let the applicant present, then make the two recommendations (operating hours and the SLU) together as one recommendation to the City Council.

Matthew Toma representing 28939 Southfield Road. He apologizes for the August meeting absence. Refiled on September 29th. There is no change to the physical building, only what they wish to sell inside. Presents the statistics prepared for the Commission. Identified that the business has no valid business license, but is working diligently to fix this.

Commissioner Hillman opens Public Comment to this Hearing.

Rick Wisz- Asks if we want two businesses right next to each other selling the same products. Also identifies item pricing, and cites the gas stations do not price their own products.

Pierre Dabish- Representing Vintage Village; cites possible oversaturation of the market with alcohol, states his concern is not because of competition, but safety, especially with drunk driving.

John Terra- Can't comment on pricing policy because he doesn't buy snacks, but does identify that pricing is a cause of issues at gas stations.

Diane Anderson- Doesn't like the time to end business hours. 11 PM is too late. Also identifies the traffic issue along Southfield Road and 12 Mile, quotes the days of the 1950's. Identifies that intersection as very dangerous, and believes that allowing for alcohol sales there would make it even more dangerous.

Leslie Ballian- Asks if competition is a bad thing. If someone wants beer when they get gas, what's the harm?

8. **Old Business and Tabled Items** 7:43

9. **New Business** 7:43

A. 28939 Southfield Road Special Land Use Application (Discussion)

Chairman Hillman asks for discussion from the dais. Commissioner Robinson speaks first, agrees to a possible oversaturation in the market of alcohol sales (especially when considering outside of Lathrup Village city limits). Does not believe the need is demonstrated even with the presentation.

Commissioner Grewer has questions: After BP got alcohol license, sales for alcohol went up, which meant that sales in the area for alcohol went up. Asks if the Market were saturated, then the addition of a new point of alcohol sales would make sales go down in the area (because they would go to different locations). Asks about Per Capita of Households (I got lost in the sauce here, may want to consult the video).

Asks Baker about procedure; can the Commission make value judgements, or if they are bound by law. Chair Hillman does agree that the data presented makes sense for a business. The standard for approval of the SLU requires data that proves need but believes need and demand could be two different things. Asks how the business bridges the gaps between need and demand.

Hillman: If the ordinances demands quantifiable need, how does the data presented define that need? It shows the demand from the business perspective, but not the need in the area from the consumer.

Robinson states that her comment was based on demonstrated need, and the business being in such close proximity to other businesses that sell the same, where is the need? There can be demand that is fulfilled by other businesses, but is there a need?

Grewer asks how quantifiable need is assessed? Property owner adds by asking what the Commission feels the need is, or what they want quantified so if they are denied again, they can come back with the information people want. Also notes the comments made during the Public Hearing- he can't do anything about Diane Anderson's complaints about how this isn't the 1950's, but does cite Rick's comments about pricing and will investigate- it is in the hands of a wholesaler that does their stock, and should be priced by them.

Nordmoe makes comments that he pre-wrote. He used artificial intelligence to answer four questions. The pre-written statement will be added to public comment at his behest.

Clarke adds her own thoughts: Citing comment made by property owner that "Labor is a challenge", asks if that is an issue, then isn't alcohol going to be an issue or additional challenge? Citing Nordmoe's packet about business proximity to local businesses, 8.8% of the population is under 15, while 11% is 15-21 years old; wants to know about safety concerns since this is just under 20% of the population. Says she would oppose based on the community aspect, and has concerns that the community may be harmed by the sale of more alcohol. However, her opinion will not drive her decision; she has to follow the laws (by her own words).

From the review of the ordinance standards, she cites #3 from the memo, #5 from the memo,

Matthew Toma wants to address some comments. The comment about labor being an issue is more saying that labor has changed between now and the last 50 years. They assure the commission they can handle it. They also identify that a lot of the thoughts by the Commission are opinions, and they state they need to review the facts that have been provided. Cites the 2024 SLU from BP, and how BP brought up the same points they are bringing, and they were approved. They also note traffic- they are not adding traffic, just adding convenience to their customers. They share a parking lot with a dedicated liquor store.

Grewer: "If it's convenient for customers, it's convenient for kids". Toma counters, saying that comment is a hypothetical that is an entirely different point. They are reading the ordinances as written and satisfying the need presented.

Chair Hillman is stuck on quantifiable need, so asks one question: How many residents of Lathrup Village do not have access to a retailer that sells packaged alcoholic products. He does not believe that the quantifiable need quota is met so long as this question is unanswered.

Grewer asks Attorney questions (check the video, I got caught up in the discussion 8:20ish).

Robinson asks if the city will be penalized for adding new licenses. Attorney Baker says there is no legal precedent and in fact, the State has expanded the means for businesses to add licenses through the years.

Baker also adds that they cannot operate outside of their hours because their 2013 SLU forces them to stay open from 7 am – 11 pm, and that they cannot get relief from ZBA, only a SLU (since that is what binds them to begin with). Toma adds that they would hold alcohol sales from 7 am – 11 pm, while their store hours would be from 6 am – Midnight.

A motion is made to recommend denial of the Special Land Use Application for 28939 Southfield Road, for packaged liquor license under 6.2.10 E and H of the Zoning Ordinance, and citing that the Applicant failed to demonstrate a quantifiable need by Commissioner Clarke, seconded by Commissioner Grewer. Motion passes unanimously.

Commissioner Nordmoe makes a motion to approve the SLU for 28939 Southfield Road operating hours of 6 AM, closing at 11 PM per the Zoning Ordinance. Commissioner Robinson seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

B. Master Plan First Draft Initial Discussion

(9:00) Hannah Prins with Giffels Webster introduces the first draft of the Master Plan document for the Planning Commission to review.

Nordmoe asks about the Future Land Use (FLU) map and how 12 Mile is now zoned the same as most of Southfield Road for the business district. Eric identifies it as Mixed Use now. Nordmoe also notes that he wasn't able to review the entirety of the draft but did consult SEMCOG data, and it shows Lathrup Village lagging behind neighboring communities in housing development. He also notes age disparity and how we have the greatest gap between young and older residents in the region. This ratio is not reflected specifically, but the median age comparison is reflected in the new draft, according to Giffels Webster staff.

Chair Hillman praises the changes to the Future Land Use map. His question pertains to the Village Center district specifically the triangle lots. He asks if they should stay zoned Village Center, or zoned Parks. The Board discusses the matter and they believe there is room to expand away from formal parks to designated green spaces. After context is provided by Attorney Baker and DDA Project Coordinator Tom Kennedy, the Commission determines the best course of action is to keep the Village Center as is, but add Green Space elsewhere.

Giffels Webster staff ask if the map is accurate to the Commission's desires. The Commission agrees. Giffels Webster staff also asks the Board to provide insight to the zone descriptions on Page 45 of the draft.

The Commission is asked if they want to schedule another Study Session regarding today's topic(s) of the draft. Their discussion leads more to a regular meeting, but perhaps they would be interested in scheduling an earlier regular meeting.

Commissioner Nordmoe identifies that there is nothing in the Master Plan that relates to the youth, specifically teenagers. He recommends the Commission push the Master Plan to reflect that teens require activities to be more welcome and feel more a part of the community. Commissioner Clarke agrees, but identifies that this may be more for civic groups than the Planning Commission.

The Commission also chooses to defer the rest of the discussion until the November meeting. This discussion will be continued in November.

10. **General Communication**

A. Virtual Planners Gathering - Oakland County Training

Janet Bloom presents to the Board a training provided by Main Street Oakland County

11. **Public Comment**

John Terra- Speaks a little to the triangle lots in conjunction with the Master Plan. He also identifies a very small lot that is owned by the city but is not marked on the map. To the Triangle Lots, he cites the proposal received and researched the company, calling them a

renovation company that hasn't done anything of this scale. The proposal is very tight townhomes, the numbers don't add up to him.

Leslie – Says she wants to see the green spaces saved, or even preserved as is. She wants them to be zoned, and wants them to be recognized by Oakland County. She also says it's premature to sell the lots without a plan.

Diane Anderson- Asks why the Planning Commission won't go after Preservation Michigan so historic homes can gain grants to restore their homes. Calls architecture important. Urges to reconsider the "failure to deal with historic preservation".

12. **Other Matters for Discussion**

Chair Hillman appreciates the attendance of those who were here at the meeting during the duration of the city council meeting yesterday.

He also shouts out Cliff Grant, who takes care of City Hall and led the effort to set up the community center very quickly when over 200 people showed up for Study Session. Calls him invaluable to the city and the greatest asset to the team.

13. **Adjourn**

Nordmoe makes a motion to adjourn. Robinson seconds.