

CITY OF HUNTINGTON WOODS  
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
DRAFT MINUTES  
**December 6, 2021**  
7:00 p.m.  
In Person Meeting – Huntington Woods Recreation Center

Commissioner Mike Wright called the Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Jill Ingber, Mike Wright, Rick Polan, Chris Golembiewski, Sheldon Kohn, Todd Sperl, Blake Moore

City Staff Present: Zoning Administrator, Hank Berry.  
MKSK Planning Staff: Brad Strader, Ann Marie Kerby  
CIB Planning Staff: Justin Sprague

**ABSENT:** Jules Olsman (excused) , Gail Linden (excused)

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

**Matter of the Master Plan First Draft Presentation by MKSK (The Master Plan Consultant.**

Chairman Mike Wright and Zoning Administrator, Hank Berry explained the agenda for the meeting. They then emphasize that this is a rough first draft and that nothing seen at the meeting is set in stone.

**Presentation by MKSK:**

Anne Marie Kirby introduced herself, Brad Strader of MKSK, and Justin Sprague from CIB Planning.

Top outcomes of the plan are:

- Meet Criteria for RRC by working closely with MEDC
- Preserve the desirable residential character of Huntington Woods
- Sustainability and Green Infrastructure
- Redevelopment and housing opportunities along commercial corridors
- Coordinate with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan process
- Master Plan Recommendations are based on: Best Practices, MEDC RRC Criteria, MKSK and CIB’s experience, and Feedback from the community and officials

MKSK Recapped their previous workshop schedule with the public

Summary of Engagement:

- Engagement focused on confirming and refining goals and strategies in the previous Master Plans and identifying new priorities.
- Community's top priority improvements for Huntington Woods: Stormwater management, road maintenance and construction, increased sustainability, and parks and recreation opportunities
- Residents also noted that diverse housing, crosswalks, and street improvements and safety should also be incorporated into the Master Plan.

The plan is organized into five different sections: Executive summary, summary of community feedback, vision and goals, existing conditions and recommendations, and action plan.

MKSK Shared the Huntington Woods vision statement in its condensed version.

The main goals of the plan are:

Goal 1: Maintain the excellent quality of City services while avoiding tax increases.

Goal 2: Promote the long term stability of the city's residential neighborhoods

Goal 3: Encourage quality infill development and residential additions that reflect the character of existing homes

Goal 4: Promote a diversified housing stock, focusing on targeted commercial corridors, that accommodates residents of all ages and strive to retain affordable housing

Goal 5: In planned location at the city's perimeter, encourage mixed-use development with high quality retail and restaurant uses.

Goal 6: Maintain and improve the city's park system and recreation facilities and programs. Continue to use the parks and recreational uses as buffers along the community's borders.

Goal 7: Promote the preservation and enhancement of trees, urban forest, and natural resources and features. Use sustainable best practices to protect and preserve the City of Huntington Woods.

Goal 8: Promote continued walkability within Huntington Woods and strengthen pedestrian connections to neighboring communities

Goal 9: Maintain, improve, and beautify the City's road network

Goal 10: Create a more welcoming environment that promotes diversity and inclusion in the city.

Woodward and 11 Mile Road are focused on as enhanced areas. Areas for redevelopment include areas along Coolidge, the city campus area, and all of Woodward.

Green Infrastructure ideas were presented to focus on the stormwater management need indicated by the residents.

#### Sustainability – Recommendations:

- Parking lots over a certain threshold could be held to more rigorous storm management practices and incorporate green infrastructure in parking areas
- Single-family and two-family residential properties over a certain threshold should now show retention of first flush storm events for the net increase of impervious surface they add
- Residential properties should redirect downspouts to vegetated areas or other approved areas (not impervious surfaces or adjacent properties)
- Conduct evaluation awareness campaign on stormwater runoff and include best practices and resources for residents
- Implement green infrastructure along key corridors, including 11 Mile Rd.

#### Complete Streets Recommendations:

- Enhancing pedestrian crossings along 696, Woodward and 11 Mile.
- Safe Route to School study is recommended being done to find the best routes for people to get to the schools
- Lane reconfiguration for 11 Mile being recommended, 4 lanes to 3.

The city hired a consultant for the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion study. The majority of residents indicated they would like more diversity. It is especially lacking in the fields of race and income.

Justin from CIB Planning shared what CIB planning feels is more important at this time for the Economic Development Strategy:

- Business Development/Retention Program
- Diverse Housing Options
- Working with Woodward communities, adjacent communities, Oakland County, SEMCOG and MEDC
- Resources and Incentives:
  - Commercial Rehabilitation Abatement
  - Community revitalization Program
  - Brownfield Act 361
  - The Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF)
  - Municipal/Non-Profit public private partnerships

#### **Woodward Avenue Corridor Plan – Recommendations:**

Phase 1 – Streetscape Improvements

Phase 2: Façade improvements

Phase 3: Infill Development

#### **Coolidge Highway Corridor Plan – Recommendations**

Phase 1: Streetscape improvements and scene management

Phase 2: Infill development

#### **City Campus Area Recommendations**

Includes City Hall, Public Safety, Senior Park and DPW.  
Public Safety has been indicated as a high area of need for rehabbing and upgrading

### **Summary of Preservation Plan:**

- Enhance the preservation plan
- Consider preservation plans for other historic areas in the city
- Consistently enforce historic district regulations
- Develop marketing materials for the preliminary design stage
- Implement hill historic district final report recommendations
- Meet with neighborhood groups to develop specific standards
- Provide education on residential guidelines and historic resources
- Research anti-monotony standards from other communities
- Develop an architectural “pattern book”
- Offer home renovation workshops related to good design

### **Zoning Plan Recommendations**

- Zoning Map and ordinance should remain largely unchanged
- Rezone the city campus area to Business District to allow flexibility in the future of the site
- Southeast corner property at 11 Mile and Woodward should be rezoned from Business District to Transitional District
- Additional Sustainable Standards

The floor opened for questions for the Planning Commission.

**Mike Wright:** Look at the goals of the action plan – it is a great summary of what is being worked towards

**Sheldon Kohn:** Asked for clarification on when the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion was added into the Master Plan since 2008.

**Berry:** Talked about the opportunities to work with results from the DEI study to create a more desirable environment.

**Kohn:** Is the DEI study available online?

**Berry:** We just received it back, it will be available under the Master Plan section

**Kerby:** It is also included in the appendix of the Master Plan.

**Kohn:** What does sustainability means to you?

**Kerby:** We should define it as primarily stormwater management for sustainability

**Kohn:** I don’t see it identified in the plan.

**Strader:** We will define it in terms of what it means to Huntington Woods.

**Kohn:** I would like some more specific identification for that concept.

**Rick Polan:** Suggested to combine like items in the action plan to reduce to number of action items that are currently listed.

**Jill Ingber:** I have an observation. I guess I am interested with how this usually works with recommendations made about the street designs in terms of utilizing the private properties on Woodward and Coolidge.

**Justin Sprague:** Part of that is just making sure that you have the vision and tools in place. Putting a district in place does not cost any money, or change anything – it just shows investors that you're serious and willing to work to occupy the space with desirable options.

**Blake Moore:** Sustainability definitely needs to have a better definition. How did we get to the place of changing a business district to a transitional district? I am using this as an example. How do the best recommendations end up on the list when they were not on the commissions short list?

**Kerby:** It was a combination of community input, meetings with the commission, and best practices. If there are things in the plan that do not look quite right, let us know and we can adjust. We are happy to adjust. It is recommended to be a transitional district to match what is around the district on Woodward.

**Kerby:** agrees that the plan should be consolidated.

**Chairman Wright opened the floor is opened for public participation.**

**Shimon Edut,** 10075 Nadine, I have to say for all of the discussion about development and increasing the size of the city, and the bottom line is money. I want to know how are you going to collect all of these resources and from who? Taxes or what? Thank you.

**Hal Stack:** 13108 Talbot Avenue – This plan does not seem to have measurable SMART goals. It was quite properly pointed out that plans should be periodically reviewed and revised as needed and the planning commission indicated at the last meeting that once the plan is approved, they do not look at it again until the plan is up for renewal by the state. Additionally, the sustainability issue is recognized in the community as a large issue. There is not a single goal that focuses specifically on sustainability, and what we do have is limited compared to what our neighboring communities are doing. This plan also does not include the study that was done in cooperation with ECO Works. I hope in the revision, you take the issue of sustainability seriously and not just talk about better trees. It should be a serious sustainability focused plan. Thank you.

**Jay Schwartz:** 10014 Ludlow – There are a couple of things that are not mentioned at all, and I would like them reconsidered.

1. The issue of forming a public safety district and a library district. What are the pros and cons, can it be done? Hazel park has a library district. Library district and public safety district should be revisited.
2. Bike Lanes – lets deprecate the bike lane issue
3. When we talk about redevelopment, the use of eminent domain should be absolutely and expressly written out and said “no, we are not going to use eminent domain”

I am absolutely against tax holidays, tax abatements, tax breaks, etc.

My comment about diversity is to be very careful how this subject is approached. It is so emotionally charged, and what is said on a survey and what is actually voted on may look different. I will submit my further comments in writing for the record.

MKSK: Library District and Public Safety District would fall under the City Commission, not the Planning Commission.

**Jeff Jenks:** 13361 Ludlow – I’m concerned that the road along Woodward that runs between the stores and Woodward is missed by MDOT. Right now we have a tremendous amount of money that is coming in as it relates to infrastructure. We both look at the big roads. MDOT is not used to thinking about streets. That should be heavily flagged so that it is replaced so that it becomes part of MDOT’s radar. I am concerned that you placed an aging population in DEI rather than discussed it in the regular report. Our senior population is increasing by 20-25%. For people to completely ignore that is not wise, and what are the implications? There’s a lot of other thinking that goes along with that. It should be treated as a general issue and how it relates to planning. People don’t really understand how Woodward can be redeveloped. We could get a lot more tax money off of Woodward, and it could be a lot more usable. Thank you.

**Mari Maslin Cooper :** 13122 Talbot – Was concerned that there demographic areas were scattered throughout the report. She also felt that the photos were more than needed and the language should be expanded so the report could actually be read. She also said the font was difficult to read and asked if it could be bigger.

**Berry:** The font Mari was looking at was a condensed version with two pages per page. He said it would be regular type.

**Chairman Wright seeing no additional persons wishing to speak, closed Public Participation**

**Strader:** went over the comment cards and what they wanted and how to submit the information. He asked that the comments be back before the Christmas Holiday.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Moved by Sheldon Kohn and seconded by Jill Ingber to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting.**

**Ayes: Golembiewski, Kohn, Sperl, Linden, Ingber, Polan,  
Moore, Wright**

**Nays: None**

**The Motion Carried, meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.**

Submitted

Amy Berry - Recorder