

MINUTES

**ANN ARBOR CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

BUSINESS MEETING

7:00 p.m. – March 7, 2006

Time: Chair Hall called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Place: Council Chamber, Second Floor, 100 North Fifth Avenue, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

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ROLL CALL

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Members Present: Carlberg, D'Amour, Emaus, Hall, Kunselman, Lipson, Potts, Pratt

Members Absent: Bona

Staff Present: Foondle, Kahan, Lloyd, Vaughn

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INTRODUCTIONS

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None.

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MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

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None.

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APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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**Moved by Emaus, seconded by Pratt, to approve the agenda.**

Hall asked that the order of the two business items be switched so consideration of the City-initiated rezoning of the South Pond Village property be first and the Northeast Area Plan second.

A vote on the motion, with the change in order, showed:

YEAS: Carlberg, D'Amour, Emaus, Hall, Kunselman, Lipson, Potts, Pratt  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: Bona

**Motion carried.**

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REPORTS FROM CITY ADMINISTRATION, CITY COUNCIL,  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES, PLANNING COMMISSION  
OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES, WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

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D'Amour announced that the New Greenway Task Force was reaching the midway point of the timeframe to complete its work, with the deadline for submitting the final work product to Council being the end of September. He said two dates had been tentatively set for public workshops: April 22 and April 29. He said two sites the City owned in the Allen Creek greenway were being used as a nucleus for exploring issues of what the greenway would entail, stating that these issues would be presented to the public for input. He stated that the next work session was March 11 at 8:30 a.m. at Leslie Park Golf Course, and the next regular meeting was March 15.

Hall suggested that a working session be held with the Planning Commission to provide input on the different alternatives.

Hall reported that on March 14 at 6:00 p.m. in the Sixth Floor Conference Room, there would be a joint working session between the Planning Commission and the Greenbelt Advisory Commission to for preliminary discussions on the idea of a City program of combining zoning with the greenbelt program and how development rights might be traded. Following that meeting, at 7:30 p.m., she said, the Planning Commission would hold a working session on the Northeast Area Transportation Plan.

Potts announced that two Ordinance Revisions Committee meetings were coming up: March 23 and March 30, both at 3:30 p.m. in the Sixth Floor Conference Room.

Pratt stated that a new committee, of which he was a member, called the Community Security and Public Space Task Force, would hold its first meeting on March 16.

Hall reported that she and the chair of the Energy Commission, as well as City staff, would be setting up a meeting to talk about the resolution passed by City Council asking the two commissions to take a look at energy efficiency.

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AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

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None.

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PUBLIC HEARINGS SCHEDULED FOR NEXT MEETING

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Hall announced the public hearings scheduled for the March 21, 2006 meeting.

REGULAR BUSINESS

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a. Public Hearing and Action on City-Initiated Zoning (South Pond Village Property), 48.29 acres, north of Arborland, east of Woodcreek Subdivision (Chalmers Drive), south of Huron River Drive, and west of US-23. A proposal to zone this property R1B (Single-Family Dwelling District) (tabled at 2/22/06 meeting) – Staff Recommendation: Approval

Vaughn described the proposed rezoning.

Tom Covert, of Atwell-Hicks, Inc., representing the owner of the property, provided background information on the South Pond Village proposal. He stated that the proposed R1B zoning would not allow an economically feasible use of the property and said the owner would request R4A zoning.

Blair Gerdes, president of the Woodcreek Neighborhood Association, stated that the main concerns with the development of this property related to access. She said access was not possible to the north due to the protected natural features, not possible to the east because of US-23, and not possible to the south because of Arborland, leaving the Woodcreek neighborhood for access. She expressed concern about using the only access into Woodcreek for access to this site, noting that there would be no access to either site if something were to happen to the only access. She also expressed concern about traffic on Washtenaw Avenue, especially with the close proximity of two of the worst intersections in the City. She stated that people took their lives into their hands when turning onto or off of Washtenaw. She said the residents of the neighborhood were committed to appropriate use of the property and protection of the natural features and asked the Planning Commission to consider the concerns expressed.

Teresa Jackson, Woodcreek resident, stated that she purchased her home six years ago. She discussed how maddening the traffic was in this area and said the development of the old car dealership site on Washtenaw at Chalmers would only make matters worse. She did not want to see the value of her home decrease because of this property being developed with all of the traffic problems in the area, and also stated that she did not want to see an access road go through her neighborhood.

Michael Homel, 3473 Woodale Court, stated that R1B zoning was much more preferable than what was originally proposed for this property, adding that it was compatible with the Woodcreek neighborhood and other residential uses to the north. However, he said, he was less than enthusiastic about R1B zoning because of the continuing traffic and access problems. While these were not problems that Commission must address this evening, he said, they would need to be addressed when a specific proposal was submitted for the property. With regard to the comment made by the petitioner's representative about economic viability of the property, he pointed out that the problems of access already existed when the owner purchased the property. He stated that residents have expressed an interest in a neighborhood park on this site, which the Park Advisory Commission was considering. It was his hope that the Planning Commission would take these concerns into consideration.

Jane Heineken, 1755 Bryan Court, stated that there have been various proposals about placing a road behind her home to ease the traffic situation. As troubling as a road in her backyard

sounded, she said, she supported anything that would improve traffic safety. However, she said, no proposal for such a road has been submitted to date that impressed her as making the situation less dangerous. She brought up the issue of transportation for the school children in the neighborhood, noting that buses have a difficult time getting in and out of the neighborhood and Chalmers Drive. Adding as many as 200 more children with the development of this property would only make the situation worse. She stated that this neighborhood was an island, in that it was isolated from recreational and commercial uses as far as safe access to them, and asked that Commission take these concerns into consideration.

Rich Mazzari, 1615 Meadowside Drive, pointed out that this property was zoned for single-family use while in the township, of which the property owner was aware prior to purchasing it, and that he believed the owner knew what he was getting when he bought the property. It was the property owner who proposed the change, he said, submitting a zoning for R4A multiple-family use.

David Krehbiel, 2940 Provincial Drive, did not live in the immediate vicinity, but said he drove on Washtenaw Avenue everyday and was amazed that all of the development in this area has been allowed because Washtenaw already was gridlocked. He believed the traffic situation has gone beyond what was reasonable and feasible and that to propose another major development and add to the traffic was irresponsible.

Geoff Baker, an Ann Arbor resident and sometime faculty member at the University of Michigan School of Urban Planning, stated that the concerns of the residents were legitimate. He disagreed with a downzoning to R1A, stating that this was a prime site for R4A-density development. He stated that one of the problems here was inadequate planning for access to these sites, adding that part of the reason the traffic was so bad here was because there were too many strip retail centers along Washtenaw and the people who would patronize them have to do so by driving their vehicles.

Anusha Ranganathan, 1635 Meadowside Drive, stated that even though Tappan Middle School was so close, the school bus for his neighborhood arrived 40 minutes before school started because the traffic and the difficulty turning onto Washtenaw made the trip take much longer. He suggested that prior to proposing anything on this site, access and expansion of traffic flow on Washtenaw be considered.

Brenda Bentley, 621 Second Street, agreed that this area was appropriate for dense development, given the assumption that the traffic problems in this area would be solved, perhaps with the extension of Clark Road, which has long been in part of the master plan. She stated that a walking lifestyle was the lifestyle of the future. She stated that finding time for physical exercise was a losing battle and the best way to achieve it was to incorporate it into daily routine, such as walking to work, school or the store. She stated that suburban residents were heavier than city residents because of the amount of time they spent in their vehicles and the more dense the city, the better it was for walking. She was confident that the traffic problems would be solved.

Nina Homel, 3473 Wooddale, looked forward to traffic problems being solved, which would mean that she would no longer have to deal with the problem of turning onto Washtenaw from Chalmers. She stated that she was a dedicated walker and she wished there were more opportunities to walk. She noted that people did not have the ability to walk past Arborland because of the entryways onto US-23. She would like to see more opportunities for recreation,

stating that a park would provide that. It was her hope that the traffic problems would be resolved regardless of the zoning of this property, adding that the people in this area should not have to deal with 200 to 300 dwelling units on this property in the meantime.

Peter Allen, 2224 Applewood Court, stated that he was in the development business and he questioned whether every option had been explored to come up with a win-win situation. If he were the developer of the property and had a chance for R4A zoning, he said, he would find every economic way to help solve the access problems.

Noting no further speakers, Hall declared the public hearing closed.

**Moved by Potts, seconded by Emaus, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the South Pond Village Property Rezoning from Unzoned to R1B (Single-Family Dwelling District).**

D'Amour asked for clarification on the difference between R1A and R1B zoning.

Vaughn replied that the main difference was the R1A zoning district required a minimum 20,000-square foot lot size and the R1B zoning district required a minimum 10,000-square foot lot size. He said both zoning districts were for single-family development.

D'Amour suggested that perhaps Commission might want to consider zoning the property agricultural. While it was an odd zoning district to see in a city, he said, it might be appropriate to use it as a holding zone in this situation to allow flexibility in terms of innovative proposals coming forth. He believed better access options were needed for this site. He was opposed to a Clark Road extension and suggested that access through Arborland Mall was not entirely impossible.

Carlberg said she agreed with many of the speakers this evening. On one hand, she said, this was an ideal site for dense development because of all of the amenities in the area, but on the other hand, the traffic on Washtenaw was impossible and she did not foresee a traffic signal at Chalmers and Washtenaw in the near future. She said the City could not leave the property unzoned, as that would be irresponsible, but said she did not think it was appropriate to zone the property for a use that was not legitimate, so she did not support agricultural zoning. She believed that R1B was a viable zoning at this time, which would allow someone to come forward with a development proposal.

Potts mentioned the benefits listed under the agricultural zoning, such as open space, light and air, and as a holding zone to protect the land until an appropriate zone was decided. However, she questioned for which type of development the land would be held using the agricultural zoning, due to the access limitations. She did not think there was much choice here but to place the most responsible zoning on the property. She thought R1B was the best solution, given the access and safety issues.

Kunselman asked how this land was zoned when it was in the township.

Vaughn recalled that the property had either been zoned single-family residential or agricultural.

Kunselman wondered if City Council would consider this rezoning first or the adoption of the Northeast Area Plan and if that would have any relevance in terms of procedure.

Vaughn stated that the existing Northeast Area Plan was a guide for future development but, when a draft update of a more outdated plan was nearing or at completion, the most current recommendations generally were used. He was uncertain if the rezoning would be considered by Council first, or if the two would be considered at the same time.

Kunselman expressed concern about the litigious society in which we lived and wondered if perhaps Commission might want to table action on the rezoning until the master plan was adopted.

Lipson stated that the City was obligated to zone this property. He thought it was helpful to have both the existing Northeast Area Plan and the proposed update, adding that the R1B zoning classification was consistent with the proposed plan. He recalled that during the earlier proposal for South Pond Village, consisting of 315 townhome units, the residents in the area were concerned about the same issues they were concerned about today. The Planning Commission and City Council agreed, he said. He also recalled that members of the adjacent neighborhood were aware that their neighborhood contained stub streets and that they believed the subject property would be developed with something more consistent with Woodcreek. He noted that the proposed R1B zoning was exactly the same as the Woodcreek zoning. He understood that anyone commuting on Washtenaw suffered from the congestion of the over-extended artery. If a proposal were to go through for this property, he said, there might be some ways that the traffic could be alleviated to some extent. That, and the fact that density under the R1B zoning was far lower than the previous proposal, was a reasonable compromise, he said. He stated that Woodcreek has been a financially viable development for whoever developed it, so it was a difficult argument for the owner of this property to say that R1B zoning was an economically unreasonable zoning. He was uncertain whether agriculture was a reasonable zoning for the property, stating that it would most likely invite litigation. He noted that the proposed Northeast Area Plan recommended an increase in density for this property if access could be gained through Arborland Mall. He expressed his support for the R1B zoning.

Emaus stated that the idea of an agricultural zoning on this property appealed to him, with the intent that it serve as a holding zone until a development proposal was brought forward that satisfied traffic problems. He noted that the traffic in this area was not generated by the residents of Woodcreek, nor would it be generated by future residents of this subject property. It was a question of access, he said, which would still be present with the R1B zoning, and how to resolve it.

Pratt stated that the concept of a lower density residential zoning, like R1B, with the idea that housing be clustered to protect natural features, was the most practical solution. He thought there would be fewer legal issues if the property were zoned close to what the owner intended when he purchased the property. One of the issues was that Huron River Drive to the north was a rural area and Washtenaw Avenue to the south was an intense use area, he said. He stated that zoning the property R1B at this time did not obligate the City to approve a development proposal that met the density criteria if there were traffic problems. He noted that the traffic study done by Corradino Associates indicated that traffic volume increases from a development on this property was minimal compared to the traffic coming from out of town. Even if this property remained undeveloped, people would still be coming into the City and increasing traffic. He would be surprised if the residents on Chalmers didn't express the same concerns when the

Woodcreek development was proposed. If the issues had been addressed then, he said, the cost of addressing those issues would have been added to the prices of the Woodcreek homes, making the home prices much higher. While it has been stated that access to Huron River Drive would be problematic, he supported finding a way to provide access in that location if possible.

Vaughn stated that what made access problematic was that most of the high quality natural features were on the north side of site, adjacent to Huron River Drive. He noted that the petitioner for South Pond Village worked very closely with staff, basically saying that he would put the access wherever staff said it should go. He said the petitioner agreed to dedicate the Huron River Drive frontage as parkland because of its natural features. Even if access could be provided there, he said, it was not the most desirable access because people would still have to circle around to get to Washtenaw. He said staff still believed that some type of access along the south side of Woodcreek Subdivision had merit should a development go in on this property.

Hall stated that this site continued to be difficult, noting that the Master Plan Revisions Committee had discussed it extensively. She supported the R1B zoning this evening. She sympathized with the traffic and safety concerns of the neighbors, as this was a difficult area, and said she also agreed with the comments made about density, stating that this was an ideal location for higher density. However, she did not think the City could right the wrongs of the individually developed properties by allowing a high-density development on this site. She thought the best that could be done here was zone the property R1B and see what was proposed for the future. She did not think Arborland was developed for pedestrians and, while high density was appropriate in this location, she did not think it would work. Perhaps a redevelopment of Arborland, if it were to ever occur, could result in more of what the City wanted for this area. She did not think zoning this property R1B would take something away from the petitioner, noting that the petitioner purchased this property while it was in the township and there was never a right to develop it a certain way in the City. If development issues were worked out, she said, perhaps a rezoning to PUD or a mixed commercial zoning might be considered, which was how the master plan was written.

D'Amour agreed with R1B zoning for this property. In terms of a specific proposal, he said, urbanism worked in the right context, not in isolated circumstances. He did not think this was an appropriate site for higher density development without a better-functioning Arborland.

Potts questioned if there were a particular timing by which this decision should be made by Planning Commission and City Council, given the draft Northeast Area Plan also being considered for adoption.

Hall stated that the City has been faced with situations of development proposals being out of sync with master plans, adding that the City recently approved developments in the northeast area while the draft Northeast Area Plan was being created and finalized. She did not think that should be an issue here.

Lloyd stated that inconsistency between a master plan and zoning could sometimes be problematic. He said staff was working with the City Attorney's Office for direction on moving forward to City Council.

Kunselman thought procedure was important here and expressed his preference that the Northeast Area Plan be considered by City Council first. He thought R1B zoning was one of the most appropriate zoning classifications here, stating that he would even support R1A zoning if more of a holding pattern were desired.

**Moved by Kunselman, seconded by Lipson, to call the question.**

A vote on the motion to call the question showed:

YEAS: Carlberg, Hall, Kunselman, Lipson, Potts, Pratt  
NAYS: D'Amour, Emaus  
ABSENT: Bona

**Motion carried.**

A vote on the main motion showed:

YEAS: Carlberg, D'Amour, Hall, Kunselman, Lipson, Potts, Pratt  
NAYS: Emaus  
ABSENT: Bona

**Motion carried.**

b. Public Hearing and Action on Adoption of Northeast Area Plan as an Element of the Ann Arbor City Master Plan – Staff Recommendation: Approval

Kahan discussed the background of the planning effort, the plan itself, and innovative aspects of the plan.

Ray Detter, chair of the DDA Citizens Advisory Council, expressed his support for this plan. He stated that the Lower Town portion was well done, that it was sensitive to the University of Michigan and neighborhood concerns while providing a creative vision for the area. He said the document provided for high density, office, retail, residential, and pedestrian-oriented development of the Lower Town area, adding that if this were followed, it would continue to attract top-notch employees and residents. He stated that increased residents would lessen the need for additional parking, thereby resulting in fewer cars on the streets, adding that this would also stimulate the vitality of the central area and offer more choices and an alternative to urban sprawl. He stated that the plans for Lower Town must move quickly, though, as the University of Michigan planned to build two six-story parking structures and a transit center on Maiden Lane. He encouraged the City to challenge the University's movement in this direction, noting that the City owned Maiden Lane and Wall Street. He did not believe that the University could do whatever it wanted as far as new development was concerned.

Ryan Buck, transportation planner with the Washtenaw Area Transportation Study (WATS), distributed a resolution from the study committee supporting the retention of the Barton Road access to M-14. The study committee also commended the City for an admirable job on sustainable planning and innovative techniques, he said. However, he stated that the committee believed the City should first adopt the Northeast Area Transportation Plan, as this was a component of the Northeast Area Plan.

Milt Baker, 628 Green Road, spoke on behalf of a group to preserve the Narrow Gauge woods, which was Site 26 in the plan. He stated that this was an important environmental piece of property for the City and should be preserved, as specified in the Miller's Creek Study recently done. Its preservation was critical to the health of the Huron River, he said. He stated that the

Northeast Area Plan looked at this site as two different portions, one being the northern part with high quality woodlands recommended for preservation and the other being the southern part recommended for residential use. He questioned why any type of development was being recommended for the southern portion since it was such an environmentally sensitive piece of property. He thought the recommendation to preserve one portion and develop the other should be looked at again.

Paul Swallow, 645 Green Road, agreed with the comments made by the previous speaker about the Narrow Gauge woods. He also questioned the inconsistency in recommending part of Site 26 being preserved and the other part being developed.

Chris Crockett, 506 East Kingsley Street, president of the Old Fourth Ward Association, expressed her support for this plan and for a Lower Town historic district, stating that both would help to preserve the historic fabric of the community and develop new housing opportunities. She looked forward to expanding pedestrian opportunities. She was very concerned, however, with the University's plans to take two blocks between Maiden Lane and Wall Street and create two enormous above ground parking structures and a cluster of stark medical buildings. She said it would squander an incredible opportunity for housing in a mixed-use development that would enhance both the University and the community. Developing this area with parking structures and a medical building complex, she said, would create a very dangerous area clogged with traffic and exhaust, and an area at night that would be dark, empty and dangerous. She suggested that the University could develop each building with street-level amenities and parking, office and residential above, with the parking structure portion designed to not look like a parking structure. This would create a more livable condition, she said, taking advantage of the access to the river. She hoped the City would work with the University to move in this direction.

Rosemary Sarri, 1050 Wall Street, stated that she surveyed members of her condominium development and residents of Nielsen Court and all strongly support the Northeast Area Plan, particularly the Lower Town portion. She wondered whoever heard of constructing two large parking structures in the middle of a residential area, stating that there were over 800 residents currently in this area, with close to another 1,000 being added with the development of the Broadway Village project. She stated that this was a gross distortion of any kind of environmental planning. It was very important that this plan be adopted quickly and implementation started, she said. She did not think the University has been very receptive in terms of consideration of others, so she also thought it was important that the City exert its control of the streets. She said the residents in this area needed to be able to live in a decent environment, which would not be possible if the University carried through its plans for the two parking structures.

Jonathon Levine, 3006 Lexington, endorsed both the plan and its process, commending City staff on developing a document that articulated a vision for creating alternatives to current development patterns and sprawl. He asked that the Planning Commission be prepared to stand up to residents when new developments with higher density are proposed, saying that the vision for Ann Arbor was to provide rich alternatives to urban sprawl. He was concerned that much of the northeast area was being developed as a suburb of metro Detroit, which he did not think Ann Arbor wanted for its community.

Ken Clark, 497 Larkspur, was in favor of adopting the Northeast Area Plan, stating that it was one of the most thorough and well-thought plans in City history, containing excellent land use recommendations. Staff did an exemplary job, he said. He was not surprised that the process was contentious, due to the amount of undeveloped land in the northeast area. He stated that

the Northeast Area Plan process took a great deal of time, but noted that quality work took time. He believed the plan was a high quality product in the area of wisdom and urged adoption.

Kitty Mohrlock, 1050 Wall Street, stated that she has lived here for about 30 years and worked at the University in the health system. She loved this area and heartily supported the Northeast Area Plan, especially because of its focus on higher density housing and retail mix. She believed this plan was an important step toward rebuilding people-friendly neighborhoods that used to exist years ago and toward strengthening the community as a whole. She expressed concern about the Wall Street corridor and the University's plans to construct two parking structures, noting that she moved to this area so she could walk to work. She thought this area would be better developed with a mixture of condominiums and apartments to enable residents to walk to work.

Laura Strowe, 1327 Broadway, said she was interested in the Northeast Area Plan because there have been several situations where it was used as a defense for a development she did not like. The first time, she said, was during the Broadway Village project, which she thought was a horrendous plan. She said it was a huge, dense development in the middle of a low-density neighborhood. However, she said, when the project was discussed, the draft Northeast Area Plan was used to defend the project. She said she recently attended a meeting with University planners, who said their plans to develop Wall Street/Maiden Lane were in keeping with the draft Northeast Area Plan. She did not believe that either of the Broadway Village or University plans complied with the intent or vision of the draft plan. Her concern was that somehow this plan could be used by developers as they see fit and she wanted to make sure that it was used correctly so it protected the citizens and the community.

Paul Green, 1615 Harbal Drive, believed this was a very well done plan. He provided comments on a few different sections in the plan. First, he said, Chapter 7, Goal E, lacked a mechanism for the suggested coordination with other governmental entities. With regard to Chapter 6, Land Use, he suggested that landscaping be required inside parking lots, not just around their perimeters. In Chapter 7, Transportation Systems, he believed the language needed to be written to retain the LOS C. With regard to Site 18 in Chapter 10, he noted that the natural features on the site constrained development. And, finally, with regard to Site 20 in Chapter 10, he asked that the term "structures" replace "facades."

Chris Graham, a member of the Natural Features Ordinance Committee, stated that this was an outstanding plan, commending staff members for their highly innovative ideas and authoring skills. He stated that the northeast area harbored the greatest concentration of natural features in the City and it was quite fitting that this new plan discussed natural features in just about every section. He was thrilled that so much of this plan included what many have been working on for many years. He urged adoption of the plan.

Peter Allen, 2242 Applewood Court, had a personal vision of proper development that reflected community values in the next five years and he believed this plan encouraged that type of development. He stated that linking the downtown to the riverfront was a very important part of the process and he thought this plan would open up the riverfront to allow that. Some of the qualities of the plan were the bold discussions about sustainability, natural systems, improving creeksheds, and increasing density. He believed the University would listen to the City about what should happen in the Lower Town area.

Bill Kinley, 843 Asa Gray Drive, stated that this was a wonderful, well-crafted plan. He suggested that language be added to Chapter 6 regarding land use, such as “On appropriate parcels, flexibility for mixed use commercial development, potentially consisting of offices, service business, community retail and/or multiple-family residential, may be considered to enrich the neighborhood.” He stated that this was a simple statement that offered flexibility and creativity and was the result of a discussion he had with staff regarding the small parcel fronting Pontiac Trail near the North Sky project.

Noting no further speakers, Hall declared the public hearing closed.

**Moved by Carlberg, seconded by Kunselman, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby adopts the Northeast Area Plan as an element of the City of Ann Arbor’s Master Plan.**

**Moved by Carlberg, seconded by Kunselman, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council adopt the Northeast Area Plan as an element of the City of Ann Arbor’s Master Plan.**

Lipson said he has never seen anything get as much support as this incredible document, stating that it was time for the Planning Commission to move forward and adopt it. He was aware that the process was a bit rocky and that there were complaints, but said staff deserved an enormous amount of thanks for shepherding it through. To receive endorsements from so many was a sign of success, he said, and expressed his gratitude for a document that clearly reflected community values.

D’Amour said he was extensively involved in this process from the beginning as a member of the citizens advisory committee. He said the plan was the result of an extensive amount of work. He believed there were problems that lead to a different culture with regard to transportation issues and that it was important to hear them. 1) He advised that a master plan document never be rewritten again without inclusion of the transportation issues. He believed the plan would have been adopted much sooner had the transportation component been included. 2) When involving a committee, he said, let the committee take votes and make decisions, even if it is an advisory body. 3) Information needed to be provided in a timely manner to committee members, he said. 4) He believed that the facilitation of a public process must be conducted by an impartial facilitator. He said he would be willing to support this document, but that he would like greater safeguards for natural features. Regarding the issue of the Northeast Area Plan and the Northeast Area Transportation Plan, he said these were different documents and processes and it was difficult for Commission to delay one for the other. He referred to positive aspects of the Northeast Area Transportation Plan process, such as its heavy public involvement, impartial facilitation, and thorough discussion of all issues. One of the reasons the Northeast Area Plan process took so long, he said, was because the Master Plan Revisions Commission painstakingly went through the entire document. He suggested that an amendment be made to Chapter 6 by adding a new “g,” as follows: “Insure that new development follows the Natural Features Master Plan.” He said this offered more protection and would make him feel more comfortable.

**Moved by D’Amour, seconded by Lipson, to amend Chapter 6 by adding a new “g,” as follows: “Insure that new development follows the Natural Features Master Plan.”**

Carlberg stated that a Natural Features Master Plan already existed and it was her belief that it would be followed with or without this amendment.

A vote on the amendment showed:

YEAS: Carlberg, D'Amour, Emaus, Hall, Kunselman, Lipson, Potts, Pratt  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: Bona

**Motion carried.**

**Moved by D'Amour, seconded by Potts, to delete the entire section entitled, "East-West Collector (Chalmers Area)," from Chapter 7.**

Carlberg stated that the Master Plan Revisions Committee spent hours reviewing this language. She would not want to see this language removed because it referred to other documents that discussed the Clark Road Extension and silence on this issue would provide no direction to other bodies. She stated that this section provided good historical information and pointed out that the final paragraph indicated that the Northeast Area Transportation Plan did not recommend the extension. She would not want to remove the possibility of a local collector south of Woodcreek should it ever be needed.

Lipson did not see any reason to delete this section. He noted that the Master Plan Revisions Committee, of which Commissioner D'Amour was a member, thoroughly reviewed this section. To bring this issue up now was untimely, he said.

Pratt said he could not envision an extension crossing the freeway happening in the foreseeable future, but he did not want to bar any opportunities. He did not want the section deleted.

D'Amour said he would be willing to modify his proposed amendment by just removing the last bulleted point, which dealt with the east-west connector. Its absence from the document did not preclude it from ever happening, he said.

Hall asked if the text in this bulleted item was quoted from another source.

Kahan replied yes, it was a quote from The Corradino Group, the consultant hired to assist with the Northeast Area Transportation Plan.

Kunselman stated that this was becoming an exercise in wordsmithing and he did not want to impinge upon all of the efforts that have occurred. He stated that the efforts put forth by predecessors should be protected.

Carlberg did not want to delete this language, as it was someone's analysis of another party's conclusion, and the importance of this final conclusion was that the City should periodically evaluate actual volumes. She did not believe the issue of "when" was the main clause in this statement.

D'Amour stated that if Commission members were uncomfortable with removing that bulleted point, then he was willing to leave it in and change the word "when" to "if." This way, he said, it was not a commitment.

Potts did not support changing the language of someone else's quote.

Following a lack of support, D'Amour withdrew his amendment.

Kunselman did not necessarily agree with the recommendation on page 8 of Chapter Ten, which referred to the Riverside Park land swap. He stated that Riverside Park had a lot of significant open space, which allowed a variety of recreational activities, and he was reluctant to see the City give that up. He did not see any critical riverfront parkland owned by DTE in jeopardy of being lost to another use, so he did not see this as a fair swap. He also noted that, given what has been said about the University's plan for parking structures on Wall Street, it was unlikely that additional housing would be developed on Canal Street.

Lipson stated that this language was a suggestion only; that it was not cast in stone.

Emaus stated that he liked the flexibility that floor area ratios (FARs) provided and said he did not see any references to these in the plan.

Kahan stated that the intent of a master plan document was to provide general guidance to design issues, such as height, so FAR recommendations would not normally be included. He said FAR recommendations were not included in the Northeast Area Plan; however, he said there was no language precluding them. What they were trying to incorporate, he said, was language to encourage narrower vertical uses.

Potts stated that this was a good, useful master plan. She said she has always been uneasy about density and height ranges, preferring that the plan identify the maximum height that would be allowed. She believed that the recommendation for Site 20 on page 11 of Chapter Ten had already been violated with regard to building design/materials, and suggested that the plan be revised to reflect that.

**Moved by Potts, seconded by Kunselman, to delete the following language from Site 20 on page 11 of Chapter Ten:  
"...building design that complements the character of a campus setting and conveys a residential instead of institutional setting, and stone and/or brick facades that convey a sense of permanence."**

Kunselman said he would prefer that this language remain, as there would always be the possibility of going back and changing Commission's previous action.

Lipson said he also would prefer that the language stay, noting that the building façade, while revised, still contained stone and brick.

A vote on the amendment showed:

YEAS: D'Amour, Potts  
NAYS: Carlberg, Emaus, Hall, Kunselman, Lipson, Pratt  
ABSENT: Bona

**Motion failed.**

Pratt expressed his appreciation to everyone who was involved in the creation of this plan, stating that he planned to support it. With regard to transportation issues, he said, just because they were not mentioned did not mean they could not happen. He wanted to make sure that his vote for the Northeast Area Plan was not construed as an endorsement for two transportation-related items. One, he did not favor closing the Barton Drive ramp onto M-14 at this time, although there was always the possibility that he may change his mind following more discussion. Second, with regard to the issue of Level of Service (LOS) C versus D, he stated that making a LOS D a passing grade was not appropriate and he was uncomfortable with that assumption.

Carlberg stated that this was an outstanding document, praising its completeness and the approach taken to come up with the greatest amount of variety and flexibility. She also stated that the plan did a good job of looking at a variety of urban residential forms that would be protective of natural features and provide a minimum footprint while allowing density. She said it would provide clear direction for developers and allow the City to plan for responsible density. She added that it represented the best of what this community desired for the future.

Hall agreed that this was an innovative plan. She believed it put Ann Arbor in the position of taking the lead in master planning, throughout both the state and country. She said the public comment about the current direction the northeast area was taking with regard to land use not fitting the image of Ann Arbor resonated with her. It was encouraging that so many people came this evening to speak in favor of the plan, she said, confirming all the hard work that has gone into its planning. With regard to a comment made this evening about Goal E in the Introduction section, which had to do with promoting cooperation between the City and other governmental agencies, she said there was an item in the Implementation section about inter-jurisdictional cooperation. With regard to the comment made about landscaping in parking lots, she stated that the first sentence under "Landscaping" on page 11 of Chapter Six referred to providing extensive landscaping in development projects. She asked if this applied to parking lots or if parking lots should be specified.

Kahan stated that the City Code required landscaping in parking lots and that the language contained in this section suggested landscaping in other places in addition to parking lots.

Hall stated that with regard to the public comment made about transportation and failing grades (Chapter 7), she would prefer having this discussion as part of the Northeast Area Transportation Plan. She stated that Site 18 was discussed at length and it was decided that the proposed language should remain, as the City would welcome the review of a development proposal that was consistent with the natural features ordinance. With regard to the public comment on reading the master plan correctly, she said this has been a concern of hers in the past because of the possibility for different interpretations, but said she believed this plan has been written very carefully.

**Moved by D'Amour, seconded by Potts, to add a new "H"  
under Objective 1 on page 16 of Chapter Six, to read as**

**follows: “Discourage additional curb cuts along Huron Parkway.”**

Potts said it was her understanding that the City had a policy that regulated curb cuts on Huron Parkway.

Carlberg stated that there was a plan for Huron Parkway that specified guidelines for curb cuts for new development and that City Council had the final word on any new curb cuts. She said the only reason the City approved an additional curb cut on Huron Parkway was because it approved a new development. If the City did not want a curb cut, she said, it needed to be prepared to vote against a new development. She did not know why a statement would be added to the plan to discourage curb cuts for one street and not another.

Lipson stated that on page five of Chapter Seven, under Major Corridors, there was a section on Huron Parkway that discussed this concern.

D’Amour withdrew his proposed amendment and suggested adoption of the plan.

Lipson stated that the construction of parking structures in the Wall Street/Maiden Lane area would be incompatible with the recommendations of the plan and suggested that discussions occur with the University of Michigan about this issue.

Potts stated that she would like to make an amendment to the plan in response to the public speaker who suggested that language be added to encourage flexibility in mixed use developments on appropriate parcels.

**Moved by Potts, seconded by Lipson, to add the following language to page 12 of Chapter Six: “On appropriate parcels, consider permitting mixed use commercial development, potentially consisting of office, service businesses, community retail or multiple-family, to enrich neighborhoods.”**

Kahan referred to the Mixed-Use Centers section on page 15 of Chapter Six, which spoke about this issue in broader terms.

Lipson stated that the Ordinance Revisions Committee was currently working on language that would allow this type of mixed use in existing neighborhoods where they currently were not allowed. He believed that would address the proposed language in this amendment.

Hall noted that the Revising Development Standards section on page five of Chapter Eleven contained a statement encouraging mixed uses in appropriate circumstances, which she believed also addressed the intent of the proposed amendment.

Potts withdrew the amendment.

A vote on the two main motions showed:

YEAS: Carlberg, D’Amour, Emaus, Hall, Kunselman, Lipson, Potts, Pratt  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: Bona

**Motion carried.**

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AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

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None.

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COMMISSION PROPOSED BUSINESS

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Pratt stated that he would like to draft a resolution suggesting that the Mayor and City Council formally request a small task force be created with the University of Michigan, which would include a Planning Commission member, to address development issues, such as the issue brought up earlier regarding parking structures in the Wall Street/Maiden Lane area.

Pratt also suggested that it might be appropriate to have a working session at the Riverside Park site in order to have staff explain the issues related to the park and the suggestions in the Northeast Area Plan about swapping land.

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ADJOURNMENT

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Hall declared the meeting adjourned at 11:24 p.m.

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Mark Lloyd, Manager  
Planning and Development Services

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Bonnie Bona, Secretary

Prepared by Laurie Foondle  
Management Assistant  
Planning and Development Services