



CITY OF NOVI
Beautification Commission
Wednesday, May 14, 2025 6:00 p.m.
Mayor's Conference Room
Novi Civic Center | 45175 Ten Mile Road

Call to Order: 6:01 p.m.

Roll Call – Gareth Crawford, Yogesh Kumar, Dinesh Seksaria, Mary Angela Winter, Torry Yu

Present – Gareth Crawford, Dinesh Seksaria, Torry Yu

Absent Excused – Yogesh Kumar, Mary Angela Winter

Approval of Agenda

Motion: Yu; Seconded: Crawford; Approved: 3:0

Approval of Minutes – March 12, 2025

Motion: Crawford; Seconded: Yu; Approved: 3:0

Chair – Vacant

Secretary – Torry Yu

City Liaison – Kate Oppermann

Purpose of the Meeting

1. Election of Commission Chairperson

As only 3/5 of the Commissioners were present for the meeting it was decided to postpone the election of a new Chairperson to a date with more attendance.

2. Addendum to 2025 Neighborhood Entryway Enhancement Matching Grant Program

Ms. Oppermann explained that this late addition for the 2025 cycle appears before the Commission now because a clerical oversight caused the valid Neighborhood Entryway Matching Grant application from Walden Woods II to be inadvertently omitted from the initial review process. Upon identifying the error, the applicant was contacted and staff proceeded with the normal review process. The grant program is funded at \$25,000 per cycle and for 2025 total amount recommended previously was \$14,316.50. As such, sufficient funds remain to support Walden Woods II's additional request of \$4,325.50, should the Beautification Commission and the City Council choose to support it.

The Commission recognized that Walden Woods II was an older subdivision requesting the grant for the first time. Their entryway has been well maintained but is due for improvements. The Commission was pleased to see that a special effort was being made to remove invasive buckthorn from the area. It was noted that none of the new plants planned as additions to the landscape were native, they hope that the HOA might consider working to add some native specimens either as part of this project or in the future.

Following discussion, the Commission determined to make the following recommendations to City Council:

To recommend approval granting the Neighborhood Entryway Enhancement Matching Grant Program award to Walden Woods II for \$4,325.00.

Motion: Yu, Seconded: Seksaria; Approved 3:0

3. Arbor Day Recap

Commissioner Crawford thought that the event went great, several people came to the table to talk in addition to participating in the sapling giveaway. He did think that it may be worth consideration of an inside space for future events in the event of cold, rainy days like the one we had this year. Commissioner Seksaria agreed and suggested that for future events a flyer or brochure specific to the Beautification Commission could be produced to pass out. He also suggested clearer advertising of our participation at the event, this could also increase the notice of our Bee City USA status and efforts.

4. Bee Hives

Ms. Oppermann shared that a small group of city staff was very excited to participate in the introduction honeybees to their two new hives in the undeveloped "back 30" section of Bosco Fields Park on 5/8. Fire Cpt. Theisen did a marvelous job with the installation and walking everyone present through the process. We hope to see the bees thrive over the coming year and, should the hives prove viable, will consider related public programming. Commissioner Seksaria suggested we could look to other communities as well as the Bee programming at Tollgate Farm as examples.

Roundtable Discussion

1. Social Media – discussion postponed due to absence of Commissioner Kumar who requested the topic.

2. Commission Mission Statement

Commissioner Crawford shared that he brought up the topic of the Mission Statement as the most recent version is nearing 20 years old. Commissioner Seksaria agreed that it has been many years and could be updated for the current Commission. Commissioner Yu agreed that it was worth examining the existing statement and work as a group to

either revise it or retain it if they feel it still applies. Commissioner Crawford stated that he plans to draft an example of a new, possibly more defined, mission statement for the next meeting. The rest of the Commissioners agreed to make their own notes as well and discuss the matter further as an agenda item in June.

Public Comment: none

Adjournment: 6:37 p.m.

Motion: Yu; Seconded: Crawford; Approved: 3:0