

**OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD APRIL 24, 2025**

---

**Agenda**

**Public Hearing: West Main Villages Mixed Use District Rezoning and Comprehensive Development Plan (Ferlito Group) 6400 Block of West Main Street  
(Parcels 3905-14-405-010, 14-405-020, 14-405-030, 14-405-040 and 14-455-020)  
*From Table of April 10, 2025***

---

A meeting of the Oshtemo Charter Township Planning Commission was held Thursday, April 24, 2025, commencing at 6:00 p.m. at the Oshtemo Township Hall, 7275 West Main Street.

MEMBERS PRESENT:      Michael Chapman, Township Board Liaison  
                                 Deb Everett, Vice Chair  
                                 Scot Jefferies  
                                 Scott Makohn  
                                 Alistair Smith  
                                 Jeremiah Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT:      Philip Doorlag, Chair

Also present were Jodi Stefforia, Planning Director; James Porter, Township Attorney; Colten Hutson, Zoning Administrator, Leeanna Harris, Planning and Zoning Administrator; Jennifer Wood, Recording Secretary; and approximately 18 interested persons.

**CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Vice Chair Everett called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Those in attendance joined in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Vice Chair Everett inquired if there were any changes to the agenda.

The agenda stands as presented.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Vice Chair Everett inquired if anyone present wished to speak on non-agenda items. There was no public comment.

## **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF APRIL 10, 2025**

Vice Chair Everett asked for additions, deletions, or corrections to the minutes of the meeting on April 10, 2025. Vice Chair Everett identified that Chair Doorlag was referenced incorrectly in the minutes, he was not in attendance.

Mr. Chapman made **a motion** to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of April 10, 2025, as corrected. Mr. Makohn **seconded the motion**. The **motion passed** unanimously.

## **PUBLIC HEARING: WEST MAIN VILLAGES MIXED USE DISTRICT (MUD) REZONING AND COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN *From table of April 10, 2025***

Ms. Stefforia presented her staff memo, which is hereby incorporated into the record. Utilizing the Mixed Use District ordinance, adopted in 2024, the applicant is proposing a 48-acre mixed use development encompassing five undeveloped properties. The proposed mix of uses includes commercial, multi-family and two-unit residential buildings. An updated plan was shared.

The Mixed Use District (MUD) ordinance provides for a Concept Plan Review by the Planning Commission, along with a public hearing. That review occurred in September, and the minutes from that meeting are attached in the packet.

Since that time, the applicant has refined the plans, making thoughtful adjustments to the proposed placement of residential street connections to help deter cut-through traffic, and revising apartment amenities and building placement. Potential commercial uses have been more refined. An updated narrative describing the project has been provided by the applicant and is included in the meeting packet for review.

Additionally, a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) – the scope of which was agreed upon by the Michigan Department of Transportation, Road Commission of Kalamazoo County and the Township – has been prepared.

### **Overview:**

The proposed 48-acre development encompasses five parcels on the south side of West Main Street opposite Advia Credit Union including a 20-acre parcel without West Main Street frontage. Several commercial buildings of varying sizes are envisioned along West Main Street at the north end with eleven multi-family buildings (336 units) and 54 two-unit buildings (108 units) also proposed. Total dwelling units of 444 are proposed. This is a rezoning request. The properties are currently zoned R-2, a Residential District that allows for one and two family homes, but these properties are also within the West Main Overlay Zone that has been in place for over 10 years.

Square footage and final layout of the commercial buildings will be determined when site plan approval is sought for the individual buildings. Agreed upon assumptions as to the mix of uses and square footage of the buildings for this area were made so that the traffic impact study could be completed.

Planned for development in three phases, West Main Villages will include public streets and connect with previously identified street extensions. The main road, Provincial Drive, will utilize the existing signal on West Main Street; an extension of Seeco Drive which is signalized at 9th Street is planned as is the utilization of several long-planned street extensions: Outlot F of Country Club Village (1965); Jane Ann's Way temporary cul-de-sac (2013), and the Ben Street stub (2017). Proposed street names include Provincial Drive as the main north-south street and residential streets called Kercheval Drive and Audubon Drive and Ben Street. Formal review and approval of street names has not yet been requested but were added to the plans to facilitate discussion.

### **Current Zoning of the Properties**

The properties are currently zoned R-2, Residential and are also within the West Main Overlay Zone. The northern 12-acres are within the West Main Overlay Zone commercial sub-district. The commercial sub-district of the overlay zone allows retail, office and restaurants without drive through windows, etc. The middle 16-acres are in a residential sub-district which allows one-unit, two-unit, and four-unit homes. The southern 20-acre parcel is located within the residential sub-district of the 9th Street Overlay Zone.

More formal review of site plans for the individual areas will occur before development may commence. The MUD process does not require formal site plans or fully detailed infrastructure plans for the rezoning to be considered.

### **Future Land Use**

#### **2011/2017 Master Plan, West Main Street Sub Area Plan**

Maps were presented from the Future Land Use Plans of 2011, 2017 and the West Main Street Sub Area Plan. A new Comprehensive Master Plan is nearly completed.

#### **Oshtemo Township Housing Plan 2023**

The Oshtemo Township Housing Plan, which has previously been shared, was worked on in detail in 2022 and 2023. Housing shortages are occurring everywhere, including in Kalamazoo County and Oshtemo Township. This plan was created with the help of the W.E. Upjohn Institute in 2022 and adopted in 2023. This plan identifies that Oshtemo was short 750 new housing units over the next eight years, based on population growth projections and known demand from under production in previous years.

#### **2025 Comprehensive Master Plan**

The 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan is in the final stages of drafting presently; numerous public engagement opportunities have been offered over the past year. With the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan, several sub area plans of the Township have been/are being thoroughly evaluated with consideration given to land use issues facing the community today and in the future. While the West Main Street Sub Area Plan's general sentiment will be retained, changes are proposed along the corridor. The Comprehensive Master Plan is moving away from Future Land Use categories and moving towards Place Types.

Along West Main Street, stopping at 8th Street, is proposed within *Regional Corridors* on the draft Place Types Map. The depth of the Regional Corridor extending north and south along the corridor has not been defined. Staff anticipate a context-sensitive approach to implementing the Regional Corridor place type to ensure development therein is compatible with neighboring land uses, provides for connectivity and multimodal transportation, etc. South of the Regional Corridor is the *Neighborhood Residential* place type.

#### Neighborhood Residential Place Type:

- Areas comprised of green, walkable urban and suburban residential developments that foster social interaction and accommodate a variety of housing.
- The scale and variety of housing within Neighborhood Residential areas will reflect the character of the surrounding community.
- Near busier Regional Corridors, these areas may feature increased housing units, types, and sizes such as townhomes, duplexes, tri/quadplexes, condos, or apartment buildings to efficiently utilize space and provide diverse living options close to goods, services, and transit.
- Access to nature and greenspace in the form of public parks, school grounds, and/or private yards is important for quality of life and supporting a strong sense of community.

#### The Regional Corridors Place Type:

- Regional Corridors are essential not only for providing goods and services but also for fostering connections between Oshtemo Township and surrounding communities.
- Through thoughtful planning, use of the Mixed-Use District tool, and availability of existing infrastructure, these corridors are poised to evolve into well-designed, accessible, and thriving centers of efficiently utilized space and vital commerce that enhance the quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

### **Proposed project**

Ms. Stefforia continued sharing that today is a *Mixed Use Rezoning Request* highlighting that this is a new tool in the zoning ordinance toolbox. After six years of work from the Commission and with stakeholders from the public and private sectors, this district was established for the purpose of implementing several sub area plans and to encourage a mixed use in the redevelopment of existing commercial areas.

The Mixed Use District strives to encourage innovation development that incorporated high-quality building design, compatibility with adjacent uses, preservation of unique environmental features, and the creation of open spaces and amenities that enhance the quality of life of residents.

The first formal step is a conceptual review of a Mixed District draft Development Schematic Plan at a public hearing before the Planning Commission. This was done in September 2024 and received a favorable review. The next step – consideration of the rezoning request – also requires a public hearing. This is where we currently are.

More project details have been provided such as a traffic impact study and planned architectural and design standards that create a distinct identity for the development.

The project is proposed in three phases. Phases 1 and 2 have co-dependent elements relating to infrastructure.

#### *Phases*

- Phase 1: 9.62 acres of commercial along West Main Street with site work anticipated to start later this year.
- Phase 2: 11 three-story apartment buildings (366 units) with a 1-acre park, commencing in early 2026.
- Phase 3: 54 duplex/condo lots (108 condos) with a 1.5 acre park, anticipating to start in late 2026, early 2027.

#### *Density*

- Overall density of residential areas is 11 dwelling units per acre, per Ordinance limitation.
- Two-family condos as proposed are permitted today without rezoning.
- Formal site plan review for each area is required before work may commence.

#### *Utilities*

- Utilities and streets constructed as appropriate with engineering review for each phase.

#### *Buffers*

- The MUD requires a 50-foot buffer where the apartments abut residential zoning or uses.
- A 50-foot buffer is provided on the south of the multi-family area (and east) is required.
- Buffer will include trees, a berm, and a 6-foot-tall wood solid fence.
- A buffer is not required where a two-family abuts existing neighborhoods.
- Perimeter greenspace is provided in Phase 1 and Phase 2 (the retail and multi-family area).

#### *Open Space & Amenities*

The main north-south road is proposed to be called Provincial. Formal review and approval of street names has not yet been requested but were added to the plans to facilitate discussion.

- Sidewalks throughout, walking paths, park and pool/club house and pickleball courts in the multi-family area and a park with walking path in the condos area are proposed on the east side of Provincial and would be limited to the multi-family occupants.
- A 1.5-acre park is included in the duplex/condo area on the west side of Provincial Drive would be available to the public.
- The MUD requirement of at least 15% of the property be open space, not including the required buffers, is met.

#### *Connectivity*

- Direct connection of Jane Ann's Way and West Ridge Circle not proposed other a sidewalk through a proposed neighborhood park.
- Potential for shared access with Maple Hill Subaru is shown. Site Plan approval has already occurred for Maple Hill Auto to reestablish the Maple Hill Subaru facility and is moving forward.
- The MUD requires a Traffic Impact Study – scope of which was approved by Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC) and the Township was performed.

Ms. Stefforia provided a brief history of the area, noting that Outlet F in Country Club Village was developed in 1965 by the then-developer of the plat. She also highlighted the establishment of Ben Street in 2017, Jane Ann's Way as a temporary cul-de-sac in 2013, and Seeco Drive as a temporary cul-de-sac in 1993. Ms. Stefforia emphasized that for decades, the intention has been for these streets to eventually be interconnected.

The street extensions are anticipated based upon the Transportation & Mobility Ordinance and both the West Main Street and 9<sup>th</sup> Street Sub Area Plans call for east-west connectivity to create the local street network and provide access management. Traffic calming and design techniques to slow speeds and for placemaking were incorporated.

#### *Traffic Impact Study*

Oshtemo Township Public Works Director Anna Horner spoke about the Traffic Impact Study, which consists of a 456-page report accompanied by a 25-page addendum that includes simulation analysis. Director Horner explained that the report was developed in collaboration with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Road Commission, noting that the study was the result of a strong partnership between the agencies. She highlighted that multiple engineers participated in every meeting, meticulously examining the project at a micro-level of detail.

Horner then explained what is a Traffic Impact Study (TIS). Evaluate the potential impact of a proposed development on the surrounding roadway network. Calculate the additional traffic associated with certain Land Use. Included in the packet is a table showing the different codes and equations used to calculate the numbers. These have been established over years of statistical and empirical data collection and continue to be redefined. The TIS identifies potential problems that might influence traffic flow (volume, speed, etc.) and recommends ways to reduce congestion and delays (called mitigation).

The outputs include Level of Service (LOS), delay timing, queue lengths – tells about the function of traffic on a road. Ratings LOS A (best – free flow), LOS C (middle – may have to adjust speed, common in this area), LOS E (bad – road is at capacity), and LOS F (worst – gridlock, not typical in this area). The LOS can be applied to both a segment and an intersection.

The TIS can be used to incorporate priorities of the Community and inform designers, staff, regional planners and decisions makers.

## Traffic Impact Study West Main Villages

- The scope of the TIS was established by MDOT, RCKC and Township input.
  - 6 engineers
  - Completed by prequalified MDOT Traffic Firm
  - Established target LOS and/or delay allowances.
  - Establish area limits, the typical MDOT limit is 1 mile, but the Maple Hill intersection was included in the TIS.
- Agreed on Land Use Codes in Institute of Transportation Engineers Manual, factors to be applied. The developer was asked to go through the codes and define them more. The Land Use Codes are the maximum, typically the worst case and that is how a road agency likes to see them. The Township wants to support multimodal and how these different land uses function together. The finalized Land Use Codes that were utilized are located in the packet.
- 5 scenarios (typically a TIS only runs 3 scenarios)
  - Existing 2024
  - No build 2026
  - 2026 build-out (All 3 Phases)
  - Mitigation 2026
  - Future 2031
- Includes standard area growth rate of 0.75% for future years.
- Includes adjacent developments proposed or existing at maximum occupancy per zoning.

## TIS West Main Villages – Results Highlights

### *Trips Generation: 24-hour trip generation vs peak hour*

The 24-hour trip generation is broad and look at network impacts and how we are sustaining the network over time and making sure we are efficient without having to build whereas the peak hour helps plan the signals and queuing (main signal on West Main, across from Advia and Seeco Drive/9<sup>th</sup> Street).

- ~~9,344~~ 9,344 average daily traffic
- 67% commercial (~6,300 trips)
  - 44% from the three drive-thru usage (~4,100 trips)
- 32% residential
- AM Peak 780 trips.
- PM Peak 798 trips
- Not enough confidence to apply internal trip capture, so presenting the worst case scenarios based on the road agencies perspectives.

### *Trips Circulation/Access*

Based on the trips generated, the community will be using the main interactions rather than cutting through the neighborhoods and have to sit at an additional signal thus having two delays. The biggest impact will be on Buckham Highlands.

- CCV – increased distance less efficient route = negligible
- Sky King/Buckham Highlands
  - More details can be found in the staff report included in the packet.

- Example – Lexy Lane
  - AM Peak - 3 additional trips.
  - PM Peak – 12 additional trips

### **TIS West Main Villages – Conclusion**

The net trips created with the overall development are minimal. The mitigation is minor. The timing of signals will need to be adjusted.

#### *TIS Specific*

- Designed to discourage cut through traffic.
- Mitigation needed is minor.
  - Signal timing adjusted.
  - Seeco Drive westbound lane configured headed westbound, it will look like the same layout that is on the Walmart side that is three lanes. There is a decent amount of pavement there so it should just need to be widened a few feet and will not need the signal moved.
  - Add a right turn lane/taper from eastbound West Main Street to Provincial Drive, it will mirror the Advia side.
- RCKC comments all addressed.
- The MDOT Kalamazoo local office concurred. They requested a few additional outputs to include. It will then need to go to the MDOT Lansing office for review.

#### *Long Term*

- Need to continue connectivity and good planning to protect function of the primary network.
- Continue active participation in regional planning at KATS, need to monitor land use decisions relative to transportation needs and goals to plan according

#### *Other Benefits*

- Traffic calming – worked with the developer to design the street curvature for a certain speed to help self-enforce the speed.
- Single signal access point on West Main and connection to existing Secco Drive intersection at 9<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Non-motorized robust/Complete Streets - the developer is adding a number of sidewalks and connectivity to the bigger network.

Oshtemo Township Fire Chief Greg McComb addressed the Planning Commission and spoke in support of the proposed street connectivity. Chief McComb described the benefits of street connectivity from an emergency response perspective. As Fire Chief, his priority is ensuring that emergency services can reach the residents quickly and safely.

#### *Importance of Connected Street for Public Safety*

- In emergencies, every second counts
- A well-connected road system is not just a matter of convenience - it is a critical component of community protection and service delivery.



### *Benefits of a Connected Street Network*

- Reduced response times – this is the most immediate and measurable benefit and allows for fastest possible routing in life-threatening emergencies.
- Better access and safe egress - allows apparatus to reach emergency scene from multiple routes when one route is obstructed by a crash, weather event, or other impediment.
- Improved scene management – allows tactical positioning of units to address scene and operations.
- Stronger Mutual Aid capabilities - allows seamless access for responding partners.

### *Support for West Main Villages Project*

- Connecting three neighborhoods in practical and forward thinking.
- Honors previous planning efforts.
- Meets today's demands for emergency response.
- Well-connected roads will help the Fire Department greatly.

### **The Mixed Use District Ordinance**

Ms. Stefforia continued with her staff report, outlining the zoning criteria as specified in the Mixed Use District (MUD) Ordinance. She also discussed the past practices of the Planning Commission in relation to zoning decisions and how they align with the current proposal.

### **Considering the Rezoning Request**

In evaluating the MUD rezoning request for a recommendation to the Township Board, the Planning Commission is not limited to the factors for rezoning, but may also consider the Master Plan (including the draft Comprehensive Master Plan underway), the goals & objectives of the West Main Street Sub Area Plan, capacity of utilities including streets, potential impact on the natural environment, and other concerns and benefits related to the general welfare, safety, and health of area residents.

### **Factors For Rezoning**

The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act does not provide specific required standards that a Planning Commission must consider when reviewing a rezoning request. While the Zoning Ordinance does not provide specific factors to consider either, the Planning Commission has recognized the following factors in prior deliberations before a rezoning recommendation is made to the Township Board.

#### **1. Master Plan Designation**

2011 West Main Street Sub Area Plan and 2025 Comprehensive Plan

Comment: As noted earlier in the report, the 2011 West Main Street Sub Area Plan envisioned that the area would develop in a manner that maintains the rural character of the Township and integrity and function of the transportation system while allowing low-impact commercial and office uses. The Plan noted that market conditions may change, development trends evolve, and new ideas emerge that were not anticipated (such as the MUD tool and the need for housing across the spectrum); 'this plan is flexible enough to accommodate such changes.'

It could be found that development on these properties under the MUD rezoning tool – where infrastructure is available – maintains the rural character of the Township by directing these land uses here which would not be appropriate further to the west. Additionally, towards maintaining the integrity of the transportation system, the proposed street connectivity accomplishes long-held plans for an internal street network in this area and sets the stage for further connectivity to the east which is being conceptually designed presently as part of the Master Street Plan element of the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan.

With this project, Secco Drive will in end in a temporary cul-de-sac, but the Township is working with a group of engineers to envision the future of Secco Drive. If site plan approval is granted, Talsma will get temporary access to West Main Street, but this will close if a different public street is created, which would be a safety improvement.

It could be found that this first criterion – is the proposal consistent with the Master Plan, is satisfied if the conditions outlined in the staff report are met.

## **2. Consistency of rezoning to MUD with Zoning Classifications in the General Area**

Comment: The following zoning designations are found within the general area with the exception to the west which Maple Hill Subaru is going there with the net zone C, everything else is R-2 in this area (across the street, Advia was conditionally rezoned to commercial).

East – R-2, Residential, and West Main Street Overlay – Commercial sub district (north 525 feet) and Residential district (next 730 feet)

West – C, Local Business District, and R-2, Residential with 9th Street Overlay - Residential sub district

North – Conditional Zoning of C, Local Business District

South – R-2, Residential and 9th Street Overlay – Residential sub district

The Mixed Use District (MUD) was designed for application in existing commercial areas and within the identified sub areas of the Township. The use of the MUD tool here, if the mix of uses are found appropriate, is a viable use of the zoning designation and consistent with the West Main Street sub area plan.

## **3. Consistency and Compatibility of rezoning to MUD of this 48-Acres with Land Use Patterns in the Area**

Comment: The land use patterns in the area present a mix of uses including large scale commercial, low intensity commercial and office uses, with residential neighborhoods off the corridor and vacant wooded land. An aerial map of the area was shown.

The concept design master plan for the proposed development providing commercial along the corridor transitioning to multiple family then lower density residential with the

provision of buffers to the south and east is consistent and compatible with the land use patterns in the area.

#### **4. Utilities and Infrastructure**

Comment: Numerous master plans and capital improvement plan documents have envisioned the infrastructure that will be established with this development including water, sanitary sewer and streets.

#### **5. Reasonable Use of Properties as presently zoned: R-2 Residential and West Main Street Overlay Zone**

Comment: In deciding if reasonable use of the property remains with the properties as presently zoned, consider that the four parcels fronting West Main Street have been within the West Main Street Overlay Zone – Commercial sub district for more than 10 years and development has not occurred. Little development has occurred on the south side of the West Main Street corridor. On the north side immediately across West Main Street, the Advia site was conditionally rezoned to C, Local Business District for that project to be achieved. Other small scale projects have been built on the north side in the West Main Street Overlay Zone.

Inclusion of the three (3) drive through windows in the commercial area of this MUD – which are not allowed in the overlay zone – may be a factor in why this proposal is before the Township presently as a viable project. Consider if three (3) drive through windows among the proposed 11 commercial spaces is desirable particularly given the traffic generation associated with just those uses (potentially 44%) as described in the traffic impact part of this report.

The duplex portion of the MUD could be developed with the property as presently zoned at a similar density to what is being proposed. Including this acreage within the overall MUD allows for greater density in the multifamily area. The density bonuses utilized by the developer were expressly written into the MUD to encourage more housing.

#### **6. Effects on Surrounding Property & Potential Impacts on the Natural Environment**

Comment: With the required buffers and finding of the TIS of minimal traffic utilizing existing residential streets, the effect on surrounding residential properties is anticipated to be minimal.

The proposed shared access among users in the development and planned street connection benefits existing and future residents by allowing for use of 9th Street or West Main Street to reach destinations as well as benefitting Emergency Response and provision of public and private services.

Consider the loss of the natural environment including tree removal with the proposed 48-acre development as you evaluate this factor.

**7. Other concerns and benefits related to the general welfare, safety and health of area residents.**

Comment: The findings shared throughout this report and the presentation along with the recommended conditions listed below address other identified concerns with the proposal.

Consider the comments of the public as a final determination is made on this factor. Also consider the interconnected street network that would be developed as this is one large project, if the rezoning is approved. By developing as one large project you can better plan open space, street connectivity, and limit access points. This is a benefit of the MUD tool.

**Recommendation:**

The Planning Commission may recommend approval, approval with recommended changes or denial of the rezoning and Comprehensive Development Plan (Concept Design Master Plan) to the Township Board.

Township Staff recommend that the Planning Commission review the information provided in the staff report, the application submission, the traffic impact study, listen to the applicant's presentation and public comment, have an open dialogue with the applicant and then make a finding as to whether the proposed request to rezone 48 acres from R-2, Residential to MUD, Mixed Use District conforms to the standards and recommendations of the West Main Street Sub Area Plan and the MUD Ordinance.

*Planning Commission Action*

The Planning Commission, after the public hearing and consideration, may do the following with the rezoning request and Comprehensive Development Plan:

- Table the request for further information and/or time;
- Recommend approval;
- Recommend approval with changes, or
- Recommend denial.

In making a recommendation, if that is the interest of the Planning Commission, the Planning Commission may consider, but shall not be limited to the following:

- The factors for rezoning set forth in the Ordinance;
- Future land use recommendation in the Master Land Use Plan;
- Goals and objectives of the Sub Area Plans;
- Availability and capacity of utilities;
- Potential positive and negative impacts on neighboring land use;
- Potential impact on the natural environment; and
- Other concerns and benefits related to the general welfare, safety, and the health of area residents.

If the Planning Commission finds that the rezoning request is supported, and a favorable recommendation is made to the Township Board, the following conditions are suggested by Township Staff to honor the West Main Street Sub Area Plan and the Mixed Use District Ordinance, and to ensure the road network functions effectively, minimizes travel delays on West Main Street and 9th Street, and reduces the need for cut-through traffic on local streets:

Recommendation for approval is per the Concept Design Master Plan which may need minor revisions as the project progresses to be approved administratively, plus the following conditions:

1. Satisfy all requirements of the Mixed Use District Ordinance whether specifically addressed in this report or not unless waived by the reviewing body.
2. Satisfy the TIS recommended mitigation measures plus the following:
  - a. Agreement on the cross-section design at 9<sup>th</sup> Street/Seeco Drive (preferably with curb and gutter) in coordination with the RCKC, and consideration of impacts to utilities along this segment.
  - b. At the West Main Street/Provincial Drive intersection, a 10-foot-wide non-motorized easement shall be provided on the south side of West Main Street. Additionally, corner clips (size to be determined) at the southwest and southeast sides are needed for signal/non-motorized grading and future improvements.
  - c. Further enhancements to non-motorized infrastructure, such as sidewalks, bike lanes, or shared use paths, shall be made in alignment with the Comprehensive Master Plan to promote safety for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users.

Vice Chair Everett asked the Commissions if they had any questions for the Planning Staff; there were none.

Vice Chair Everett invited representatives from the project to come forward and speak.

Mr. Darrel DeHaan from Integrated Architecture spoke to the Planning Commission in support of the project. Mr. DeHaan shared that a lot of collaboration took place with this project. He thanked Ms. Stefforia and Ms. Horner for the great job they did highlighting the project.

Mr. DeHaan shared that he has been involved with this project for over a year. He discussed the character of the proposed development, and the standards established to guide it. Several changes were made to reflect evolving goals, including the promotion of non-motorized activity and traffic calming measures—particularly through the inclusion of two-family units. The original plan reduced the number of duplex lots by three, to allow no more than two units on 10,000-square-foot parcels (108 units, 54 lots). The goal is to provide attainable housing to the community. This plan for the two-family homes is to attract younger professional and older community members (retirees). Additional green space was incorporated, nearly doubling the overall public amenity space compared to earlier versions of the plan.

The clubhouse and pool, which were previously bundled as a single amenity, have now been decoupled. The pool will serve as a dedicated amenity for apartment residents, while the

expanded green space and public amenity areas will serve both the broader development and adjacent neighborhoods. A shared amenity space will also be provided for residents of the attached two-family units, promoting community interaction and enhancing the overall livability of the area.

The number of multi-family residential units remains at 336, consistent with the plan presented in September. However, the number of multifamily buildings has increased slightly, from 10 to 11, but effectively the same number of units. Overall, there are few noticeable changes on the multifamily side of the development.

Efforts continue to promote non-motorized participation, with particular attention given to pedestrian connectivity and accessibility. The green space associated with the two-family units is intended to remain in place for the life of the development, contributing to both the visual character and long-term quality of the community.

The buildings have not yet been designed, but Mr. DeHaan shared with the Commission and the public multiple potential design and ideas for both the residential units and the retail units. The project introduces thoughtful elements intended to enhance both the development and the surrounding area. Design guideline standards have been established for future construction to align with the overall goals of the project. These include a maximum three-story height for multi-family units, architectural styles that reflect a traditional neighborhood character, and the use of two different exterior materials for each unit (this is also recommended for the duplexes). Design features such as front entries, porches, and stoops will be required as part of the development's zoning standards to promote visual interest and pedestrian engagement. Continuous building reliefs will be avoided to maintain architectural variety for all aspects of the project. The duplex residential units would appear like single family homes. The lot sizes for the duplexes are approximately 180x120 on average.

Vice Chair Everett asked if the Commissioners had any questions for Mr. DeHaan; there were none.

Vice Chair Everett invites additional representatives of the project forward to speak on behalf of the project.

Mr. Dave Kaleel, representing the Ferlito Group and West Main, addressed the Commission and made two key points. First, he referenced a market study conducted a year and a half ago to assess community needs and wants, which indicated a strong demand for multifamily housing with a higher level of amenities. The proposed development includes 336 units in response to those findings.

He also noted that discussions with the County TIF (Tax Increment Financing) Board he was question about the affordable component and if there would be an architectural difference. Mr. Kaleel confirmed that there would be no distinction among the units and would be offering a great product to everyone. This is not their first project in multi-family.

Regarding traffic, Mr. Kaleel emphasized that significant and careful attention was given to addressing public comments and adhering to best practices for traffic management. While noise is often a major concern in such developments, the primary focus in this case has been on mitigating traffic impacts.

Mr. Kaleel concluded by thanking the Commission for their time and thoughtful consideration of the project.

Vice Chair Everett asked the Commission if they had any questions for Mr. Kaleel; there were none.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Vice Chair Everett opened the floor for public comment, noting a time limit of four minutes per speaker.

Eight residents spoke in opposition to the project during the public comment period citing concerns about traffic, connectivity and loss of trees and space for wildlife. No residents spoke in support of the project.

Vice Chair Everett closed the public comment period.

Mr. A. Smith expressed concern over the perception that development is being concentrated disproportionately in the eastern portion of the Township, particularly east of 8th Street, due to the availability of sewer infrastructure. He noted that while preserving open space is an important goal, care must be taken to ensure that development decisions do not place an undue burden on specific neighborhoods. In addition, increased traffic is a concern with this and future projects.

Mr. A. Smith went on to emphasize the importance of balancing that against respecting property rights, stating that landowners should be allowed to develop their property in accordance with zoning laws and community standards. The question to the Commission is simple, does this meet the requirements of the law? If so, this should be approved.

Mr. Chapman stated that the discussion touches on a core issue: while property owners do have the right to develop their land within legal parameters, the broader context of a regional housing crisis must also be considered. He expressed appreciation for the changes the developer made in response to community feedback, noting that while the plan is not perfect, efforts were made to incorporate traffic-calming measures and pedestrian-friendly features. He acknowledged that, given the street layout, it would be difficult for vehicles to reach high rates of speed, something that supports safety within the neighborhood.

Mr. Chapman voiced reservations about the inclusion of additional drive-through establishments, stating that this area does not need more and that he is not in favor of drive-through windows in general. He remarked that while retail development along West Main had long been anticipated,

he is concerned about how core-density housing aligns with the existing character of the community.

Mr. Chapman acknowledged that the Phase 2 development does not need to come before the Commission as it is already zoned for that development. As for West Main, it was just a matter of time before that area was developed for retail. The core area of the housing development is where he struggles the most. Is it in the character of the community and one that we would want?

He noted appreciation for the inclusion of park space, though he commented that it is relatively small compared to what once existed in the area. He also supported recommendation from the public to save as many of the mature trees during this development as possible. Mr. Chapman thanked the developer for their responsiveness and willingness to revise the project based on public input.

Mr. J. Smith noted that the developer referenced the project as being intended for professionals but emphasized that the Commission's responsibility is to take a forward-looking approach. He stated that, if traffic concerns can be adequately addressed, the development represents a promising and thoughtful vision for the future of the area. He encouraged consideration of who will be living in the community not just today, but 10, 20, and even 30 years from now.

Mr. Makohn shared that this has been a difficult process, noting that he lives in a nearby neighborhood and understand that change can be challenging and even frightening for residents. While traffic studies and data can help guide decisions, the ultimate question must be: what best serves the public welfare, long-term health, and safety of the Township?

Mr. Makohn acknowledged a personal hope that the land could have been preserved as a park but recognized that such an outcome is unlikely. He expressed support for approving the rezoning for development as a mixed-use project, emphasizing that this approval should not be seen as the end of the process, but rather the beginning of continued collaboration with the developer. He concluded by affirming the importance of working together toward a shared vision of a community everyone wants to live in.

Vice Chair Everett acknowledged that the required criteria for evaluation had been presented but emphasized the importance of also considering the environmental impact of the development—specifically, the loss of trees and natural areas. She posed a key question: if this environmental loss is viewed as a negative outcome, what steps can be taken to mitigate it?

Mr. Porter noted that environmental impact is only one of several factors to consider in the decision-making process. He reminded the Commission that Planning Staff presented that the impact on the environment would be minimal. He acknowledged that the development plan includes the addition of new trees and landscape buffers and emphasized the importance of weighing all relevant factors collectively when evaluating the project.

Vice Chair Everett asked whether, if the project moves forward and returns for detailed site plan review, would the Planning Commission have the opportunity to include additional conditions or requirements for more trees and/or buffer at that stage.



Ms. Stefforia advised that site plan reviews for projects within the Mixed Use District are conducted administratively and would not return to the Commission for further review. She explained that the public works, fire, and planning departments would be responsible for reviewing and approving the site plans as they move forward.

Mr. Chapman requested clarification regarding the Commission's role at this stage. He noted that the current action involves voting on whether to rezone the property to a Mixed Use District. He asked whether, if the rezoning is approved, this would be the final time the Commission would review the project.

Ms. Stefforia stated that it would be unless they made material changes to the project.

Mr. Chapman inquired about the threshold for when a project would be handled administratively versus when it would be returned to the Commission for further review. He asked what would constitute a substantive change that would require the project to come back before the Commission.

Mr. Porter explained that a substantive change would involve any modifications to the street design or the overall building layout. For example, if the developer were to realign the condominiums or reduce the size of the lots, these would be considered substantive changes. In such cases, Planning Staff would bring the project back before the Commission for additional review. He emphasized that all decisions must follow the Ordinance, and that is the standard Planning Staff is required to uphold.

He further noted that the primary responsibility of the Planning Commission is to evaluate whether the proposal meets the established criteria and to decide whether or not to make a recommendation to the Township Board.

Vice Chair Everett noted that if the proposal is evaluated against the seven review criteria and is found to meet those standards, the Commission does not have a valid basis to deny the request. The role of the Commission is to assess compliance with the established review standards, and if those are met, the project must be considered accordingly.

Mr. Porter agreed that, if the Commission finds the proposal meets the established review criteria, there would be no valid basis to deny the request. If the Commission believes the standards are not met, it must clearly and factually articulate which specific criteria are not satisfied and provide the reasoning behind that determination. Specifically, the Commission must determine whether the proposed mixed-use zoning is consistent with the Sub Area Plan, the goals of the Master Plan, and the broader Land Use Plan. Is it consistent with what is developed in the area? Is it consistent with the land use pattern in the area?

Mr. Porter acknowledged that traffic remains a significant concern within the community. However, he noted that a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) was completed, and its findings indicate that the projected traffic impact of the development would be minimal.

He emphasized that, in evaluating the general welfare of the community, the Commission must weigh all relevant factors—including the demonstrated need for housing. It is the Commission's responsibility to assess whether the proposal aligns with the Township's long-term planning goals.

Mr. Porter posed key considerations for the Commission's decision-making process: Does the proposal conform to the Land Use Plan? Is it consistent with the surrounding development? Does it have access to adequate utilities and infrastructure? Is single-family residential development a reasonable alternative for this site? And what would be the impact on surrounding property owners?

He concluded by reiterating that, based on the TIS, traffic impacts appear to be minimal. Regarding the broader public welfare, he noted that one of the most important factors raised during the meeting was the community's ongoing need for housing. Ultimately, it is up to the Commission to determine whether the proposal meets the applicable standards and serves the best interest of the Township.

Vice Chair Everett acknowledged that, based on the factors presented, the proposal likely meets the established review criteria. She also recognized that change can be difficult for communities and that it often brings uncertainty and concern.

It was decided to walk through each of the presented standards.

### **1. Master Plan Designation - 2011 West Main Street Sub Area Plan and 2025 Comprehensive Plan**

Mr. Chapman reminded the Commission that the proposed condominiums are already consistent with existing zoning and, therefore, do not require further consideration as part of the current rezoning request.

Mr. A. Smith stated that the key determination the Commission must make is whether the proposed development falls within the scope and intent of the Mixed Use District adopted last year. He affirmed that, in his view, it does.

Mr. Chapman agreed.

Ms. Stefforia read from the West Main Street sub area plan that the transitional residential designation anticipates a mix of residential uses up to four-dwelling unit buildings not necessarily apartment buildings.

### **2. Consistency of rezoning to MUD with Zoning Classifications in the General Area**

Mr. Jefferies agreed that it appeared that it is consistent.

Mr. A. Smith agreed.

Mr. Chapman agreed.

### **3. Consistency and Compatibility of rezoning to MUD with Land Use Patterns in the Area**

Mr. A. Smith clarified that the current discussion is focused solely on the apartment component of the proposal—not the duplexes.

Mr. Jefferies pointed out that a key distinction is that the proposed apartment patterns are not currently found elsewhere in the corridor right now.

Mr. Porter added that it would be remiss not to acknowledge transitional residential is defined in the Land Use Plan. How that is defined is up to the Commission.

Mr. Chapman expressed appreciation that the proposal includes the high density up-front of the development.

### **4. Utilities and Infrastructure**

Vice Chair Everett confirmed that utilities and infrastructure for the development already exist.

Mr. Chapman agreed, stating that there is no question about the availability of utilities.

### **5. Reasonable Use of Properties as presently zoned: R-2 Residential and West Main Street Overlay Zone**

Vice Chair Everett noted that little development has occurred on the south of the area, and the north side is already largely built out. She suggested that the three proposed drive-thru windows seem to be the primary reason why this project is being brought before the Commission for review for rezoning as they are not allowed as presently zoned.

Mr. Chapman disagreed, stating that he does not believe the drive-thru windows are the primary reason for the proposal coming before the Commission. Over the past 10 years, there has been significant development and job creation in the area.

Ms. Stefforia explained that, according to conversations with developers, the reason the area has not seen more development is because drive-thru windows have not been permitted in the past. This restriction has limited development opportunities.

### **6. Effects on Surrounding Property & Potential Impacts on the Natural Environment**

Mr. Chapman remarked that the name "West Main" inherently suggests it is an area designated for development. He noted that while the natural environment is a valid consideration, it is important to recognize that this is a developing area. The presence of trails is acknowledged, but he pointed out that the forest area is unlikely to remain as surrounding development progresses. He emphasized that there is no significant water feature in the area, and the primary natural feature is the forest.

**7. Other concerns and benefits related to the general welfare, safety and health of area residents.**

Vice Chair Everett asked for clarification of what is immediately next to this project.

Ms. Stefforia shared that immediately adjacent to the project is Hampton Plaza.

Vice Chair Everett observed that there appears to be ongoing struggle or hesitation among some members of the Commission specifically related to the multifamily component of the proposed development.

Several Commissions agreed with this statement.

Mr. Jefferies questioned whether the drive-thru component is the primary zoning issue under consideration, noting that the other aspects of the development may be permitted under existing zoning and could potentially proceed without requiring Commission approval.

Vice Chair Everett clarified that the zoning request is related to both the inclusion of drive-thru uses and the proposed multi-family residential component of the development.

Mr. Chapman noted that the Township has been actively discussing the need for housing, including mixed-income options. He acknowledged that this project appears to address that need by offering a mix of housing types. He then inquired whether the development is expected to go to the TIF Board.

Ms. Stefforia shared that not as of this moment, but they were meeting with the County Brownfield Development Board earlier that afternoon.

Vice Chair Everett asked for clarification on the current status of the discussion and decision-making process, and did we want to hold off on making a determination?

Mr. Chapman responded that it is not in the best interest of the public to delay the decision any further.

Mr. A. Smith agreed.

Mr. Chapman **made a motion** to recommend approval to the Township Board. Mr. A. Smith **supported**. Mr. Chapman **amended his motion** to include the conditions recommended by the Planning Department as outlined in the staff report:

Recommendation for approval is per the Concept Design Master Plan which may need minor revisions as the project progresses to be approved administratively, plus the following conditions:

3. Satisfy all requirements of the Mixed Use District Ordinance whether specifically addressed in this report or not unless waived by the reviewing body.

4. Satisfy the TIS recommended mitigation measures plus the following:
  - b. Agreement on the cross-section design at 9<sup>th</sup> Street/Seeco Drive (preferably with curb and gutter) in coordination with the RCKC, and consideration of impacts to utilities along this segment.
  - b. At the West Main Street/Provincial Drive intersection, a 10-foot-wide non-motorized easement shall be provided on the south side of West Main Street. Additionally, corner clips (size to be determined) at the southwest and southeast sides are needed for signal/non-motorized grading and future improvements.
  - c. Further enhancements to non-motorized infrastructure, such as sidewalks, bike lanes, or shared use paths, shall be made in alignment with the Comprehensive Master Plan to promote safety for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users.

Mr. A. Smith **supported** the amendment. The **motion passed** unanimously.

Vice Chair Everett expressed a desire for the developer to consider adding more trees and landscape buffering to the site plan. The developer responded that it is their intent to preserve as many mature trees as possible during the development process.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Vice Chair Everett opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

#### **OTHER UPDATES AND BUSINESS**

Vice Chair Everett asked if there were any additional updates or items of business. There were none.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Minutes Prepared: April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Minutes Approved: