

**CITY OF WIXOM
PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING
TO INCLUDE A WORKSHOP STUDY SESSION
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
MONDAY, JULY 24, 2006 – 7:30 PM**

Chairman Day called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm.

PRESENT:

William Day, Chairman
Phillip Carter
Jim Crowley
Kurt Gottschall, Vice Chair
John Lee
Cheryl Tacy
Guy York

CITY CONSULTANT:

Carmine Avantini, LSL

CITY STAFF:

John R. Lipchik, Building Official

RECORDING SECRETARY:

Jennifer Garrett

ABSENT:

James Maher (unexcused)
Patrick Fitzpatrick (excused)

There being a quorum, the meeting was declared in session.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

There were no minutes listed on the agenda to be approved at this meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE:

There was no correspondence received for this meeting.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

There was no public present for public comment.

NEW BUSINESS:

There was no new business received for this meeting.

DISCUSSION:

Ford Motor Company

Mr. Lee began by saying he didn't want to step on Mr. Avantini's presentation, but the thought is that he knows something is going to happen within the year; and based on what those of us at Ford heard in the last couple of weeks, he wouldn't be surprised if the plans even get accelerated just because of the nature of their business. It seems to him that we ought to be in a position where we don't just accept what happens there but that would try to provide some kind of guidance of what we would like to see. Whether or not we do it as an overlay or whether or not we change the zoning and maybe get some ideas out, he is interested to see what the consultant thinks about this. When we think about this he would like to also think about the other properties we have, and one that comes to mind is the Atmospheric Furnace property that could come up within the next year to year and a half as well. He stated while it is a little bit different he would think that might be maybe an opportunity we should look to possibly expand the VCA District so we get a little balance on both sides of Wixom Road. Again, it could be an overlay situation

such that if someone does want to change the nature of that parcel it would blend in a little better with the Poota development, with the gas station, the Auto One; and he would think it would balance out the whole property of the downtown rather than having the industrial use in the downtown. He stated we could even consider going beyond Korex which would complete that whole quadrant. He stated this is just discussion. It is important that we bring this up, make some decisions; and if it is necessary to make a recommendation to Council we should before it gets too late.

Mr. Lipchik wondered what he was hearing out of Ford.

Mr. Lee stated he is not hearing anything out of Ford. All he hears is that things are tough and there could be an announcement probably within 60 days, and he thinks the board meets in the middle of September. Nothing will be announced probably until after the board clears it, so he is going to guess by mid-September we are all probably going hear about it. There is no question that what was said on the news is that the plans have got to be sped up. What that means, he doesn't know. He said anyone that drives by this plant realizes there is not a whole lot of action going on inside. It makes sense to him that maybe some of these plans get accelerated, but that is just observation.

Mr. Lipchik indicated he just thought Mr. Lee (being one of those Ford land guys) might have heard something.

Mr. Lee said he is not in that section of Ford land. He is in Ford land but is not in that section of Ford land. He could tell us if he knew, but he doesn't know.

Mr. Avantini stated the timing is really actually pretty good because they are getting ready to kick off with the zoning ordinance. He said the September workshop meeting they are anticipating will be a meeting where they give the board an opportunity, before they really get rolling on the zoning ordinance, for two things. One is to present to the board the blue print, which is basically the format, the table of contents and the game plan for putting it together. Second, he said it is an opportunity for the board to throw out your list of things you have seen in the zoning ordinance, projects and so forth. He said they are going to be doing quite a bit of work leading up to that, but at that particular session the board just might want to think about that and put it on their calendars. If the board does have a laundry list of things in the zoning ordinance (pet peeves or whatever they might be) that would be a good opportunity to throw those out there. That doesn't mean that beforehand the board can't ship a list off to them because they already got a list from Mr. Lipchik, and they are coming up with their own list of things they have been keeping track of that they would like to see change. He stated maybe some of the things the board brings up would be a duplication of things they have brought up, but it is better to bring them up because it might be something they didn't think about.

Mr. Avantini went on to say the reason the timing on this is so good is if there are going to be any changes at the plant that they are anticipating, as Mr. Lee said, now is a good time to reflect that in the zoning ordinance and make changes to the ordinance so it could be redevelopment-friendly. He stated there are a lot of other steps that can be taken here, other things that can be done; but what we can control right now is the future zoning and potential for redevelopment on that site and also to plan out what the possible uses are which is what they looked at. There is a gentleman on their staff named Val Lazdins who has been involved in these types of projects his whole career. Before joining their firm he was at one point actually with a firm called LDR International who had done this type of work all around the world. When he threw this at him and said look they just want some conceptual ideas, initial ideas as to how this site might be redeveloped, they did take some opinions from different folks on the staff here before they came up with this; but it is basically just an opportunity for you to start looking at different options, different ideas and to talk about those and talk about what direction you might want to go in the future redevelopment

Mr. Avantini stated obviously with a parcel of this size, redeveloped, this property could generate maybe 3,000 jobs whereas right now maybe they are looking at 500 jobs. There could be a significant improvement in the overall value of this land to the City, not just in terms of tax base but also employment and visual impact. This is obviously an entranceway into the City, a gateway; and what happens here positively can have a great impact on people's perception of the City of Wixom because for good or for bad the first impression most people have of Wixom right now is the Wixom Plant because it is on the highway. You would like to think their first impression is the downtown, the Village Center Area; and it is not.

Mr. Avantini continued by saying they did not get real specific on it. They wanted to keep it fairly generic, and it is a starting point for discussions (what they saw here). Some of the key opportunities they saw were (One) improving the visual image of Wixom from I-96. He thinks the other side, on the north side, the Alpha Tech project and the hotel there has a nice image for the City for the entryway in. The Ford Plant is not necessarily so. We have an opportunity to upgrade that. (Two) is the road connections with the business parks to the northwest. Something we want to think about as we are planning this out is that there is a potential to connect with those and to improve our traffic circulation so not everything has to dump out onto Pontiac Trail and Wixom Road. We can do things internally which may also create synergy between the other business parks and the companies we have there and the ones that may locate there in the future.

(Three) is the site backs up to Lyon Oaks Park. He thinks just having that there gives some opportunities to the rear of the property that maybe aren't just industrial in nature. Maybe there are other uses we could look at for that reason. (Four) is the traffic light to the entrance of Alpha Tech Drive. They talked about this many times. They have raised the issue on reviews that the light really needs to be moved and located there at Alpha Tech Drive. Maybe with the redevelopment there, that will give us the opportunities to do that. Finally, (Five), the potential mixture of uses can create new employment and tax base opportunities. Once again, maybe we will have 1,000 people working there instead of hundreds of people working there.

Mr. Avantini commented that they came up with a series of concepts and said he would do his best. They put this together quite a while ago, and it was a lot fresher in his memory than in terms of the specifics of their discussions; but he would do his best to recreate and recall all of that. He explained a concept that showed the Lyon Oaks Park and a commercial area. Then farther north on Wixom Road they had what they were calling Office Industrial which could be R & D (Research and Development) type facilities, maybe similar to what we have in some of the industrial parks right now. He said as you move farther north they showed actual rail-served industrial, more traditional industrial type uses. He explained that doesn't mean it has to be heavy industrial. It could still be light industrial, but the thought was to make that gradual transition where you have high quality commercial working its way into R & D and then up into industrial. He remarked that once again this was just a concept, and he would run through the rest of the concepts. The commissioners could obviously pick and choose and take out different things they like and don't like. He noted too that they do have road connections in there that tie up into the industrial parks to the northwest.

Mr. Avantini indicated what they were showing on the next concept instead was that they did still have the commercial component, a commercial node right near the interchange; but they actually have higher density residential backing up to the park like he had talked about being a feature or something we could take advantage of. When you move farther north they go back into the office or industrial and in fact at that point we may want it to be more of an office type use than an industrial (given the proximity to the residential) then working its way back up to the rail-served industrial.

Mr. Avantini stated one of the things they wanted to talk about was the Midlink Business Park, and this ties into the third concept they looked at. He said the reason we brought this up is not because it is something we want to emulate, but it kind of shows the advanced banking they did for this particular piece of property when they found out it was going to be closed. It's what he believes is a GM Plant in Kalamazoo which had closed, and what they did was ended up taking a progressive look at it like we are now. Instead of waiting for something to happen here, let's be progressive and get this site redeveloped and look at an alternate mixture of uses on the site. Actually what they did was split the building into two, basically gutted both buildings and redid them completely so they would look brand new.

Mr. Lee wanted to know if "they" were GM or a private developer.

Mr. Avantini replied it is a private developer. He thinks it is a development corporation that actually put this into effect because he doesn't know an awful lot about it. Midlink did offer a tour if this board was interested in going to tour the facility and finding out more about how they did this, in addition to their website. They said they would be more than happy to give a tour of the facility and some background on it. He explained that what they have in the blue is an industrial distribution zone. They have a retail corridor, and they also have some office buildings that are located on it. They came up basically with a concept plan for the redevelopment. That was one of the first things they did, and this was one of the buildings they rehabbed and one of the entryways to it. He felt you can tell it was a big industrial building, but one of the things he noticed with the photos too was that they kept the buildings but when they rehabbed the buildings they also made the entire site look nicer and different with landscaping and greenery. That is something we might also want to think about if it isn't a complete teardown for the Ford Plant. He also showed a photo of the inside of one of those buildings.

Mr. Lipchik asked what they are using those buildings for now.

Mr. Avantini replied that his understanding was that it is available for lease at this point but once again, he doesn't know all the details for this. He can either get more information on where they stand right now (because this was at least three or four months ago) or he can set up a visit with them.

Mr. Lee asked how old of a project it is at this point.

Mr. Avantini said he wasn't even sure. It is a recent project.

Mr. York offered that it is within ten years anyway because GM moved out of the facility in the early 90's.

Mr. Avantini stated obviously to be able to do this with the facility we would have to be pretty progressive. He next showed a photo of the aerial view and said you can see where they split it down the middle. He commented they don't have a lot of the other buildings that were shown on the concept plan yet, but they are taking steps at least to move in that direction. The thing he really liked about it was the organization was really well done. They did a nice job putting it together. He noted that actually they had on there a Hackman Capital Partners Property, so it is set up through a private developer; and the website is www.midlinkbusinesspark.com if you want to look it up. The nice thing is that they have all the amenities listed, and they actually have a promotion program out there to go out and market it and look for the tenants on it. But they have their act together, are organized and are pushing forward with the redevelopment.

Chairman Day asked where the money came from.

Mr. Avantini replied that he doesn't know but his guess is that in terms of a private developer like this if this is a large enough development they bring in their own resources and fund the whole thing. His guess is (especially for the Ford Plant here) if you brought in the right developer they can afford to buy a property like this and redevelop it the way it needs to be done. This is not the type of effort that you want a small time developer to come in and take a look at. It is too capital-intense to be able to do the redevelopment.

Mr. York stated he didn't know if anyone here was familiar with Centerpoint up at South Boulevard and Opdyke, but that whole GM Truck and Bus facility from Updyke west to Woodward was redeveloped and in very much a similar way, taking a plant that was built between the 30's and the 60's, added on to many times, and created that same kind of thing.

Mr. Crowley said he knows what he was talking about because he had worked up there for a while.

Ms. Tacy asked who moves in and who the users are.

Mr. York replied in that particular case (because GM Truck and Bus still had a presence up there) he thinks a lot of them were GM suppliers that moved in.

Ms. Tacy said she guessed her question in looking at any of these is that we have Ford moving out, and that was the job security of old. If there is so much a proverbial crystal ball looking ahead, she asked what jobs we should be looking to entice. What are the jobs of the future? She guessed she is leaning more towards what type of facility and what type of zoning do we need to have in place to entice the high tech, the aerospace and those types of things that are clean industries and so forth.

Mr. Avantini stated when you look at where the new employment is coming from anyway it really does in the future potential seem to be in the technology end of things. It is the mental not the physical labor.

Ms. Tacy said her husband happened to mention an article in the Ann Arbor News, and we all heard Google is coming. She mentioned that they said they are looking at providing 1,000 direct jobs plus it would create an additional 1,200 related jobs in Michigan just to support what is going on in Ann Arbor alone. They are saying how it would support not only the struggling real estate market and bolster it, but it would bolster the retail and service sectors. She said there is so much we would gain if we have the right property or the right development sitting there, so she wants to make sure we are poised to look good for something of that nature to come in and move in. What do we anticipate the job market being? What is it that we should be looking ahead to enticing?

Mr. Avantini stated that is really going to be one of the key questions in the redevelopment. Anybody who redevelops this, any firm that redevelops this, is going to do their homework and take a look at that and do their market research but also look at what the trends are, what types of companies are attracted to Michigan.

Ms. Tacy asked if we wait for them or if we do some of that homework ourselves so we are already set up and looking attractive.

Mr. Avantini replied that is the big question. It all depends. Obviously the City could look forward and have market research work done, at least some big picture to get an idea of what the possibilities are. There is nothing wrong with that. Whoever comes in will do their own work and probably be more detailed because they are going to have a lot more money at stake.

Ms. Tacy stated she guessed she was wondering if there is a way to posture ourselves (if we were to do research to some extent) to determine what is out there that could be gained. Can we then kind of position ourselves with the State to say hey we have this prime piece of real estate? We have done some research, and this is what we are looking towards. This is what we would love to see. Can the State then offer some incentives to corporations that are looking to make a home here? That is not her ball of wax and she doesn't know how that goes about, but certainly she wants to make sure they are advertising themselves to the best of their abilities.

Mr. Lipchik said unfortunately a lot of times once the State is involved they are looking at the community giving tax incentives or tax breaks, and he doesn't know if overall that is the best idea for the community itself.

Ms. Tacy inquired if we kind of let it be known to the State that we have a prime piece of real estate it might actually work against us, and Mr. Lipchik replied yes.

Mr. Lee stated he didn't disagree with what Mr. Lipchik had said because the experience has always been when you get the State Economics they are looking for incentives to bring those companies in. Not that it is always a bad thing. We have gotten some big companies in the City because of that, but you are giving up some of your tax base in order to bring them in and hope they are going to stay. The City has given Ford an awful lot of tax incentives over the years to keep them to stay, and now they are going. He thinks we would be better off to look to someone with Oakland County Economics versus the State because they are more geared to the Automation Alley concept and not as much in the way of incentives as it is marrying proper partners with the property.

Mr. Lipchik said we have had a lot of contact with Oakland County also and he could give a couple of examples. Jatco and Ceradyne have both received tax breaks from our community. Jobs are jobs, and that is a good thing; but you might want to be real cautious.

Mr. Lee stated looking at the new technologies one that he doesn't believe received a tax abatement was Trijicon, which is state of the art optics for military and practical applications. This community has been able to attract a lot of those businesses that have a very diverse base. He said one of the questions he would have with the property (and he doesn't have a problem with what he has seen so far but rather than saying maybe what we want) maybe we should look at what we don't want up there so that starts to push some of the people in directions, saying if someone wants to come in and put in a massive warehouse he isn't too interested in having a warehouse there himself. He doesn't want to turn the building into a massive transfer station for shipping over-the-road trucks. Maybe if we approach it that way and eliminate some of the uses then we can start to blend out.

Ms. Tacy stated it allows you to focus in on what it does. It forces you around the back way. On board, she doesn't want it to just go to waste with some big box over there. She is looking to create jobs in the area that hopefully then those people would want to live in the area and buy our new downtown. They would also then support the commercial retail aspects of our community as well. She wants to draw bodies in, not just a big building.

Mr. York said he was thinking along the same lines, and maybe Mr. Avantini was going to get into this. His thought was, are there lessons learned in Midlink of what the city or the municipality in that area did or could have done as a planning commission to ease, create or make that happen faster or more easily? He inquired if that was in Mr. Avantini's discussion.

Mr. Avantini stated in terms of implementation we can set the whole site up as a planned unit development. That ideally will give the greatest flexibility, and give the greatest flexibility to redevelop

it. Beyond that it comes back to the economics of the market. What will the market support and who can you attract there? He said then when you talk about the tax breaks it is not just property taxes. There are income taxes and other things we can do that are not just traditional tax breaks. Maybe like a tax capture like you did with the Village Center project. Maybe you do something with a Brownfield. Maybe you give up some of the taxes early on but then once that runs out you are able to recover your money back on that. There is a number of ways of doing that.

Mr. Avantini went on to show the next concept, which is basically what they are calling the Midlink Concept where you have a mixed office/commercial use and then as you go farther north basically if you were to look at keeping the building and doing a rehab like they did at Midlink, that would be a possibility if there was any desire to keep those buildings there. He stated you may decide not to, but at least that opportunity or that option is available here.

Mr. Avantini further stated with the last concept which is fairly interesting too they have commercial next to I-96, and then they go into what they called a sports and entertainment area. He knows there has been some discussion about whether we can put a minor league baseball stadium there or an ice arena or whether there is any other opportunity to do anything that is entertainment or sports related. We already have Total Sports here that has quite a variety with soccer, roller hockey and all sorts of different sports activities. Is there something that would tie into that? Then when you move farther north you go into office and research development which is basically what they have seen in the industrial parks, especially towards the front of the industrial parks where they are not really what you would call true industrial uses, where they tend to be more office, research and development related.

Mr. Avantini stated what they have looked to do in all of these is just to give a variety of options, different things that you can do. Personally, he likes the residential component tied in with this which definitely changes the character of what you can do with other parts of the site. You may decide that you don't think residential is appropriate there, but that is one of the options. He also likes the idea of putting some kind of sports or entertainment facility in there that adds a little more pizzazz and gives a little different draw like that. He said let's face it. It is a highly visible site, and if you dropped any type of facility in there it is going to get as much exposure as any other facility in the greater Detroit Metro area.

Chairman Day stated something he thought might play there would be like a Great Wolf Lodge type of resort where it ties in with Total Soccer, the Lyon Oaks Park and would help serve our restaurants in our downtown by bringing people in.

Everyone concurred that was a great idea.

Chairman Day went on to say he thinks it would help the whole community and with Twelve Oaks Mall being right there would be a pretty natural fit.

Mr. Crowley stated the one thing he liked was kind of like one of the hybrids of several of these but from the Midlink project. He likes the way it appeared that they have the restaurants and sorts of things buffering between the main road and the industrial. If you did put some kind of residential there, it would give the folks places to maybe walk to. The mention of a park there too; something that would tie in great with Total Soccer would be an outdoor soccer field because our kids get bumped all the time off Walled Lake Northern and Western's football fields if they are wet and don't want them playing there. He is not sure that there are a lot of big outdoor fields for the soccer.

Mr. Gottschall said he knows Detroit has not had a major league soccer team part of the MLS, and he doesn't know how to go about exploring these things and seeing what the temperature might be for

receptiveness of these organizations; but we are in the hot bed of soccer in southeastern Michigan and with all the facilities we have around maybe something sitting right on the freeway is an option as well.

Mr. Avantini stated we probably have more major sports franchise owners per capita than any other city in the country when you think about it. Mr. Gottschall is right. Michigan is probably maybe the third best state in the country for youth soccer in terms of the quality of the teams that come out of here. There actually is a potential for a big draw, and maybe we can contact some of the other franchise owners and see if they are interest in putting in a MLS team here. He thinks that would be a huge draw and said you have a big enough population.

Mr. Crowley said it was certainly more exciting to him. The Midlink concept looks great. He is real curious on how the leasing of that is going. It is great, but that Pontiac Center where all the engineering that was up there is moving down to the tech center, and it is going to be open and is gone. Great Lakes Tech Center up there in Flint, they are out of there pretty much; and he thinks it is just SPO or something that is left up there. He doesn't know how much need there is for more places like that.

Mr. Lee commented that one thing he would like to keep in mind is that whatever we do up there, it is an entrance to the City but it shouldn't stand by itself. It has to be able to drive business into the downtown area and into the VCA. Ideally, the VCA is going to expand itself a little bit and get all the stores on both sides of the street, both sides of the center plaza right now. There is a lot of room to expand in the VCA, and we want to have those people coming in here going down to the VCA, doing their shopping, their entertainment, eating or whatever. He likes the concept, but he is personally not really interested in putting a lot of retail up there. He is thinking if you have any retail at all it is maybe something like the sports shop that goes with arena, whether it is soccer banners, uniforms and hats.

Mr. Gottschall said or the hotel. He could say, talking about the Great Wolf Lodge, that he has been to a few of those establishments in Sandusky; and you cannot get into any of the restaurants. In January or February these places are packed, and all the restaurants up and down that road are packed. It is a fantastic driver for businesses.

Mr. Lee further stated he is also not real interested in a whole lot of commercial. He thinks some is good if it is geared correctly, but we have that commercial IRO across the street; and just based on the fact that the Alpha group didn't come back, the market is not real good. He thinks what we need to do is drive that business over to there, and whatever happens on this side should be a blend so it looks like it is part of the entrance into Wixom but it is not more of the same. We have an awful lot of that, and we are also still driving a lot of it into our interior. To him, ideally we should be driving it along where Landrow Road should go through behind the storage place and Gary's Catering with 30 acres in there that still needs to be developed. Ideally, you want something real quiet there because it backs up to those houses on Maple and Theodore Street and all the streets around there. Whatever we do, he wouldn't want to make this stand-alone. He wants to make this as the entrance and say this is great. This is what brought you here, but there is more down the street and go take a look.

Mr. Gottschall said and transport downtown.

Mr. Avantini advised that one of the things Hamilton Anderson had talked about at one point to the DDA was setting up a way-finding program, and that was exactly what they mentioned because there is talk about doing signage down here. He said their comment was really that the way-finding should not only incorporate the Village Center but it should come up from the interchange and draw people into the VCA and also should come up Beck Road into the VCA because it is not just the one direction. So he thinks they were pretty much foreseeing that this could be a lot more. He told the commissioners another thing they would want to look at too. He said you really should be looking at this site in a regional context,

meaning in this area of I-96, seeing a lot of growth and development. You have the Fountain Walk just down the road which has its own unique characteristics, so obviously there is a pretty good commercial shopping area. What about the other activities? You have the Rock Financial Show Place. So how does this site work with those so it doesn't compete with them but actually uses those activities as a way to support what happens here and is part of the selling point? The more you talk about the sports and the hotel like that, wow, that would be huge.

Mr. Gottschall asked how fast we could get Ford out of there.

Mr. Avantini said he doesn't know. Maybe they want to be a development partner. He doesn't know and asked if Ford land takes equity positions in their development.

Mr. Lee replied that they used to. He's not sure how they are going to approach that in the future based on the costs to do these things.

Mr. Avantini inquired if you bring in a big enough developer and bring in the right parties, and Mr. Lee answered he would never say never because this is a very special site. Not just because we are in Wixom, but just the nature of this site is much different than any of the other plants the company is looking at right now.

Mr. Avantini said with the new interchange it would be even more valuable.

Mr. Lee further stated the one thing he would like to recognize when we do this is that there is a lot of natural features on that property that are not shown on these sketches that can be attributes to whatever you might want to plan when you divide it up. A lot of it is based on the wastewater treatment plant operations they have put in there. There are two nine-acre lakes in the back that haven't been used in probably 13 years which are just polishing ponds allowing the water to go through and get oxygenated. The DNR considers that wetlands now, so there is a potential for changing over the nature. They are just sitting as ponds right now, and basically water just percolates and rain water collects and fills out.

Mr. Lee went on to say the wastewater plant itself is relatively new and was built about the same time as the Wixom plant. To him (and he would have to talk to Tim from Earth Tech) there is a real possibility that might actually service the entire area as a municipal plant even though it is made as an industrial plant. Or we could back charge the lines coming from the New Bright development, helping that and take some relief on our current wastewater plant which would expand the capacity for the whole City.

Mr. Lee stated there are attributes we may want to try and capture as well and look at. The property in the back end by the park has had some fill there, but for the most part has been left fairly vacant over the years. As you get into the center, that is where they have the old fill area that has been closed so you are going to have some limited use.

Mr. Lee further commented that the area where it's shown in the dark purple, that is roughly the paint shop area. If we were to leave any kind of industrial to him that would be the ideal place to leave it as some sort of an industrial and develop the other because it does have the rail service. It is a relatively new building with the high bays and parking. The question he has is how much industrial, and he thinks Ms. Tacy alluded to this. How much industrial should we really plan for going forward in the City recognizing the change in business in the United States? He thinks we have to have some. Maybe if we change the weight of the industrial, maybe we have that one little niche. To him, it is not just 320 acres worth up in one spot. Maybe there is a reason to have something planning-wise that says we are supposed to or by law that says we are supposed to have that area designated like mobile park developments used to be.

Mr. Avantini stated he thinks we have that covered. There is so much industrial land in Wixom, and he doesn't think that is an issue. Really, at this point it becomes a couple of things – what can go there market-wise and what do you want to go there?

Chairman Day stated he doesn't see industrial as having a big future there. He thinks in terms of what your space is going cost you for square foot on a site like this it just doesn't make industrial a really good fit for that space.

Ms. Tacy said that is why she was drawn to like a high tech science park because you are looking for educated people who demand a higher salary. You are looking at things like computers, software, technology, industries that are commanding more money. It offers a lot of jobs in the area for people with degrees bringing in that cash flow, and again they can afford the housing. They can afford the amenities and so forth. She doesn't know that she is thoroughly sold on an entertainment/sports type venue in the standpoint of if money gets tight and the economy gets tight those are the first things you cut out. Look at our tourism industry up north; look at how difficult times are for them because you pinch back. You are not spending the extra money, and should we be going into a situation like that where we can get pinched down the road or should we be creating jobs for people who demand higher salaries than an assembly line worker and so forth? She thinks that is our opportunity to turn that area over and create a different type of work environment and is something that seems to be going when you look at what Ann Arbor is able to do. We are just down the road from them, so to speak; and that is what these types of industries are looking for. Is there a population base? Are there a lot of colleges around that have graduates who don't necessarily want to leave?

Chairman Day commented that what Ann Arbor has been able to do was practically a product of the fact that the economy has been so slow, and you have so many young people leaving Michigan for those kinds of jobs. Google can hire people in Ann Arbor probably for \$10,000 apiece just so they hire them for Chicago.

Mr. Gottschall stated there are a lot of locations that are clamoring for exactly those kinds of jobs right now. We will be on the "me too" list, and we have all of that property across the street in Alpha Tech that is designed for that use as well that sits vacant. What is the real drive right now? It is a good point that as the economy turns south, people tighten up the walls a little bit; but do we want to have another potential Alpha Tech sitting on this side of the road? If we do, then how do we make it more attractive than the Ann Arbor and everyone else in Automation Alley that everyone else is trying to do right now? What is the focus? Do we try to zero in on one particular industry that is kind of future proof and be an alternate energy or something of that nature? That is we make it an environment that is conducive to a new high tech focus industry, because he thinks there are an awful lot of communities out there right now that are trying to do exactly this right now; maybe not this kind of ideal location but still in some way, shape or form.

Mr. Lee said ideally it would seem better too if you had some sort of mixed opportunity rather than any one opportunity. Quite frankly, if you look at Ann Arbor that is probably what the draw is. One is they have the universities there that have the training for the people right there on staff where they could be interns or graduates. It is a very diverse culture in the area, and it just happens to have a lot of land because of all the farm land around Ann Arbor. It is not because they have set aside a spot or because they had a spot available. It is because of all other attributes you put together, and that is what we have to try and create.

Mr. Avantini stated it has a sense of place, which is what attracts the young people. They want to go some place where there are things to do, where there are activities, where there is a vibrant area; and

really that is kind of what he was getting at here. Yes, maybe a sports facility on the surface doesn't seem like the greatest thing from an employment point of view; but when you start adding in other activities that are affiliated with it along with all the other things in here including our downtown, we are setting ourselves up to be competitive with Ann Arbor and the other states. He said with the cost of fuel the way it is right now, people are also looking for more opportunities locally to be able to take in events than they are traveling a great distance. Whether a Great Wolf Lodge, a soccer facility or whatever it might be, having those additional activities in the area certainly makes this a viable community and can compete with other states; and that is our competition right now.

Mr. Lee stated a development he is very interested in (for a number of years) is a college campus in the City. Very honestly, he would like to see it downtown; and he thinks that gives the vitality of the students going to the local things, walking. When you get down here it's a little bit of a walk to get down to the VCA even with the sidewalk, but it may be that we have an educational component in this layout that we have come up with.

Mr. Lipchik said which would probably be perfect right at the corner, and Mr. Lee replied that is exactly where he would like to see it.

Mr. Lee further stated if he won the lotto tomorrow what he would be looking to do is take over the Dorr building and make that the initial campus, and later on it would be the administration building and he would want to talk to Mr. Poota about developing the property as the core campus. Ideally, hopefully some day it could go across the street over to the Korex property as well and make that like the little campus downtown. If you look at the small colleges in Michigan there is no reason why Wixom shouldn't be right up there with the others. He thinks we have a lot more going for us than they do. There has been some discussion with the City; and it hasn't been pushed because there is an awful lot going on here, and there are only so many people to work on it. So, it hasn't been the highest priority.

Mr. Lipchik indicated another nice piece of property that would work for it too would be that Theodore property, which would be real good because you could actually have a bridge over the creek; and people can walk back and forth all day long.

Mr. Lee asked if that was a smaller site.

Mr. Lipchik replied if you count all of Parvu's farms, if we could get those two, right to the railroad tracks it would be about 30 acres.

Mr. Lee stated it would be about the same then, but something like that is going to give you a lot of sale-ability. It is going to give you vitality, new people coming in every so many years; and it is going to give you a lot of traffic in town day and night which is what you want for your VCA to be successful. If you have that kind of traffic then the business traffic can use it when they use it. The residential can use it when they use it, and just have that little bit of a buffer of the student population that keeps it going in the interim. Maybe there is some kind of educational tie to this property as well that helps that out.

Mr. Lipchik stated probably one of the toughest things good and bad (that piece of property being right next to the expressway like that is) what do all the Ford workers do right now? They jump on the expressway and head east. They are not coming up this way. They are not going into your downtown, and he thinks some of that has to be considered.

Mr. Avantini stated over time it would be nice to think that this will develop enough synergy and enough reputation that it will, and once again the way-finding from the Ford Plant site up there will draw people

into the downtown area because people will know that it is here. So many people don't know that it is here. Even the people that live around here don't even know what is going on.

Mr. Lee stated he has had about half a dozen people in the last week come up to him and say "Wow, when did you build that downtown?" but they know that Milford, Northville and Plymouth has one. He has had more people ask him where the downtown is in Wixom.

While she was thinking of it, speaking of entryways, Ms. Tacy asked if the piece of property where the railroad has a loading dock was going to get re-landscaped. She had people asking her that Friday night. We used to have a little signage in the grouping of trees and landscaping that went away when the extension went through because it was in the way. It has been cleaned up but when is it going to get beautified?

Mr. Lipchik told her right now there is (at least he thinks it is out on the street or about to be put on the street) an enhancement for the new Wixom Road, and that includes street lights and trees. That one piece of property where you see the loading dock is still CSX property. We have been fighting with them to try and get that cleaned up for quite some time, and they are just rather difficult to pin down. Where that loading dock is, the City has tried for a number of years to buy that property to make an extension of our parking lot. It is just logical. It is right across the street from our City parking, and we have put that idea out there. You are dealing with some person and his attorney in Jacksonville, Florida and it is terrible at best.

Mr. York stated there was talk about the Lyon Oaks Park being to the side. Maybe we would want to avoid the topic but he asked if there is anything the County would like on their wish list for us to provide in our development that would improve access or usage or anything to that park.

Mr. Lipchik stated he didn't see any harm in discussing it with the County after we have something nailed down so that they are not going to in some way supersede what your wishes are.

Mr. York went on further to ask, regarding the rail line that accesses the Ford Plant, how many rail users we have in Wixom and what the likelihood is of landing an organization that would be interested in that access.

Mr. Lipchik replied Ford Motor Company and Korex, and that is about it.

Mr. Lee stated so is CSX. It is a major switching yard, and he doesn't think most people realize what kind of switching yard they have in the middle of town there. It is a major operation. He stated Mr. Lipchik was right. The tracks that go out the back are just basically to ship vehicles out, and there are even a couple switching lanes he believes behind the plant.

Mr. York asked if Edison uses rail for their pole yard, and Mr. Lipchik replied no.

Mr. York indicated rail is up and down in its use, but he is not so sure that having rail is necessarily a benefit. It certainly is for someone who wants it, but who knows how many people would be interested in that? He guessed from that standpoint, it is there. We have it, and we don't have to get rid of it; but it doesn't mean that the tail has to wag the dog. We can develop around it if we so choose.

Mr. Lipchik stated there were some really good articles in the paper on Sunday on light rail and that there is a lot of interest in going back to having street cars and light rail especially with the way the cost of gasoline is going. One of the routes they mentioned was Port Huron down to Detroit, and that is exactly

where this thing goes. So maybe there is a thought there. He doesn't know. What do you do? Talk to them.

Mr. Lee stated maybe put a depot restaurant or depot store there.

Mr. Lipchik replied maybe you could put a depot there, a real good size depot because he believes some of these tracks make their way down to Ann Arbor; and there you go. So if you could hit Port Huron and Ann Arbor what do you have? You have a good portion of southeast Michigan. That is just something to think about.

Mr. York asked if we would have to do something to our ordinances to allow mid-rise and high-rise on that piece of property.

Mr. Avantini replied the best step for the property regardless would be to do a planned unit development. As part of the planned unit development you can have ancillary plans that correspond to it that are conceptual plans used to guide it but you are not locking it in so strictly, so tightly, that the developer can't do something else with it. The overall theory here is to have a planned unit development so you can enter into a development contract with the developer so it will become something the City wants and something you can make viable. So that is really the best zoning tool you can use, but in the meantime to start investigating and looking at development possibilities would be really a good thing to do.

If you allow a lot of high density residential down at Ford's Mr. Lipchik asked what that is going to do to your VCA which goes all the way to Mettala Park. Whatever line you walk on, you are on a tight rope because you don't know what type of businesses ten years from now are going to be viable. It is like was said, research and development and all that is good and great. Then you look at what happened to the Silicon Valley out in California and take a look at what happened to Bowings up in Seattle. So you tie yourself in a certain way without enough flexibility and what occurs is that one type of business goes down. Then you are stuck.

Mr. Avantini stated getting back and creating a sense of place, at least in his mind, should be one of the overriding qualities of this site because this is such a unique site with the visibility and the amount of land that is available so close to an interchange. Whatever happens here has to be really spectacular and has to be something that jumps out at you and draws you in. You can put office space and R & D around it. You can do that anywhere, but you don't often get the opportunity to do something spectacular like you have at this corner of the interchange like you have here.

Mr. Lee remarked that one thing he would like to steer away from is any more freeway service. He thinks we have that pretty well covered up there, and it doesn't tend to draw people into your downtown area.

Mr. Lipchik said the other thing he would like to not see is any kind of heavy trucking terminals of any kind.

Mr. Lee indicated that is why he worries about the Midlink situation because that can lead to blending itself to that.

Mr. Lipchik stated exactly, like Keebler over at Napier and Grand River.

Mr. Lee went on to say he thinks that is basically what is going to happen at the Loren facility. The company is closing down in Ohio because there is really nothing else there, and probably what it is going to end up is like a bid type situation. He agrees he would rather see some higher, more collective uses of the properties than just renting out the bays and the building. We have the trucking firms around us

already, and a lot of them have moved out because the area is developing and you want to regress. There is nothing wrong with trucking outfits, but that is not the kind of traffic we need at that intersection right now. It would shut us down rather than expand us.

Mr. Lipchik said that is a prime place for trucking because it is so close to 275 and 23, and it is just perfect from a trucker's sense.

Ms. Tacy stated that is not quite the gateway she was envisioning.

Mr. Avantini asked if this wouldn't be a great location to have the world's largest indoor water theme park.

Chairman Day stated he really thinks that would drive the downtown, and he thinks with people being a little tighter with the costs of gasoline they are going to be vacationing closer to home.

Mr. Avantini stated they have the perfect climate for it. They are indoors how many months of the year?

Mr. Lee commented if there is some sort of recreational facility (whether it is a water park or a soccer field or some other kind of athletic situation) he wouldn't want to lose sight of the ambiance of the property in the back. The mention of the park on that piece of property itself has a lot of opportunities for developing the small parks that are used on the outside as well. It could be something as simple as a bowling green area or canoe rental at the lakes.

Ms. Tacy stated thinking about what Mr. York said, she is a bug for adding sidewalks because it bothers her that she can't get anywhere because nothing is connected and is all disjointed; but since it does abut Lyon Oaks, if we made that an actual park feature on this side with an entrance where you can go into Lyon Oaks from this side or that side it would give you a big circuit of bike riding, hiking, trails and what have you and get the best of both worlds. Whatever our other uses are, there is also this other avenue that people can ride their bikes up and down and families can take advantage of it. That hooks into the whole trail system that goes to South Lyon. There is something we can keep in mind as it is developed. That is a huge parcel of land. People are always looking for more areas to walk and bike around.

Mr. Lee said it could be just like Kensington with the two entrances, and very honestly that end of Lyon Oaks is primarily clogged in swamp area and very wet. So there is limited access, and it is almost like a preserve; but it doesn't mean that you couldn't put a road that meanders through it on some of the high grounds that let people at least see these preserve areas. Right now it is going to be the hardy souls that wear hip boots for half their life and don't mind mosquitoes but there is some pretty property back in there.

Mr. Lipchik stated he has been in the way back there, and a lot of it is wet. He thought that was a good point. What is the sense of having something that nice that you can't ever get to, to see?

Ms. Tacy stated that is one of the features people look for as they are looking for a home. Where can they go that doesn't require motor vehicles? And what is there where they can just walk out their back yard to strap on the cross country skis, roller blades or whatever? That can be a real enticement to the community.

Mr. Crowley said it is probably an enticement for something like one of those water parks as well. You are not limited to just the water park. Even if you did the water park/soccer field or something that the people go to the soccer field for tournaments and stay there. If you can open that up back there they can go to the water park and say they are sick of the water park and go out and do some cross country skiing,

some jogging or some biking. He doesn't know how, if you can get through that Lyon Oaks Park up to the north side along Pontiac Trail or if it is connected to the sidewalk going towards the VCA.

Mr. Avantini commented that maybe a redevelopment there encourages the County to do more with that park like what they have done at some of their other parks. Maybe they offer more activities knowing that you have this other facility there, and they can play off one another. They are about making money also.

Ms. Tacy said maybe they could put a water park in.

Mr. Lipchik indicated the original plan showed a water park, showed an archery range and showed a whole lot of other things that never have happened.

Chairman Day stated they needed to get the golf in because the golf provides the money to pay for the other stuff.

Mr. Avantini stated in terms of activities when you think of the Detroit Metro Area we have to go quite a distance to reach some of these types of facilities. It is not like they are in our back yards. We have great sports venues. We have the arts and theaters and have a lot of things in the Detroit area, but the amusement type things were really void. That is a tough business and people don't want to travel now.

Mr. Crowley mentioned that we are talking about building too off of what Novi is doing at Grand River with the thing that has a lot of stuff down there but doesn't have a water park. You have go-carts, laser tag, rock climbing, putt-putt golf and whatever else they have out there.

Mr. Lee mentioned it is also right in the middle between the interchanges so a lot of people don't even realize it is there.

Mr. York said as we talk about these things it occurs to him that there is a lot of green field opportunities whether you are talking about airline industries or whatever, particularly all down 275 and all the way down 75. Why would somebody want this piece of property that already has so much demolition that would have to take place, a potential for some environmental issues and a lot of work to redevelop this? This whole idea of something that wants to be under one roof is obviously a benefit, like the world's largest water park because you can take advantage of so much that is already there. The Midlink concept makes a lot of sense because it is reusing as much of the facility as you can, but we are not interested in a trucking depot. We are not interested in big box stores. We are not interested in a shopping center because those are not going to make it here. He thinks whether it is a PUD or it is a redevelopment that takes advantage of something that is already there just makes an awful lot of sense.

Chairman Day wanted to know how far the commission was going to take this tonight.

Mr. York stated he guessed he was going to ask that question. Is there something we are prepared to make a recommendation to Council that we consider a rezoning of this space tonight or is this something we need to think about for a while?

Mr. Avantini replied that he doesn't know. He thinks the timing again for the zoning ordinance right now is running parallel with the potential redevelopment of this site. If we need to step it up, if we find something new in another month or two we can always do that; but at this point in time he wouldn't worry too much about the zoning. He thinks getting some of the concepts and the ideas brought forward to the Council to get the thinking and the discussion going is probably more valuable in his mind. The zoning, we will be able to take care of that. It is thinking about what we are going to be reusing it for.

Who are the folks we would be talking to? Maybe we bring in the folks that do the Great Wolf Lodge or one of the other lodges like that and say "Hey, would this particular location be of interest to you if it were available?"

Mr. York wanted to know who "we" is. Us, the Planning Commission?

Mr. Avantini replied it is the city administration. It would have to be the administration to implement the wishes of the Council, but ultimately the discussion has to build kind of like the Village Center discussion began originally. It starts with an idea, with a concept. Begin talking to different folks and see what the opportunities are. Maybe you do a market study, and there are things that can be done independent of Ford to figure out what is the best vision for this particular property. It is like with the VCA, even if you don't own the property yet.

Mr. Lipchik asked Mr. Avantini if he would have any idea how much a market study on a site of 320 acres would run. We don't even have that idea.

Mr. Avantini replied most market studies are about \$20,000. He knows because they have worked with a firm in East Lansing that does a lot of those, and ballpark are somewhere usually in the range of \$20,000 (sometimes a little more and sometimes a little less depending on what you need done). But that is generally what market studies run.

Mr. Lipchik said that was why he wanted Mr. Avantini to bring that point up, because obviously nothing is free and it might be a bigger chunk than you realize.

Mr. York asked what a market study does.

Mr. Avantini stated it identifies the potential for different uses at this site, and a lot of the thoughts and ideas that are being thrown around it will let you know what the market potential is for the redevelopment and the different uses. The nice thing is it helps to focus you in the direction where there is market potential. Like you said, industrial there may not be a market for it. Maybe the rents aren't great enough, and maybe that is just a bad idea to go in that direction. But maybe there are other subsections (R & D, entertainment or whatever it might be). To know what the things are that would most likely attract new development to this location, and then look to match up what the market is saying. Are there possibilities with what the City considers to be acceptable and hopefully finding a middle ground there? You are telling folks you know there is a market for these types of uses; and we know you might want to do this other stuff, but we want you to go in this direction.

Ms. Tacy said she thinks that is about the only way we are going to come up with the best possible use from an objective source. Her concern is if someone comes in with a great idea that sounds great to us and sounds great to them because they want to sell it. But what if that is not really what the greatest idea is? We rely on developers all the time. They come in and present their site plans and so forth, and a lot of times she sits there and questions whether they really think they are going to have the traffic in that location that they are going to need. We have some empty buildings already. We rely on them to do the homework, and we better be doing our own homework.

Mr. Avantini indicated that is exactly what he was saying, and it is even beyond that. It is what your vision is. How do you get your vision to match up with the market and what the market will support because you could have ten different types of uses that would go into that particular location and maybe they are all viable? It might just be whatever developer comes in with a use (the first one in the door) that ends up going in rather than you picking what you want the use to be, which may be equally viable from a market point of view. Once you know what those uses are that are viable, it is possible to go out and meet

with the owners and encourage them to sell themselves and sell the City. "This would be a great site for you to put your next Great Wolf Lodge; and while you're at it, instead of just doing a small indoor amusement park, why don't you build the biggest one in the world here and look at your market draw?"

Ms. Tacy opined it is too valuable of a chunk of land for us not to be in the driver's seat on it.

Mr. Crowley asked if that market study would actually be able to get down to that level. He said he is afraid of getting something back that basically just breaks it into these high segments of industrial, sports, entertainment or something like that as opposed to someone putting in the world's largest indoor Frisbee golf versus a Great Wolf Lodge. He thinks there is a lot of potential for income from those two things. If we are really focusing in on a soccer complex or a Great Wolf Lodge, he would like to have more detail on that. He told Mr. Avantini it was great to hear him say maybe you could go get some of these people from Kalahari and Great Wolf Lodge and some of those developers of those types of places to ask if they are interested here or interested in not doing that because they are seeing a lot of Michigan people coming down to Sandusky.

Mr. Avantini replied right, but you would also have to recognize that with the price of gas the way it is there is going to be more interest. They are probably missing a large segment of the population here. Yes, you get folks that will drive down there; but there are a lot of folks that won't who would drive to a facility like this. He doubts if they are going to be able to build something that is so large that it is going to so out compete with what they have in Ohio because you have Cleveland, Toledo and Columbus nearby. He would have to believe they'd have an opportunity to really hit the Detroit market and draw people here from the Detroit market that (he doesn't think) they are going to be that worried about what they are going to do with their other facility if they are going to make money here.

Mr. Crowley stated it would be his desire for any marketing study to at least be detailed enough to be useful.

Mr. Avantini stated that's when you select a firm that can lead you in the direction you are looking for, to give you that type of information and let you know not only who we are likely to attract but what it is going to take to get them in here and what the factors are they are looking at. So maybe your market study costs \$30,000 instead of \$20,000 because it is real specialized, but when we are talking about the future for this piece of property we are talking about peanuts compared to what is a possible guarantee.

Mr. Lee commented that before we start talking market studies (and he doesn't have any problems because he thinks it is a great idea to get the information) there is a massive difference between the VCA project and this property, and that is the ownership of the property. The City over quite a number of years was buying up the parcels that made up the controlling interest of the VCA. That gave us a lot of initiative and gave us a lot of power to guide the course of things.

Mr. Lee said he is very encouraged by what he is hearing and thinks there is a general theme we are looking at and thinks it is fairly cohesive, but it would seem logical that the comments made tonight from this dais should be taken to staff (the City Manager's Office) and let them look at them because he does know Ford has talked to the City Manager and the City Manager has talked to Ford. By getting this conversation understood by the City Manager, let's see if we can engage the owner a little bit to say "These are the kinds of things we are looking at for the property. This is kind of what we see as the vision for the community. We don't know what your plans are (if you have plans at this point) or if you want us to take a larger role; but if we are going to work cooperatively like this community has the reputation of doing, these are the kinds of things we are looking for and we can help get you there."

We can get that little bit more of a meeting of the minds that we didn't have to do down at the VCA. Even with the VCA we went through a couple of developers before we settled on the consortium between Cohen and Robertson. In fact the City did an awful lot to bring those two together. They weren't talking to each other about developing the downtown when it came to us. It is a matter of getting the concept agreed to (a rough idea), and then you start working together to find the people that can make it a reality.

Mr. Lee would think (would hope) that is something the company is interested in doing because they want to maximize the effort out of this as well as we do. It is not the company's benefit to put in something that is a quick slam dunk if they are going to be leaving money on the table, and it is not in our interest if we don't have something that adds to what we already have going in this community.

Mr. Avantini indicated the key point here is that the one thing you do have control over is future uses at this location. Obviously being in business Ford is going to be interested in getting the highest dollar in the quickest fashion possible. There may have to be some middle ground there where maybe some of the things that will get them the quickest highest dollars then may be some of those uses that aren't acceptable for the City, and that is where this discussion is critical. Maybe they can do as well; but it is going to take a little more effort, a little more work, but only if it is something the City is willing to move forward. Otherwise, the City has control over the future uses.

Mr. Lee stated that is what we have to really watch though because there is a time frame on this as well, and right now you have the most open zoning you could possibly have on that property. You don't want to change it before they are going to do something because it will look like a spot zoning situation, and that is not a good situation to be in.

Mr. Avantini said that is why you make it a planned unit development.

Mr. Lee continued by saying that is why you have to step through this, and that is really why we need to have these discussions; so we are ready and have things in place and there is logic behind our discussions because we discussed it and have these logical points that can make those decisions that may or may not be agreeable to all the parties but in the best interest of everybody. It should give them the best solution.

Mr. Crowley asked who takes this kind somewhat vision we have. Does it go next to City Council? Does it go to Mr. Dornan?

Mr. Lipchik stated he would take the minutes and have an open discussion with the City Manager to get his input on it and let the commissioners know their thoughts.

Mr. Lee suggested just like the VCA in its early stages that is maybe something where the City Manager's Office (whether it is Mr. Dornan and Mr. Nowicki) actually comes and has a little discussion with us at another workshop on what they see and what they are planning and try to work cooperatively. He doesn't think they want to take something like this to the City Council too early because it is still very nebulous and until we can get a little more flesh on these bones, it is really not something they can do anything with.

Ms. Tacy asked if it is possible, in the best interest of both entities (one being Ford and one being the City of Wixom) that it could be a joint situation where we have a market study done where they are helping us with the bill so they know they are going to be able to sell it to the correct people for what we want. So both parties work out because they are able to sell it for a good price, and we are able to gain something we really want to see.

Mr. Lee stated ideally that is a relationship you want to develop working as a partnership.

Mr. Crowley said then put it out in the press so they can get good press out of that.

Mr. Avantini stated frankly one of the strengths of this administration is ability to take a vision and implement it. He thinks the things that have been done in the VCA, there aren't that many government administrations that can take something like that, run with it and make it happen. So at least in his opinion that is some of the strengths of this group. The challenge is going to be getting combined vision, and that is one thing we have here. There is a unified combined vision that everyone knew that this is what they wanted. The secret now is going to be taking all these thoughts and ideas and getting the whole City to move forward in a direction that this is what we would like to see. That is going to carry a lot more power with Ford than maybe this or that and a bunch of other things. It is also going to help the administration here move forward and do what it is good at which is implementing that vision.

Chairman Day stated we have in the past had meetings where we met with the Council, DDA and the City Manager's Office on a Saturday morning; and it might be a good idea just to have where all the people that are involved in the process in different ways who have been spending their time on this City and have an interest in what happens and just shoot some ideas around.

Ms. Tacy said even when we have that workshop where we start discussing with either Mr. Nowicki or Mr. Dornan and invite the others to come along so we are all getting the information at the same time because she still thinks collectively more heads are better than one. They may have ideas that we haven't even considered.

Chairman Day stated that is why he kind of likes the Saturday morning meetings so it is not anybody's meeting; it is everybody's meeting.

Ms. Tacy indicated she doesn't care what form. She just wants to make sure that communication stays open so we are taking advantage of all the ideas we have.

Mr. York stated that is an excellent idea too because it would be greater to have more heads all talking about some common goals and objectives than each board saying why are those guys doing that and why isn't this more obvious?

Chairman Day commented we had a marathon discussion at the last meeting, and he doesn't know how much more we are going to get out of talking about this tonight. He didn't want to cut anyone off, but he was really wondering if we are still being productive at this point.

Mr. York stated the only other thing he would like to add to the minutes is that the City Manager's Office start to undertake some discussion with the County and see what their long terms plans and objectives are at Lyon Oaks.

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Ms. Tacy stated this was something that came out of our last meeting. Mr. Marvin Poota brought up a point that she had to go out and check the next day regarding the no left turn we voted on and so forth. She was sitting on southbound Wixom Road waiting for the light at Pontiac Trail; and if you pull up to the line on the pavement that you are supposed to adjacent to the National City Bank, two cars can stack in there. She said he had brought up a very good point that if we are going to start concerning ourselves with the movements and so forth, we should go back and examine other businesses and other traffic problems. She has had more people pull out from that bank and try to wedge themselves into the traffic. It drives her nuts, and then blocking traffic with a gridlock because they couldn't wait their turn. She doesn't know when their turn was going to happen because the line was so long to make a left. How do

we go back and correct things? Do we go back and correct things. What do we do because he had brought up a very good point?

Mr. Lipchik indicated when someone says they are going to change their building (this is at least how the building code works) that then opens them up to fair game. You are going to improve the building; this is what you have to do. You have to improve no left turns and so on. He said the way he sees it the only other thing you can do is to go and evaluate a whole intersection and say we have a problem at the intersection and look at every single driveway that empties into this intersection.

Mr. Lee noted he was not sure if Planning has that ability to do that. Once it is in place, Mr. Lipchik is right. The time to do it is when you look at a plan and can evaluate everything.

Ms. Tacy wanted to know when that building went in if our traffic was anywhere near what we have stacking up there now, and Mr. Lipchik replied no.

Mr. Lee indicated that use to be the Korex factory.

Ms. Tacy asked how you go back and fix things, and Mr. Lipchik replied the most logical way is when they are going ahead with building improvements because then it does become something you can do something about.

Mr. Lee stated he thinks the only other way is the Police Department can put in traffic ordinances or they can recommend them based on warrants or conditions, and the Council has to take an action to change the traffic ordinance for that location.

Mr. Crowley asked if they heard anything about National City considering redoing that building or if that is us wishing they would.

Mr. Lipchik stated we tried when they were putting up the new siding to get them to do something in line with what the downtown looks like, and it got pretty heated for a little bit. The City Manager's Office became involved at that point, and they said in the future they are going to change that bank and put a new building up. No one is saying when that is, though.

Mr. Lee stated it would seem that the logical driver for that would be the new credit union. When they see that new financial building go up (and he would expect there is going to be a lot of people waiting for that bank just from comments he has heard because they want to go to that bank) that may encourage them to do something with their building.

Mr. Crowley said he is not sure what their hesitation was. Didn't we hear something when they were talking about that credit union that the payback on those types of buildings is like six months or some real short period of time?

Mr. Lee replied yes, depending on what their payback is right now if they are satisfied with their return.

Mr. Lipchik commented you have to face the fact that National City has had that building, has been there for about 20 years; and it is paid off. Are you going to enter a cost if you already have the clientele? He doesn't know.

Ms. Tacy said her other question is the school property at Wixom Elementary, the vacant lot that is adjacent to the railroad tracks. Doesn't the City own that?

Mr. Lipchik stated the Coe property actually wraps around Renton, but there is a portion. If you were to look at the school, there is a tree line. From that tree line to the street is City-owned property.

Ms. Tacy asked if there has ever been any discussion because she knows the school is always looking for more parking because even though they have added parking it is still not enough, and it came to mind Friday night as she parked at the school and walked to the downtown. Has there ever been any discussion of the City actually turning that into a nice little municipal parking lot updating it with trees and shrubbery because it gets just run over in the muddy season when people are trying to park, and it always just looks kind of like an eyesore.

Mr. Lipchik stated at one point in time there were discussions between the school and the City about them purchasing that property, but then he doesn't know what happened to it.

Ms. Tacy stated she just wondered if there was anything that could be done, if the City would turn that into a municipal parking lot the school could certainly use during school functions so it could serve both uses.

Mr. Lipchik stated that will certainly be in the minutes, and we can certainly bring that up.

Mr. Crowley wanted to let everyone know he enjoyed himself Friday night and enjoyed some of the shirts some of like the City Council had and things. He would love to find out how we could get some Wixom shirts and maybe have Planning Commission embroidered on there because he is proud of his role on it yet sometime he doesn't like to necessarily push himself doing this. It is kind of a subtle way to let people know what you are doing. He doesn't know if there are City of Wixom shirts, but he had heard someone say there are shirts they might be able to get their hands on.

Mr. Lee indicated he knows they have bought them in the past and tried to keep a supply on hand for the Fourth of July and for people that are interested. It seems to him over the last couple of years that it was taken from the budget because the budget is so tight. He doesn't know if it went back in this year or not, but he knows they are supposed to talk about it.

Mr. Lipchik said to his knowledge it did not go back in.

Mr. Lee stated it is kind of a toughie. You want to have something to promote the City but you want to keep the budget tight so they don't raise the taxes too.

When Mr. Crowley stated personally he doesn't need someone to give it to him, Mr. Lee stated these were things for sale but it still just tied up cash.

Ms. Tacy stated she wouldn't mind buying her own, but it would be nice to be able to wear something and be identified so if people had questions they would know who to go ask.

Mr. Lee stated, unlike Mr. Cutright, he never put Council or anything like that on his because he figured he wanted to wear it no matter what his role. It just says City of Wixom, but he agrees; his are getting kind of ratty.

Mr. Lipchik stated he can certainly look into that and see what Ms. Magee can come up with, and then he would bring that to the Commission.

Ms. Tacy said she was with Mr. Lee. She wouldn't need to be identified as the Planning Commission; just City of Wixom would be nice.

Mr. York wanted to mention one small item and said we talked at the last meeting about an easement connecting those two subdivisions together to improve our walk-ability. He said he and Mr. Avantini talked a little bit about that after the meeting and how you foresee that kind of thing. He guessed that he just wanted to keep something going on the record and perhaps at a future workshop session because he wants to talk about non-motorized cross easement access. How do we improve our walk-ability in our community and how do we look at site development and what kinds of things do we need in our ordinances versus in our site evaluations that promote that kind of thing, linking properties together and all that?

Chairman Day commented if you look at what we went through with Cliffs of Loon Lake and the park situation he knows living in Birch Park when Loon Lake Woods went in the residents didn't want it because they didn't want other people coming in to use the beach.

Ms. Tacy stated she could see that but if you don't have amenities like that you just simply want to offer people a place to walk that is not in a roadbed.

Mr. York said he appreciates the discussion; and he would like to set aside some time to go through some of those issues, not the least of which is Potter Road is considering some redo and repaving. He had a chance to talk to Jon Booth a little bit on Friday night and talked about the idea of a bike lane or something like that on Potter Road that would solve several problems and create a calming situation.

STAFF COMMENTS:

There were no comments made by staff:

ADJOURNMENT:

This meeting of the Wixom Planning Commission was adjourned on motion by Mr. York and Mr. Lee at 9:11 pm.

Jennifer Garrett
Recording Secretary
July 26, 2006