

FARMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS
23600 Liberty Street
Farmington, Michigan
December 14, 2020

Chairperson Crutcher called the Meeting to order via Zoom remote technology at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, December 14, 2020.

ROLL CALL

Present: Crutcher, Kmetzo, Mantey, Perrot, Waun and Westendorf
Absent: Majoros
A quorum of the Commission was present.

OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT: Director Christiansen, Recording Secretary Murphy, Brian Golden, Director of Media Services.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Kmetzo, supported by Perrot, to approve the Agenda.
Motion carried, all ayes.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA

A. November 9, 2020 minutes

MOTION by Perrot, seconded by Waun, to approve the items on the Consent Agenda.
Motion carried, all ayes.

DISCUSSION OF THE 2022/2027 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Chairperson Crutcher introduced this item and turned it over to staff.

Director Christiansen stated the first item on the screen is the calendar for Fiscal Year 2022/2027 Capital Improvement Program process. And this is the annual calendar that I think most of you are familiar with that the City utilizes for developing and moving through a process for the establishment and approval of the six-year Capital Improvement Program that the City annually puts together. And as all of us are aware, the City is required to update the Capital Improvement Program annually and that's in accordance with the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, the State statute specific to municipal planning. And the Michigan Planning Enabling Act which provides for the Planning Commission and also for the process related to the City's planning efforts and more specifically the City's Master Plan. As I think everyone is aware, the Master Plan includes an implementation tool which is the Capital Improvement Program or part of the implementation is utilizing the Capital Improvement Program. So this calendar is put together by the Finance Director and Administration and lays out what the timeline is for this year's six-year Capital Improvement Program which is 2022/2027. So, you might

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recall back in November the Planning Commission as is requested in the City's process, appointed a representative to the City's CIP Steering Committee and that representative is Mr. Majoros. Unfortunately, he is not able to join us this evening but if you did have a chance to look at his email he said he thinks we're off to a good start, that things are in good hands and that the plan right now as currently exists, the 2021/2026 is still very valid, very reflective of the City's overall Capital Improvement Program goals. So, again, November you appointed Mr. Majoros. We are now in December, tonight, December 14th, the Planning Commission's responsibility this evening is to formalize items for submission to the CIP Steering Committee. If you go to the next screen, I think we can scroll up if that is possible or scroll down, I guess, and that will then show submittals and the next responsibility of the Planning Commission is March 8th, we're in December and that's in March. Well, what happens between now and then. Between now and then is when the 2022/2027 plan, the draft plan, gets developed. And that's what the responsibility of the Steering Committee is. With each of the Board or Commission's input. So, Mr. Majoros will take the Planning Commission's input to the Steering Committee and you'll see that there's a draft that will be put together and the draft then that is put together will be done by the CIP Steering Committee and they are scheduled to meet January 4th, January 7th. If between now and that time and as the Planning Commission moves forward with its responsibilities, because under the State statute the Planning Commission being the steward, the shepherd if you will of the Master Plan, is responsible for the Public Hearing for the Capital Improvement Program and then acting on the draft program and forwarding it to City Council. So the Planning Commission at the February 8th meeting is scheduled to set the Public Hearing for March 8th. At the March 8th meeting, you see in green, the Planning Commission will meet to hold the Public Hearing if that's what the Planning Commission chooses to do and in accordance with this schedule, possibly approve the plan. If you don't approve the plan on that date, there's an alternative date to do that and that is April 12th. Once the Planning Commission acts on the CIP and moves it forward to the Council, you'll see in blue here, the Council then continues on with the CIP as part of the overall budget process for the City and that would be for the 2021/2022 budget. And the CIP again is a six-year plan for 2022/2027. As I was indicating, if there's any input that anyone wants to make, whether it's this evening as we're scheduled and now talking about, or any time during this whole process, please don't hesitate to do so. Either together with the Commission and we meet, and/or to Mr. Majoros, and/or we can share things electronically and move it forward. You'll see again the CIP is going to be working as a work group in January, February, so if there's something that you are wanting to have included and maybe you're not thinking about it today or maybe it's something that evolves over the next little while, please, there's ample time to do that over the next several months.

So, with that, the purpose of this item tonight is aside from reaffirming this schedule and your role, let's take a look at the current Capital Improvement Program, which is the City of Farmington Capital Improvement Program, Fiscal Year 2021/2026. So this is the

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document which is the current plan and this was created in accordance with the same schedule last year. This is the beginning pages; this is the resolution that you moved forward with last year. And if we look at this, you'll see again the Michigan Planning Enabling Act specifies the requirements of the Capital Improvement Program and their responsibilities. And the responsibility of the Planning Commission of the community is to schedule and hold the required Public Hearing and to act on the annual Capital Improvement Program as presented. And your action as included is an approval of the resolution and this is that resolution which is included annually in the document. And if you just look at this here, you'll just see whereas adhering to Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, the Capital Improvement Program shall be created for the ensuing six years. The CIP will further the goals of the City, to promote the safety, well-being and general welfare of its residents. The CIP is a roadmap for future funding and planning of Capital Improvement projects and not an appropriation of funds. So it's not a budget, but it is a guide, it's a roadmap. The City creates the CIP or this resolution is created the number of plans to help guide the creation of the CIP including and you reference the plans here. And they're even in the CIP document including the Master Plan, the Recreation Master Plan, the City Vision Plan, the Downtown Area Plan, the Downtown Master Plan, the Grand River Corridor Vision Plan, the Rouge River Project, and the Orchard Lake and Ten Mile Roads Intersection report. So all of that is part of this Comprehensive Master Plan Program which includes the Capital Improvement Program.

The Capital Improvement Program Steering Committee was created to evaluate and finalize the CIP, appropriate stakeholders according to the public, City Administration, Council have been involved, they have developed this comprehensive list of potential Capital Improvement projects, the components in this resolution have been found to have been subject to a Public Hearing which has been held, and then the Commission's action was to adopt the CIP and again forward it to City Council. So this is pretty much the reflection in this resolution of all of your responsibilities, the reasons why, and the action that you took.

So, as we move on, there's a transmittal letter, we talked about what is the Capital Improvement Program, again, we know that the purpose of the CIP is any improvement that meets one of the following criteria: a purpose or improvement of a facility, system, infrastructure, piece of equipment that costs \$10,000.00 or more with an expected service life of more than one year; is a non-recurring expenditure in the study that leads to such purposes. So pretty straightforward criteria. CIP versus City budget, again, it's not a budget, it is identification of projects, equipment and other capital related elements that is of interest in acquiring or moving forward with.

Why create a CIP? Again, it's the State statute that we referred to, Public Act 33 of 2008. Benefits of the CIP: The program can be used in many different ways. The plan is certainly an identification of all the projects and we'll look at what these are in a minute

here. The benefits also include calling attention to community deficiencies, providing a means to correct them, identifying long and short term expenditures which greatly improves the budgeting process and efficiency, enhances the ability to secure grants, reducing the taxpayer burden, increases the likelihood of governmental cooperation, improving continuity, reducing costs, and encourages efficient governance. So, significant benefits.

This is a very important graphic. This is the Executive Summary, kind of a snapshot, an overview. You'll see in the pie chart that the 2021/2026 CIP which is the current program plan, identifies various subject areas by category. The categories that really are the ones that require the most focus and have the greatest number of projects and expenditures identified are infrastructure projects: roads, sidewalks, streetscapes, water and sewers, drains. Then you'll see other category areas that include other projects related to buildings and grounds, land acquisition and redevelopment, recreation and culture, parking lots, vehicles and equipment. But you can see the largest three really are roads, sidewalks, streetscapes and water and sewer. If you look over at the quick view, this six-year plan that we're currently under, identified 117 total projects at a total project value of \$28.3 million dollars. And those projects that are grouped and broken down by year, you can see the expenditure by year. So, it's a pretty significant list of projects that are a pretty significant expenditure level. But without this, we don't have this roadmap, this guide for which to follow. So, a very important tool to have. And the Planning Commission has had some level of input in almost every one of these as a Planning Commission. So, again, your responsibilities are very significant under Public Act 33 of 2008 with respect to the role that you have as Commissioners, the responsibilities of the Planning Commission, the responsibilities that you have with the City's Master Plan and certainly here in this case the City's Capital Improvement Program. You'll note funding sources area also part of this of course because the projects being identified have a priority identification with this, whether it is immediate or a must-have spelled out and then it has sources and it has timelines, so we'll take a look at those real quickly.

So, again, there's project prioritization and then the Capital Improvement Program, projects and priorities, and then they are ranked in terms of their priority, whether it's currently under construction, desired not necessary, necessary long term, necessary short term, or urgent and that's all involved over time. The categories as we saw in the pie chart in the Executive Summary again, buildings and grounds, drains systems, land acquisitions and redevelopment, parking lots, recreation and culture, roads, sidewalks, streetscapes, vehicles and equipment, water and sewer system. So this is a format, at tool taken over time, it's the one that we're looking to continue with as a community. Your responsibilities here are to help guide in this process and to fulfill your obligation, your role as Planning Commissioners, as the Planning Commission as a whole, so if we move forward this is just a quick overview of one of the nine category areas in the plan, and we won't look at everyone of these, it just identifies just a quick view of the total expenditures

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that are anticipated and planned out in the six-year program. And then the projected cost per year. And then it goes to a little bit of identification. And if you keep scrolling through, you'll see all these other categories as well, we won't look at every one of these, the categories are and they kind of stay consistent, and again the idea is not to change the plan, but to review what is still valid and is to modify this plan as necessary. Either removing or eliminating things or adding things. If we look at this, this is the beginning of the appendix, I know it's a little tough to see, you'll see that this Appendix A is an overview of all of the projects and it has first the project category. Look at what the first one is, under sidewalks and streetscapes, one of the nine categories, Farmington Road Streetscape. I think as everyone knows, the City has been focused on the Farmington Road Streetscape Project for quite a significant period of time, has applied for a grant, you'll see that prioritization rank is necessary short term. That funding sources identified, General Fund and DDA and outside funding sources, SEMCOG, MDOT, the TAP Grant that the City has applied for and has been awarded again. So General Fund money, DDA money, the TAP Grant, the total project costs right now is estimated to be 4 million dollars and all of that is being worked through in Planning and in Engineering planning and you'll see that the first monies for this project in this CIP, 2021/2026, are in the 2021 year and that's in the 2021 year and that's \$100,000.00, that's really the planning money, that's the developing the plan, that's the securing the grant, that's the engineering planning, that's the obtaining easements, that's the working through the legal process. The 2022 is the 3.9 million dollars, that make up the rest of that 4 million dollars for implementation of the project.

So this is how each one of these projects then is laid out. And if you go all the way back, you'll see subsequent projects under their category, the project name, and you'll see the prioritization rank and everything else we just went through with the Streetscape project.

So, the goal this evening is to and I'll turn it back over to you, Mr. Chair, as the Planning Commission, if there's something you have some interest in or concern in or a question about, or want to take a look at something, this is the opportunity for us to talk about this. Again, this is a living, breathing document, things can be amended, they can be changed. Certainly if there is something that tonight if it doesn't move forward or it wasn't discussed or maybe you weren't thinking about it and over the next little while you were to do that, absolutely it's something that can be moved forward from you as a Commissioner or a Commission as a whole to Mr. Majoros representing the Commission and to the Steering Committee.

And with that, Mr. Chair, I'll turn it back over to you and we have this tool if we need to look at other areas, if you want to look at the Appendix, if you want to look at other areas, if you have a question about a particular project, we can certainly take a look at that and talk about it.

Chairperson Crutcher opened the floor for questions from the Commissioners. Hearing none, he asked if there was a way to see what is included in the Drake Park line item.

Christiansen replied that if you want to go back, we can take a look at Drake Park in the CIP for Recreation and Culture, which is the category and look under that category and see what the improvements being proposed are. I can tell you that the City has actually made application to the MDNR for two recreation grants for upgrades. Now, this is the general one right here, I think if we scroll through there is Recreation and Culture. So if you look here now, this is buildings and grounds, let's go the next one, this is it right here. We can now look what was in this plan for Recreation and Culture, Shiawassee Park, and Drake Park bathroom replacements. So that was the first item in the Recreation and Culture in the 2021/2026 Plan that related to Drake Park and that is a necessary, short term, it's a General Fund Project, it's an estimated cost of \$130,000.00 is really the two properties together so it's not broken out but it's an immediate need that's been identified. And in fact, what the City is doing is trying to see if it can secure grant monies to assist in doing this. So that's still in process right now. I know another one was the parking lot and I don't know if that is under here, it might be back in parking lots, we'd have to go back and look. Maybe in buildings and grounds. So you see right here, the fourth item, that's the Drake Park storage facility that you see that there's a \$50,000.00 identification there. So what you saw under Recreation and Culture was the bathroom facilities, this is part of that, it's a dual purpose building and this is the storage part of it. So, again, that's all under DNR grant. I'm looking to see if the parking lot replacement was under here, I think it might be under parking lots for Drake Park but it's also part of it and it's being applied for, too. So the goal is several fold. The bathroom facility, the storage building, the parking lot, and the sidewalk connection, that's all part of Drake Park and that's all in this CIP. And it's being moved forward with right now because as you saw, that was a 2021 limitation timeline on that.

Crutcher said he went past Drake Park a couple days ago and wanted to make sure that was something that's on the list.

Christiansen replied not only is it on the list because it's been in the CIP Program but because of the timeline and the need, it is a priority and is being moved forward in terms of seeking some funding sources from the State to achieve those public improvements. Here it is under parking lots, number two. The downtown parking lot, the downtown Farmington Center, that's the number one parking lot of focus under the CIP for upgrades and enhancements and then you'll see Drake Park is next. So, again, the reason all these things are able to move forward is in the first instance because they've been identified in the Capital Improvement Program. And they've been ranked and funding sources have been identified and timelines have been laid out.

So, what I might suggest, Mr. Chair, if the Commission is so inclined, individual Commissioners, is maybe just to ask if there are any projects or if there is anything that any Commissioner has a concern about or of interest or something that they would like the City to look at or to be included in the CIP. And if it is, we can look for it, if not, we can certainly then add it and certainly provide that to Mr. Majoros to move forward with to the Steering Committee.

Commissioner Perrot asked seeing that Drake Park abuts up to Longacre school property, is there a clear separation between the City and Farmington Public Schools in terms of that property, is there any kind of joint venture, joint usage, of that property?

Christiansen replied right now they are two completely separate sites, Longacre School is owned and operated by Farmington Public Schools and the property boundary is demarcated by a fence that runs along that property boundary. Drake Park is solely owned and maintained, operated by the City of Farmington, but absolutely, we have relationship, no question. I mean there's a pathway through Drake Park that goes then from west to east and goes through the fence in an opening right through the school. So that's very important. One of the things we're talking about right now, the City is, is the City's connectivity and Council was requested to consider moving forward with putting together a Pathways Committee. And they have moved forward with supporting that and doing that, that's in process right now and the purpose of the Pathways Committee is going to be to identify areas that need to be looked at to achieve the connectivity the City desires and one of the areas of discussion is here at Drake Park and from adjacent neighborhood to Drake Park, through Drake Park to Longacre School and a lot of the discussion is focused on the need to make sure that we have a cooperative, collaborative effort together between the City of Farmington and Farmington Public Schools, wherever that might be, not just there at Longacre School and Drake Park but anywhere in connectivity to Longacre School and/or to Farmington High School and other school properties. You know we have the School Administration property, and the bus drive, and the Ten Mile School, the IT for Farmington Public Schools here, too, so absolutely, all that certainly is taken into consideration and we work to achieve things together.

Perrot said coming from the angle of being a parent of kids at Longacre, I know from experience that parking lot is used by Longacre a lot and there's a lot of foot traffic from that through the ballfield and onto the public school property. So, if there was a way that we could have some kind of buy-in from Farmington Public Schools to help out with some of those renovations, that would be enormous.

Director Christiansen stated that is something that is worth consideration, you know, they certainly they have their priorities and their responsibilities to maintain their infrastructure as well and to maintain, sustain their facilities and do their capital improvements, certainly ours as well. But if we can find a way to work together, we certainly want to be able to do that, at a minimum we want to make sure we maintaining our facilities as necessary, and we're upgrading and enhancing our facilities like Drake Park and the parking lot and the connectivity as necessary, even if it's just something that we have to do ourselves for the greater good. But I appreciate that, those are good comments.

Chairperson Crutcher stated he knows there was a discussion before or a forum at least about the parking lot out in front where La Sheesh used to be, there's a spot where there's no sidewalk crossing into the part to Riley Park.

Christiansen asked if he is talking about the property that is Riley Park/Sundquist Pavilion and that southern parking lot that is bounded by the curbing and that has pavers for the Pavilion and then the south end has the planter island that runs all around it?

Crutcher replied right. It's a pedestrian hazard as there's no place for pedestrians to walk through that parking lot.

Christiansen stated there is identification through that area of that connectivity and some areas where there's some voids in the area, where for sure there needs to be maintenance and then upgrades and enhancements. That's a very well used, highly used area. It's home to Farmer's Market for half a year, 26 weeks there's a lot of people and a lot of foot traffic through there and we're aware of all of the existing conditions and deficiencies, so it's part of what's been identified to be maintained and enhanced and certainly part of the overall downtown Farmington center parking lot enhancement that is earmarked to be done shortly, and hopefully sooner than later when we get that opportunity to do so, very important, absolutely. It's the parking lot and what's associated with it as well. You know the Pavilion itself is fifteen years old, we built the Pavilion in 2005 and so over time there needs to be some adjustments, some enhancements, along with the general maintenance. So, a lot of that's been talked about and intended to move forward.

Crutcher then asked what about in the neighborhoods, I know we spend a lot of time in downtown, but what about the sidewalks throughout the rest of the City. I know there was recently some aligning or smoothing of some of the pavement but it looks like in some areas it's probably getting close to a time to be replaced and not just patched over.

Christiansen replied that's a good question and a good point. The City has a Sidewalk Maintenance Program that they go through annually and routinely and identifies deficiencies. And if there's a way to make adjustments to sidewalks, sections of sidewalks that have fallen into a state of disrepair, whether it's grinding those sidewalks and getting them back to a more level, traversable means, the City looks to do that. If it means replacing sidewalks then potentially that has to take place. But if it's more than just a slab of sidewalk, there's an approach that the City would look to take and that's potentially a Special Assessment scenario. In fact, sidewalks were just improved in neighborhoods, Grand River and in the Floral Park neighborhood, Floral Street where the old Wash Hut used to be, if you remember that in the day that burned down, that's a property that sits vacant next to Flagstar Bank on the corner of Orchard Lake and Grand River. That property used to be two-fold, there was the Wash Hut and there was a restaurant there, there was a Chinese restaurant there. And for those of you who have been around for a while, there was a fire there years ago, and there was a structure then that was damaged and the restaurant was torn down and so was the Wash Hut and on the restaurant site, if I'm correct, that's where the bank is, and the Wash Hut site sits there with some of the old foundations and a very, very poor condition sidewalk. And in the CIP it was identified. And the Grand River Corridor actually was requested, asked, if they would participate as a public improvement project in the Corridor and they did, and that sidewalk was all redone. So, that's another way of doing it, Mr. Crutcher, when it becomes a priority area like that, where there's an extended area. You might note we have areas in the community that don't have sidewalks. There are some subdivisions that don't have sidewalks running through the neighborhood. And that was purposeful. We have some zoning and we have some projects, some developments that were approved back in time that didn't have sidewalks with it, they have swale drains and no sidewalks and no curb and gutter along with them. So there's something to be said about that as well. Those are potentially areas where the City might have looked to to construct sidewalk at some point in time. And we have to identify that in the CIP and then we would have to identify prioritization and have to identify funding sources, whether it would be General Funds or outside funding sources or Special Assessments. The City has a sidewalk program, an annual sidewalk program that they constantly look at maintenance.

Crutcher then asked if that would be part of a study of the Committee to the City to the place where there's no sidewalks and Christiansen responded it's been discussed between City Management and the Administration in moving forward with Council's direction to create a Pathways Committee, yes.

Chairperson Crutcher asked if any other Commissioners had any comments to make.

Commissioner Perrott stated that he had done an informal survey and that the majority of residents in the City would say sidewalks were of utmost concern and a huge priority.

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And that the City has an individual budget for sidewalks and that that budget may not be large enough and that the City is going to drop 4 million dollars to renovate downtown which he understands the means and why it gets the attention that it does, but if the City is going to spend 4 million dollars on renovating a couple of blocks of the downtown area, they need to be prepared to explain to residents why their sidewalks are not getting fixed. And that creates a larger issue of if a senior falls and sues the City, where are we at then. But the City needs to be prepared to explain themselves when we start throwing around that much money, why is our infrastructure in the shape that it's in.

Commissioner Kmetzo asked if that is the feedback that Commissioner Majoros should bring back to the Steering Committee when they meet and Perrot responded yes, that they addressed this the last time they got together. Perrot emphasized the point of having a plan, without a plan, the City is in trouble. And that he has shared his sentiments with Majoros who he knows will relate his concerns to the Steering Committee and that sidewalk repair is a lot higher on the priority list than we really recognize.

Christiansen stated that if we were to go back into the CIP that we were looking at before, the 2021/2026 funding needs that are identified, the Executive Summary, the pie chart, the three largest areas number of projects and expenditures is infrastructure, and in particular roads is number one. But number two, sidewalks and streetscapes, that area is the second largest area in 2021/2026, \$6,540,000.00, 23% of the budget. Now, certainly a significant portion of that was with the streetscape project. But sidewalks are, too. If you look here, two areas of sidewalks that are identified, Power to Brookdale on Grand River, the Grand River Streetscape, that's a streetscape project. The Sidewalk Replacement Program, you can see that this is a City fund that there's 1.3 million dollars allocated, it's a \$151,000.00 a year program, it's all of the years under this years CIP, and that's the Sidewalk Replacement Program where sidewalks have been identified and deemed to be deficient and need to have replacement, more than grinding, etc., so it's an ongoing program. However, I think with the Pathways Committee and with the emphasis on certain portions of sidewalks and areas where we don't have connectivity, you're going to see this area expanded. And if there is a certain area of focus or interest, this is where it needs to be included. So this is where you as an individual Commissioner or the Commission needs to then refer that to Mr. Majoros and have him continue it forward to the Steering Committee with a specific project area.

Commissioner Waun asked for clarification on the record that the 4 million dollar project is not 4 million dollars for a streetscape that the City is spending; that it is partially the City, partially the DDA separate from the City, and a part of it is a grant, so it is not 4 million dollars from the City.

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Christiansen replied that the breakdown was shown previously, that it was 75% General Fund and DDA, and then it was 25% of TAP Grant, and that is very important for that particular project.

Christiansen summarized the plan and asked the Commission for input into the CIP and further discussion was held.

Chairperson Crutcher asked for further comments and hearing none, moved on to the next Agenda item.

2021 SCHEDULE OF PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS

Director Christiansen presented the schedule.

MOTION by Perrot, supported by Kmetzo, to approve the 2021 Schedule of Planning Commission Meetings.
Motion carried, all ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None heard.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Waun wished everyone Happy Holidays.

Director Christiansen wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Commissioner Perrot commented on the adjustments that were made in accommodating the Zoom meetings and acknowledged everyone in their efforts to comply.

Director Christiansen thanked Brian Golden for his help in making the adjustment.

Commissioner Perrot thanked Recording Secretary Murphy for her participation in the Planning Commission meetings.

Murphy replied that it has been a privilege and a pleasure to serve.

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ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Waun, supported by Perrot, to adjourn the meeting.
Motion carried, all ayes.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary