



PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

CITY OF NOVI
Regular Meeting
August 5, 2026 7:00 PM

Council Chambers | Novi Civic Center
45175 Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI 48375 (248) 347-0475

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Pehrson, Member Reddi, Member Avdoulos, Member Roney, Member Verma

Absent Excused: Member Lynch, Member Dismondy

Staff: Lindsay Bell, Director of Planning; Elizabeth Saarela, City Attorney; Brad Doane, Planner; Humna Anjum, Project Engineer

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Pehrson led the meeting attendees in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by Member Verma and seconded by Member Avdoulos to approve the August 5, 2026, Planning Commission Agenda.

ROLL CALL ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 5, 2026, PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA MADE BY MEMBER VERMA AND SECONDED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS. Motion carried 5-0.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Chair Pehrson invited members of the audience who wished to address the Planning Commission during the first audience participation to come forward.

Ms. Julie Gold at 22032 Greentree Road stated that she would like to speak about development in general. It was expressed that Novi residents have recently navigated water main breaks and boil water advisories. Ms. Gold suggested that development projects could be placed on hold until repairs to the water main are complete to reduce burden on the system. Related to the Providence Meadows proposal; Roberston Brothers has stated that the entrance to the proposed development being from Providence Parkway as opposed to Grand River Avenue satisfies traffic mitigation. However, once traffic leaves Providence Meadows utilizing Providence Parkway, it will have to exit onto Grand River Avenue or Beck Road adding congestion to already busy roads. The only entrance to the hospital is also from Providence Parkway, traffic congestion could impede emergency vehicles or those bringing sick patients to the emergency room. It was noted that the developer has stated that the townhomes would provide affordable housing for hospital staff. However, hospital staff may not be able to comfortably afford to live in the townhomes. Ms. Gold requested these issues be considered when reviewing the rezoning request.

Ms. Ann Nelke at 48646 Windfall Road stated that she would like to thank the Planning Commission for taking the time to hear comments and for their representation of Novi residents. It was stated that Novi created the Zoning Ordinance and a Master Plan for Land Use so as to ensure the community would be

developed mindfully. Ms. Nelke relayed that the project on the agenda this evening JSP26-0008 Optimus Sports Training Facility is an example of how Novi's future development can occur. The project fits within the zoning designation of the parcel and no ordinance changes are requested. It is compatible with the adjacent use of land in terms of size, character, and impact. It is also consistent with the Future Land Use Map. Additionally, it is a perfect example of redevelopment, doing so with minimal impact on the environment. Of the 228 trees on site 219 are regulated woodlands, only 29 trees are proposed to be removed. More importantly, the independent site study of these trees found 90% of the trees to be in fair or poor condition. Ms. Nelke relayed that she took the time to go to the Planning Department to review the latest set of plans for the Providence Meadows project. In contrast, this project is asking for a major zoning change from I-1 Light Industrial to RM-2 High Density Multi Family to construct 26 buildings with 157 units. It appears they will offer a few ranch options to work around zoning and state an added benefit. The Providence Meadows proposal is not consistent with the Future Land Use Map. Additionally, of the 869 trees on the site 481 are slated to be removed, all of which are in good condition with an average trunk diameter of over 12". Merjent, the independent site reviewer, did not recommend approval of the project. Their review deemed parcel 50-22-17-101-012 meets all the criteria for regulated woodlands and was omitted in error from the City's woodland map, this is where Phase 1 is proposed with 12 buildings and 71 units. Likewise, acres of wetlands and vernal pools were found on this parcel, and as such their claim that only 6 regulated trees will be removed is misleading. Their derived benefit to the community is missing middle housing, complete with a synthetic turf field to be placed over existing natural features. Should one drive west on Grand River Avenue, the missing middle housing can be found with the Hudson Townhouses. Should anything be approved to be developed it appears that the parcel furthest north should be the one, as it has the least negative impact on the environment and would front Grand River Avenue. In closing, Ms. Nelke stated she has been a resident volunteer of the Novi 2050 plan. At the last City Council meeting an update was given by the group conducting the project. The presenter stated that an added module should be included concerning environmental sustainability and conservation, with the focus on maintaining our natural features for current and future generations.

Ms. Martha Ryznar at 44875 Yorkshire Drive stated that she has been a resident of Novi for twenty-three years. It was relayed that 6,100 mature trees are due to come down due to rezonings in the City. It was expressed that it is legally defensible to say no to developers. Ms. Ryznar stated that the Providence Meadows project will come before the Planning Commission as a rezoning with the developer requesting a zoning change from Light Industrial to High Density Residential. Four hundred signed opposition letters have been turned into the City requesting denial of Providence Meadows. The site is approximately seven football fields of woods, wildlife, and wetlands. This is the only remaining contiguous corridor for wildlife movement. Many residents feel Novi is becoming a concrete city. Respondents of the 2050 visioning workshop used the term hyper-development, with 61 percent of residents responding that managing growth is the number one most important initiative. Residents are asking the Planning Commission to curb rapid development. The strongest priority across the 2050 community visioning process is protecting green space. The Sierra Club has officially come out opposing Providence Meadows. If the property is developed under the current Light Industrial zoning more trees and wetlands could be preserved. The developer purchased the land with knowledge of the zoning. Ms. Ryznar stated fear of developer litigation should never replace leadership for the City.

Ms. Patricia Shaw at 26065 Whipple stated that she has lived in Novi for twenty-eight years. It was stated that there is concern regarding the City West District located on the north and south side of Grand River Avenue from Taft Road to Beck Road. The area consists of two hundred and fifty acres to be developed with housing, a hotel, restaurants, and a grocery store. Ms. Shaw expressed that she does not believe a person, their children, or their grandchildren wants to be raised in a concrete city. We have been given the gift of forests, greens, and animals which are not ours to keep taking. We need to look at our conscience and there comes a day and time to say no to further development. Trees keep the environment clean and green; they are home to birds and a shelter for animals providing shade and oxygen. We cannot live without trees, but we can live without further development.

Ms. Michele Duprey at 48566 Windfall Road stated that she has been a resident of Novi for forty-two years and has seen many changes over that time. It was noted that there used to be a horse farm in Novi. What

has been seen recently is mega development. Ms. Duprey expressed that she would like to thank the applicant for the property at Providence Meadows for their contribution to Grand River Avenue, however, is against the rezoning for several reasons. First, the designated zoning does not contemplate residential use. Residential use for these parcels is not in concert with the Master Plan for Land Use that was approved just over a year ago. Additionally, the City West project that was discussed at the last City Council meeting involves housing. It was suggested that the City see where that project goes before deciding if the Providence Meadows rezoning is reasonable. The infrastructure, transportation, traffic, public safety response times, environmental sustainability, burden on schools are all concerns. Ms. Duprey stated it is for these reasons she is against the rezoning.

Seeing no one else, Chair Pehrson closed the first audience participation.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was not any correspondence.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Committee reports.

PLANNING DIRECTOR REPORT

There was no Planning Director report.

CONSENT AGENDA - REMOVALS AND APPROVALS

There were no consent agenda removals or approvals.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. JSP26-08 OPTIMUS SPORTS TRAINING FACILITY

Consideration at the request of ZAF Investments for approval of Special Land Use, Preliminary Site Plan, Stormwater Management Plan, and Woodland Use Permit. The subject site is located at 43700 W. Twelve Mile Road and consists of approximately 4.34 acres (Section 10). The applicant proposes opening an athletic training center.

Planner Brad Doane stated the subject site is approximately 4.34-acres and is located on the north side of Twelve Mile Road, east of Carlton Way Drive. The property is zoned OS-1: Office Service, as are the adjacent properties to the east and west. The property to the north is zoned RA: Residential Acreage, while the properties south of Twelve Mile Road are zoned RC: Regional Center. The Future Land Use map designates the subject site and the adjacent properties to the east and west as Community Office. The property to the north is designated Multiple Family, and the properties to the south are designated Commercial Mixed-Use. Wetlands and woodlands are present along the eastern portion of the site.

The applicant is proposing interior modifications to the approximately 15,500 square foot existing building to establish a private training facility serving athletes and active individuals of all ages, sports, and skill levels. Within the OS-1 District, private indoor and outdoor recreational facilities require Special Land Use approval from the Planning Commission. The Special Land Use considerations include potential impacts on traffic, public utilities and facilities, natural features, and surrounding land uses.

Associated site improvements include parking lot upgrades, new landscaping, a natural grass soccer field west of the building, and an artificial turf field east of the building. No exterior modifications to the building are proposed.

Planner Doane stated that landscape waivers are requested for deficiencies related to required berms along the north and west property lines, the placement of foundation landscaping, and the required percentage of building perimeter landscaping. All waivers are supported by staff due to existing typography and site constraints. The project also requires a Woodland Permit for removal of 29 regulated

woodland trees, resulting in a requirement of 63 replacement credits. The applicant proposes to plant approximately 41 replacement trees on site, with the remaining 22 credits to be paid into the tree fund. The wetlands located on the site will not be impacted by the proposed development. Stormwater will be collected by a single storm sewer collection system and discharged to an underground detention system.

Representing the applicant this evening is Engineer Erin McMachen. Staff are also available for any questions.

Chair Pehrson invited the application to address the Planning Commission.

Ms. Erin McMeachen with Stonefield Engineering and Design stated that they are the civil engineers on the project. Also representing the project this evening is Mr. Jordan Vassum and Mr. Zack Caswell with Optimus Sports Training Facility.

Mr. Caswell stated that over the last decade he has been a high-performance Team USA coach for all Olympic sports going into quadrennials. The facility in Novi will be as close to an Olympic training facility as the one located in Colorado Springs. It was noted that there are a lot of athletes from Michigan as well as the surrounding regional communities who are looking for elite training in their sport. In addition to Olympic training, Optimus supports youth sports by working with various high schools throughout the region. It was relayed that they work with athletes not only on strength and conditioning but also offer rehab management tailored for their sport.

Mr. Joran Vassum relayed that he is a partner on the project and has known Mr. Caswell for twenty-five years. He stated he is an attorney by trade and founded a Sports Management firm approximately four years ago. Mr. Vassum expressed that during his time working in the field he has sent countless athletes from all over the country to elite training facilities. It was noted that there are no facilities of this nature in the area. In collaboration with Mr. Caswell the idea of bringing an elite training facility to Novi took shape.

Ms. Erin McMeachen stated she would like to provide further detail on the site improvements. The site has been vacant for quite some time and is in need of maintenance and overall improvements. The interior of the building will be renovated, and the parking lot will be expanded and repaved. The entrance drive from Twelve Mile Road will be repaired with the current curb cut being maintained. Additional site improvements include a proposed stormwater facility which is an underground detention system per City and County requirements that discharges to the wetlands on site. A permit was obtained from EGLE last month for that discharge to the wetlands. Additionally, a large number of landscaping improvements are proposed throughout the site working with the existing footprint to cause minimal impact. Tree removal is at a minimum and the wetlands and wetland buffers will not be impacted. In terms of landscaping there are three waiver requests. The first is for the berm on the north side of the property abutting City owned land. The landscape architect on the project worked closely with the City's landscape architect Mr. Meader regarding the berm, and it was concluded that it would be more appropriate to do a single row of evergreens along the property line to preserve existing trees and maintain the established drainage flow of the property. The other landscape waiver requests pertain to the percentage and location of foundation plantings. The existing building has quite a few doorways and few overhead doors at the rear along the artificial turf area which will be maintained to allow movement between indoor and outdoor training areas, which limits the locations in which foundation plantings can be placed. In working with Mr. Meader, the lack of foundation planting has been supplemented throughout the parking area of the site. The site has many natural features which have been thoughtfully designed around. It was stated that due to all the reasons detailed this evening the team believes that the project meets the criteria for Special Land Use approval. The project is not a detriment to the surrounding properties or traffic. Additionally, is it not a detriment to public facilities as the site is serviced by a private well and septic system. It is a benefit economically for the City and complies with zoning and the Master Plan for Land Use.

Chair Pehrson opened the public hearing and invited members of the audience who wished to speak to approach the podium. Seeing no one, and confirming there was no correspondence received, Chair Pehrson turned the matter over to the Planning Commission.

Member Reddi stated she has no comment.

Member Verma stated he has no comment.

Member Roney stated that he applauds the applicant for finding an existing building that has been vacant for quite some time and reutilizing it. He relayed that the packet noted that there will be a conservation easement placed over the woodlands and wetland areas and asked for confirmation regarding the easement.

Ms. McMeachen stated that there will be a conservation easement placed over the trees identified as woodlands as well as the wetlands on the site.

Member Avdoulos stated that he appreciates the reuse of an existing property and the care that the team took in working with the existing site conditions. Having a facility like this in the City adds to what Novi already has with some world class facilities.

Motion to approve the JSP26-08 Optimus Sports Training Facility Special Land Use Permit made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Roney.

In the matter of JSP26-08 Optimus Sports Training Facility, motion to approve the Special Land Use Permit based on and subject to the following:

1. Relative to other feasible uses of the site:

- i. The proposed use will not cause any detrimental impact on existing thoroughfares in terms of overall volumes, capacity, safety, vehicular turning patterns, intersections, view obstructions, line of sight, ingress and egress, acceleration/deceleration lanes, off-street parking, off-street loading/unloading, travel times and thoroughfare level of service. *(The proposed recreational facility is not anticipated to have detrimental impacts – traffic generation is expected to be minimal, existing site access will remain unchanged, and adequate parking is provided.);*
- ii. The proposed use will not cause any detrimental impact on the capabilities of public services and facilities, including water service, sanitary sewer service, storm water disposal and police and fire protection to service existing and planned uses in the area. *(The proposed recreational facility is not anticipated to adversely impact public services or facilities. Existing utilities and public safety access will remain unchanged, and stormwater will be managed on-site.);*
- iii. The proposed use is compatible with the natural features and characteristics of the land, including existing woodlands, wetlands, watercourses and wildlife habitats. *(The proposed recreational facility is compatible with the site's natural features and maintains its natural character by minimizing impacts to existing woodlands and wetlands, with disturbed trees replaced in accordance with ordinance requirements.);*
- iv. The proposed use is compatible with adjacent uses of land in terms of location, size, character, and impact on adjacent property or the surrounding neighborhood. *(The proposed recreational facility is compatible with adjacent land uses, as the existing building is consistent in scale and character with surrounding uses. The facility will serve as a transitional, community-oriented use within the area.);*
- v. The proposed use is consistent with the goals, objectives and recommendations of the City's Master Plan for Land Use. *(The project supports the economic development objectives and land use framework of the Master Plan);*
- vi. The proposed use will promote the use of land in a socially and economically desirable manner. *(The project contributes to economic development and the redevelopment of a vacant building and site);*
- vii. The proposed use is listed among the provision of uses requiring special land use review as set forth in the various zoning districts of this Ordinance. It is in harmony with the purposes and conforms to the applicable site design regulations of the zoning district in which it is located.

This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Article 3, Article 4, and Article 5 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance.

ROLL CALL ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE JSP26-08 OPTIMUS SPORTS TRAINING FACILITY SPECIAL LAND USE PERMIT MADE BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER RONEY. *Motion carried 5-0.*

Motion to approve the JSP26-08 Optimus Sports Training Facility Preliminary Site Plan made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Roney.

In the matter of JSP26-08 Optimus Sports Training Facility, motion to approve the Preliminary Site Plan based on and subject to the following:

- 1. A Landscape waiver under Section 5.5.3.A.v for deficiency in berm requirements on the north and west sides of the site due to existing topography and proposed landscape screening, which is hereby granted;**
- 2. A Landscape waiver under Section 5.5.3.D for location of building foundation landscaping not being located immediately adjacent to the building due to site constraints. A portion of the building foundation landscaping will be located away from the building to satisfy the intent of the ordinance, which is hereby granted;**
- 3. A Landscape waiver under Section 5.5.3.D for deficiency in required percentage of building perimeter landscaping as the deficiency is minor and the overall required landscape area is exceeded by the proposed landscaping, which is hereby granted;**
- 4. The findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters and the conditions and the items listed in those letters being addressed on the Final Site Plan.**

This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Article 3, Article 4, and Article 5 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance.

ROLL CALL ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE JSP26-08 OPTIMUS SPORTS TRAINING FACILITY PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN MADE BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER RONEY. *Motion carried 5-0.*

Motion to approve the JSP26-08 Optimus Sports Training Facility Stormwater Management Plan made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Roney.

In the matter of JSP26-08 Optimus Sports Training Facility, motion to approve the Stormwater Management Plan based on and subject to the following:

- 1. The findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters, and the conditions and items listed in those letters being addressed on the Final Site Plan.**

This motion is made because it is otherwise in compliance with Chapter 11 of the Code of Ordinances and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance.

ROLL CALL ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE JSP26-08 OPTIMUS SPORTS TRAINING FACILITY STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN MADE BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER RONEY. *Motion carried 5-0.*

Motion to approve the JSP26-08 Optimus Sports Training Facility Woodland Use Permit made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Roney.

In the matter of JSP26-08 Optimus Sports Training Facility, motion to approve the Woodland Use Permit based on and subject to the following:

- a. The findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters, and the conditions and items listed in those letters being addressed on the Final Site Plan.**

This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Chapter 37 of the Code of Ordinances and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance.

ROLL CALL ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE JSP26-08 OPTIMUS SPORTS TRAINING FACILITY WOODLAND USE PERMIT MADE BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER RONEY. *Motion carried 5-0.*

2. PSLU26-0005 LITTLE BUILDERS LAND - WITHDRAWN

Chair Pehrson stated that PSLU26-0005 Little Builders Land has been withdrawn and no action will be taken on this matter.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. APPROVAL OF THE JULY 22, 2026 PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Motion to approve the July 22, 2026 Planning Commission Minutes.

ROLL CALL ON MOTION TO APPROVE THE JULY 22, 2026, PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES MADE BY MEMBER RONEY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS. *Motion carried 5-0.*

CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS FOR COMMISSION ACTION

There were no consent agenda items.

SUPPLEMENTAL ISSUES/TRAINING UPDATES

There were no supplemental issues or training updates.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Chair Pehrson invited members of the audience who wished to address the Planning Commission during the final audience participation to come forward. Seeing no one, Chair Pehrson closed the final audience participation.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the August 5, 2026, meeting made by Member Roney and seconded by Member Avdoulos and all in favor said aye.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.