



CITY OF MADISON HEIGHTS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

April 8, 2025 **(DRAFT)**

Council Chambers – City Hall

300 W. 13 Mile, Madison Heights, MI 48071

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Champagne called the meeting of the Madison Heights Planning Commission to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Josh Champagne
City Manager Melissa Marsh
Commissioner Eric Graettinger
Commissioner Ryan Fox
Commissioner Colton Smith
Commissioner Grant Sylvester

Also Present: City Planner Matt Lonnerstater
Assistant City Attorney Tim Burns
Business Services Coordinator Mary Daley

Absent: Mayor Roslyn Grafstein, Mayor Pro Tem Mark Bliss, Commissioner Cliff Oglesby

3. EXCUSE ABSENT MEMBERS

Motion by Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Graettinger to excuse Commissioner Grafstein and Oglesby.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Marsh, Commissioner Eric Graettinger, Commissioner Ryan Fox,
Commissioner Colton Smith, Commissioner Grant Sylvester, Chair Josh Champagne

Motion carries unanimously.

4. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

Motion by Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Sylvester to move new business ahead of public hearing.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Marsh, Commissioner Eric Graettinger, Commissioner Ryan Fox,
Commissioner Colton Smith, Commissioner Grant Sylvester, Chair Josh Champagne

Motion carries unanimously.

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion by Commissioner Graettinger, seconded by Marsh to approve the minutes of the regular Planning Commission meeting of January 21, 2025.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Marsh, Commissioner Eric Graettinger, Commissioner Colton Smith, Commissioner Grant Sylvester, Chair Josh Champagne

Abstain: Commissioner Ryan Fox

Motion carries.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT - For items not listed on the agenda

Chair Champagne opened the floor for public comment at 6:16 pm. Seeing none, Chair Champagne closed public comment at 6:16 pm.

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. Temporary Use Request # PTMPU 25-02 - 27591 Dequindre Road - Temporary Sand Staging/Storage

Chair Champagne opened the floor for public comment on this item at 5:34 pm. Seeing none, the Chair closed public comment at 5:35 pm.

Planner Lonnerstater introduced the temporary use request. The applicant and property owner, Whitehill Six, LLC, on behalf of Crown Contracting & Industrial, requests Temporary Use approval from the Planning Commission to operate a temporary sand staging and storage yard associated with the ongoing I-696 renovation project. The property is located at 27591 Dequindre Road.

The applicant and property owner requests Temporary Use approval to lease a portion of their property to Crown Contracting & Industrial for the staging and storage of sand which will be removed from the roadbed of I-696 as part of the ongoing reconstruction project. The property is approximately 3.6 acres in area and is currently vacant but was previously developed with a landscaping business and storage yard.

This is zoned as O-1 Office and temporary sand staging and material storage is not explicitly listed as a permitted Temporary Use under Section 7.03.43. No other material other than sand and gravel will be placed at the area per the applicant.

Planner Lonnerstater made note of some adjacent land uses that are important to consider. The subject property is located directly to the north of a medical office building and is approximately 200 feet from the Henry Ford Madison Heights Hospital (formerly Ascension Macomb-Oakland Hospital). Property to the west and north is vacant and wooded. The site is approximately 850 feet from the single family residences on Park Court to the west and 350 feet from the Solberg Tower Apartments and Madison Tower Apartments to the North.

Staff reviewed this application and had several concerns as detailed in the packet:

- Impacts on the medical offices
- Dequindre Road is under Macomb County Dept. of Roads and they will require right-of-way permit and gravel curb cut to be replaced with a paved approach
- Vehicular Access and Circulation
- Sedimentation Control permit may be required through OC Water Resources Commission
- Visual impacts

Motion by Sylvester, seconded by Marsh, that the planning commission hereby approves temporary land use request number PTMPU 25-02 for temporary sand staging and storage at 27591 Dequindre road based upon the following findings:

1. In accordance with Section 7.03.43 and Section 15.08 of the Zoning Ordinance, the applicant requests Temporary Land Use approval for the temporary staging and storage of sand, gravel, and associated aggregates removed from I-696 as part of the ongoing reconstruction project.
2. Temporary material storage is not explicitly listed as a permitted Temporary Use in the Zoning Ordinance. Per Section 15.08.4, the Planning Commission may consider temporary uses not specifically permitted nor deemed similar by the Planning and Zoning Administrator, provided that the use complies with all other relevant development and operational standards for the use as provided in the Zoning Ordinance.
3. The proposed sand staging and storage use generally complies with the use-specific standards applicable to all Temporary Uses as contained in Section 7.03.43. of the Zoning Ordinance.

APPROVAL IS GRANTED WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS

1. Outdoor storage and staging of sand and gravel, and the placement of temporary office buildings and parking, shall be restricted to the areas shown on the sketch plan provided by the applicant as part of this application.
2. No permanent buildings or structures, defined as those with a permanent foundation, shall be permitted on site related to this Temporary Use.
3. Existing landscaping shall be preserved and maintained along the southern property line to screen the temporary use from the medical office building to the south.
4. A minimum eight (8) foot-tall fence or wall shall be installed between the staging, parking, and office areas and the Dequindre Road right-of-way. The fence or wall shall be opaque and shall be anchored to the ground. Fabric mesh or wood inserts may be utilized for screening purposes.
5. The existing parking lot located on the east side of the site, which is in disrepair, shall not be used as part of the operation of the Temporary Use.
6. Details of proposed security lighting shall be provided to the Community & Economic Development Department. Lighting levels shall comply with Section 8.04 of the Zoning Ordinance – *Exterior Lighting*.
7. Trucks shall not arrive or operate on site prior to 6 a.m. nor after 10 p.m.
8. The applicant shall obtain all necessary permits from the Macomb County Department of Roads (MCDR). If driveway improvements are required by MCDR, additional permits, including concrete permits, may be required through Madison Heights Community & Economic Development Department. Approved external permits shall be forwarded to the

Madison Heights Community & Economic Development Department prior to commencing operation of the Temporary Use.

9. As requested by Macomb County Department of Roads (MCDR), an industrial vacuum truck shall be placed on site for sediment removal.
10. The applicant shall obtain all necessary permits from the Oakland County Water Resource Commissioner (WRC), including Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control permits. Approved external permits or waivers shall be forwarded to the Madison Heights Community & Economic Development Department prior to commencing operation of the Temporary Use.
11. This Temporary Use approval shall only be valid for a period of two years from the date of Planning Commission approval. One (1) 12-month extension may be granted by the Technical Review Committee, upon review, if all other conditions continue to be met. Any extension of this time frame beyond 36 months from the date of Planning Commission approval, or any significant departure from the operations and conditions initially approved, shall require new approval from the Planning Commission.
12. All site improvements made to accommodate this Temporary Use, and all materials, vehicles, equipment, and temporary buildings associated with this Temporary Use, shall be removed upon completion of the operation.
13. Prior to the commencement of the Temporary Use, a site plan guarantee bond shall be deposited with the City of Madison Heights in accordance with Section 15.04.7 of the Zoning Ordinance.
14. Prior to commencement of the Temporary Use, the Technical Review Committee shall review the revised sketch plan for consistency with the aforementioned conditions.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Marsh, Commissioner Colton Smith, Commissioner Grant Sylvester, Chair Josh Champagne

Voting Nay: Commissioner Eric Graettinger, Commissioner Ryan Fox

Motion carries 4-2.

B. Temporary Use Request # PTMPU 25-03 - 434 W. 12 Mile Road - Lowes Outdoor Accessory Sales and Storage

Chair Champagne opened the floor for public comment on this item at 6:16 pm. Seeing none, the Chair closed public comment at 6:16 pm.

Planner Lonnerstater introduced the Temporary use request that was received from Lowes of Madison Heights located at 434 W. 12 Mile Road. Lowes is requesting Temporary Use approval to utilize a portion of their designated parking lot on the south side of their building for the storage of bagged mulch, dirt, stone, and other seasonal landscaping materials. The storage area takes up approximately one hundred (100) designated parking spaces. A drive aisle is proposed through the storage area to allow vehicles to enter and load materials. This type of temporary use is classified as "Temporary Outdoor Display/Sales" per Section 7.03.43 of the Zoning Ordinance (Temporary Uses). The applicant is requesting the outdoor seasonal sales area for approximately eight (8) months, from March to the end of October 2025.

While the existing enclosed Garden Center was approved as part of the original site plan, the area proposed for the temporary outdoor storage is formally designated as parking on the approved site plan. Lowes has operated a seasonal storage yard in the same area for at least the past six years. Because the previous Zoning Ordinance prior to 2024 did not contain clear language or administrative processes

for temporary or seasonal uses, prior iterations of this outdoor storage area were approved under the Temporary/Seasonal Business License process through the Clerk's Office. However, the new Zoning Ordinance adopted in 2024 now contains explicit standards and processes for temporary and seasonal uses necessitating a more detailed review and approval process. The Commission discussion revolves around the change in the zoning ordinance which is why the applicant was required to apply for a temporary use permit as opposed to their annual temporary seasonal business license.

Staff reviewed the request and detailed the following concerns:

- Vehicular circulation is impacted.
- Drive aisle has materials on it
- Vehicular and Pedestrian Safety to allow for clear vision corners to the southeast and southwest corners of the storage area
- Visual Impacts of the storage area particularly because their request is for eight months out of the year

To avoid the need to return for temporary use approval year after year, staff recommends Lowe's explore the construction of a permanent outdoor storage area on the site either enclosed by a masonry wall, decorative fence, or permanent landscape screen.

Chair asks for discussion, questions, or comments. It was suggested that the manager of Lowe's return to their corporate office to share the details of what was discussed at the planning meeting and to allow them to revise their strategy. At the next meeting, the Planning commission would essentially be reviewing Lowe's plan for a more permanent solution that would allow them to operate outdoor storage for a full eight months. The application and conditions we recommended has an end date. There would be an exact date set in which the materials would have to be removed from the site.

Motion by Fox, seconded by Graettinger to deny PTMPU 25-03 for the following reasons:

- **The applicant has various other modes to conduct outdoor sales, such as expansion of their current outdoor garden center**
- **Potential to negatively impact the development of neighboring parcels**
- **Potential for litter and debris dispersing in the area in extreme weather conditions**

SUBSTITUTE MOTION

Motion by Marsh, seconded by Sylvester, to postpone action on this temporary use request to allow the store manager time to speak with Lowe's corporate office about a permanent outdoor storage area solution and to return to the May 20th Planning Commission meeting to present their updated plan.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Eric Graettinger, Commissioner Marsh, Commissioner Colton Smith, Commissioner Grant Sylvester, Chair Josh Champagne

Voting Nay: Commissioner Ryan Fox

Motion carries.

C. Major Site Plan Request # PSPR 25-01 - 32650 Stephenson Hwy. - Residence Inn Conversion to Multi-Family Residential

Planner Lonnerstater introduced the proposed site plan approval from the applicant, L2L Madison Heights, LLC to convert the existing Residence Inn Extended Stay hotel, located at 32650 Stephenson Hwy. into a multi-family residential apartment complex featuring 101 residential units. The hotel is currently zoned MUI-2 and is 4.2 acres in area.

The subject property currently features twelve (12) separate guest suite buildings and one (1) gatehouse/clubhouse building. The applicant intends to convert the existing 96 hotel guestrooms into a combination of studio, one-bedroom, and loft-style apartment units, and construct five (5) additional units in the gatehouse building, amounting to a total of 101 residential units.

Per Section 15.04.3(D) – Major Site Plans – lists several scenarios where Planning Commission approval is required; per this section, any residential development with more than fifty (50) units requires Planning Commission approval. While no formal public hearing is required for by-right use, this project involves a total of 101 residential units, requiring Planning Commission review and approval.

Staff reviewed the proposed project and is in support of this request with some minor modifications for the following reasons as detailed in the packet:

Vehicular Access and Circulation will be maintained.

Pedestrian Access and Circulation – the existing sidewalk network will remain around the site and some connections will be improved per staff recommendation. A painted, hatched crosswalk shall be added across the main drive entrance into the site and new sidewalk connection and crosswalk should be added running north/south in the same area. The sidewalk connection to Stephenson Highway is technically located on the adjacent industrial property. Staff recommends the applicant should confirm that a pedestrian access easement is recorded; If not, the applicant should work with the adjacent property to record a pedestrian access easement to ensure that residents can safely walk to the Stephenson Highway sidewalk.

Vehicular parking is sufficient along with proposed bicycle parking. Additional ADA spaces should be provided.

Landscaping – Landscaping meets the minimum requirements. This project is an adaptive reuse of an existing site so existing landscaping may be used to satisfy ordinance requirements. Staff informed the applicant that they should attempt to bring site landscaping into greater conformance with the Zoning Ordinance than it exists today. The applicant has submitted a Landscape Plan which highlights existing trees and new landscaping, particularly on the south side.

Exterior Lighting - Eight (8) existing pole lights will be maintained, with five (5) new poles installed throughout the site.

Stormwater - An “Aquaswirl” stormwater quality control structure is proposed within the southern drive aisle.

Design Standards for Multi-Family/MUI-2 - Given that this project represents an adaptive reuse of an existing site and existing buildings, staff finds that the project generally satisfies the design standards of the MUI-2 district.

Site Amenities - Proposed site amenities include a basketball court, fire pit, barbeque, dog walk, and central laundry area. The site currently features an outdoor pool.

Dumpster Enclosures - Two dumpster enclosures are proposed for the entire site: one in the northwest corner and one in the southeast corner. We don't have a minimum number of dumpsters required.

Number of Units – Site Plan Amendment - The site plan denotes five (5) new units in the gatehouse building, for a total of 101 residential units. In a supplemental letter dated February 10th, 2025, the applicant indicates that, depending upon unique circumstances, they may or may not construct all five of these new units. Staff suggests they could submit an administrative site plan amendment if they decide not to proceed with the five units in the gatehouse building.

The Planning commission proposed some questions for the applicant. It was recommended that maple trees are not used and black gum trees should be considered instead. It was also suggested that the applicant offer recycling. Another consideration should be given to adding speed signage and partnering with the Madison Height Police Department to add cameras. The applicant was amenable to suggestions and will research them.

Motion by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Smith, that, following discussion, the Planning Commission hereby approves major site plan request number 25-01 for a 101-unit multi-family residential apartment project at 32650 Stephenson highway based upon the following findings:

- 1. The applicant requests Major Site Plan approval to convert an existing hotel use into a multi-family residential use, featuring 101 total units, at 32650 Stephenson Highway, as permitted by Section 3.21 of the Zoning Ordinance, MUI-2 district.**
- 2. Contingent upon several conditions, the proposed Major Site Plan is consistent with the site plan review standards and criteria set forth in Section 15.04.5 of the Zoning Ordinance. In particular:**
 - a. The site plan is in substantial compliance with applicable site design standards contained in the Zoning Ordinance.**
 - b. The location of existing development features, including principal and accessory buildings, open spaces, parking areas, driveways, and sidewalks minimize possible adverse impacts on adjacent properties and promote pedestrian and vehicular traffic safety.**
 - c. Existing and proposed landscaping is of such a design and location that the proposed development's impact on existing and future uses in the immediate area and vicinity and on residents and occupants is minimized and harmonious.**

APPROVAL IS GRANTED WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

1. The Major Site Plan is approved for a total of one-hundred and one (101) residential units, including five (5) new units in the gatehouse building. If, in the future, the applicants choose not to move forward with all or any of the new gatehouse units, they shall be eligible to apply for an administrative minor site plan amendment through the Community and Economic Development (CED) Department to reflect the reduced unit count.
2. The following site plan modifications shall be included on a revised site plan, for final review and approval by CED:
 - a. Add a painted, hatched crosswalk across the main drive entrance into the site, as shown in the image included within the staff report dated March 10th, 2025. Additionally, add a new sidewalk connection and crosswalk running north/south in the same area as denoted within the image.
 - b. Confirm that a pedestrian access easement has been recorded for the existing sidewalk connection on the adjacent property to the west. If an easement has not been recorded, the applicant shall work with the adjacent property to record a pedestrian access easement. If an easement cannot be obtained, the applicant shall work with CED staff to provide a pedestrian connection to Stephenson Highway via the site plan amendment process.
 - c. Remove a minimum of two (2) parking spaces to comply with the maximum parking calculations.
 - d. Add one (1) additional van-accessible parking space in the northern parking area.
 - e. Provide at least one (1) additional bicycle rack with a minimum of three (3) hoops on the eastern side of the site to allow for better access to bike parking facilities.
 - f. Install additional shrubs adjacent to the new parking area along the southern property line to shield headlights shining onto the adjacent hotel use.
 - g. Details regarding the location of the stormwater quality control structure shall be confirmed, and may be modified, as part of final Engineering Review.
 - h. Provide information regarding anticipated trash generation and the adequacy of two (2) dumpster enclosures for the entire site; additional dumpster enclosures may be approved administratively by CED on a revised site plan.
 - i. Clarify whether or not the existing outdoor pool will remain; if proposed to be removed, this shall be reflected on a revised site plan for approval by CED.
 - j. Replace all proposed trees of the Acer genus (Maple) with alternative deciduous canopy tree type(s) as listed in Section 11.09 of the Zoning Ordinance
 - k. Install signage around the site to discourage vehicular speeding within the drive aisles.
 - l. Explore opportunities to coordinate with the Madison Heights Police Department for the installation of Flock cameras within the site.

3. **Following the approval of a revised site plan by CED, the applicant shall submit for Final Engineering Plan review and a Site Plan Guarantee deposit in accordance with Section 15.04.**

Voting Yea: Commissioner Fox, Commissioner Marsh, Commissioner Eric Graettinger, Commissioner Colton Smith, Commissioner Grant Sylvester, Chair Josh Champagne

Motion carries.

8. PUBLIC HEARING - Special Land Use Request # PSP 25-01 - 31691 Dequindre Road – Major Auto Repair and Service

Chair Champagne opened the hearing for public comment at 7:22 pm. Seeing no one from the public wished to speak, the public comment portion was closed at 7:23 pm.

Planner Lonnerstater introduced the Special land use request from the applicant, Ogeen Kada, to operate a Major Auto Repair and Service business at 31691 Dequindre Road, zoned M-1, Light Industrial; tax parcel # 44-25-01-426- 028. The property is located on the west side of Dequindre Road, north of Whitcomb Ave. The subject property is 2.25 acres in size and is currently improved with a 15,000 square-foot light industrial building, asphalt parking lot, and an outdoor storage area (improved with gravel) at the rear of the building. The building and site most recently operated as a landscape supply store.

The applicant intends to repurpose the building into a full-service auto repair and collision shop and used auto dealership; provide exterior façade improvements to the building; demolish and reconstruct the parking/storage areas with a new asphalt parking lot; and install new landscaping around the site.

While used auto sales is permitted by right on the property subject to site plan review, auto repair and service requires Special Land Use approval.

The applicant addressed the Commission. Mr. Kada explained that collision vehicles will never be visible from Dequindre. He said they are leaving their flagship location to move to Madison Heights. The location is perfect for their needs and it will be a multi-million-dollar investment to the community.

Motion by Commissioner Fox seconded by Commissioner Graettinger, that, following the required public hearing, the planning commission hereby recommends that city council approve special land use request number PSP 25-01 for a major auto repair and service facility at 31691 Dequindre road based upon the following findings:

1. **The applicant requests Special Land Use approval for a Major Auto Repair and Service facility at 31691 Dequindre Road as permitted by Section 3.17 of the Zoning Ordinance, *M-1 Light Industrial District*.**
2. **The Planning Commission held a public hearing for PSP 25-01 at their April 8th, 2025 meeting.**
3. **The proposed Major Auto Repair and Service use is consistent with the special land use review standards and criteria set forth in Section 15.05.3. In particular:**
 - a. **The use is designed, located, and proposed to be operated in a way that protects the public health, safety and welfare.**

- b. The use will not involve activities that will be detrimental to adjacent industrial land uses.
 - c. The use is designed and located so that it is compatible with the principal uses permitted in the M-1, Light Industrial district.
 - d. The use is designed and located so that it is compatible with the Madison Heights Master Plan and the Industrial future land use designation.
 - e. The design of this auto-centric use minimizes nuisance and blight as the repair uses and operations are contained within the building.
4. The use satisfies the use-specific standards for Major Auto Repair and Service facilities as contained in 7.03.2 of the Madison Heights Zoning Ordinance and is in general compliance with site design standards contained within the Zoning Ordinance.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Eric Graettinger, Commissioner Marsh, Commissioner Colton Smith, Commissioner Grant Sylvester, Chair Josh Champagne

Voting Nay: Commissioner Marsh

Motion carries.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair opened the meeting to the public at 8:10 pm, seeing no one wished to speak, the public comment was closed at 8:10 pm.

10. MEMBER UPDATES

Newly appointed Commissioner Ryan Fox introduced himself to the Planning Commission. He has been a resident of Madison Heights for three years. He is a planner by trade and is currently a municipal planner. His interests do include landscaping and reforestation.

Newly appointed Commissioner Colton Smith introduced himself to the Planning Commission. He is grateful for the opportunity to be in a position to be a voice for the public.

Commissioner Grant Sylvester addressed his desire to improve the local bus stops throughout the City. His passion project is to be able to improve the bus stops to make them more humane and welcoming for local residents.

11. PLANNER UPDATES

Per Planner Lonnerstater, we will be beginning our master plan update which is required per state law every five years. The master plan was last completed in 2020. We will be ensuring the updated Master Plan will be in accord with the updated zoning ordinance. Planner Lonnerstater asked the Commission members to review the master plan if they are able to prior to the update discussions.

The Safe Streets for all plan working with several other southeastern Michigan communities is almost nearing its final draft with the anticipation it will be presented to Council by the end of summer.

11 mile streetscape plan will begin construction in mid-June.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Champagne adjourned the meeting at 8:19 pm.