

CITY OF STERLING HEIGHTS
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2022
IN CITY HALL

1. Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Mayor Taylor led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and Melanie D. Ryska, City Clerk, gave the Invocation.
3. Council Members present at roll call: Deanna Koski, Michael V. Radtke, Jr., Maria G. Schmidt, Liz Sierawski, Michael C. Taylor, Henry Yanez, Barbara A. Ziarko.

Also Present: Mark Vanderpool, City Manager; Marc D. Kaszubski, City Attorney; Melanie D. Ryska, City Clerk; Carol Sobosky, Recording Secretary.
4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
Moved by Koski, seconded by Ziarko, **RESOLVED**, to approve the agenda as presented.

Yes: All. The motion carried.
5. **REPORT FROM CITY MANAGER**
Mr. Vanderpool highlighted a new program through the Michigan Homeowner Assistance Fund (MIHAF) for which the City is in partnership with the State of Michigan. This is for individuals suffering some type of financial hardship due to Covid, even two or three years later, and is funded through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, with significant funding available to households across the State of Michigan. He explained that homeowners with household incomes less than 150 percent of the area median income (AMI) and who own and occupy the property as their primary residence are eligible. It is up to \$25,000 per household, and includes current expenses such as delinquent mortgage payments, housing

expenses, including property taxes and insurance escrow shortages, delinquent land contract payments, mobile home consumer loan payments, delinquent condominium and homeowner association fees, utilities, and delinquent internet broadband services. He advised there is a link on the City's website at www.sterling-heights.org and on the main page, there is a link to the program under Community Resources. The link will connect to the State website and the application.

Mr. Vanderpool stated they will be continuing this evening with highlighting the City's boards and commissions, showcasing their good work. He invited Marketing and Communications Coordinator Marissa Russo, who will make a presentation on the Youth Advisory Board.

Marketing and Communications Coordinator Marissa Russo stressed this Board is a great board because they can highlight their youth involvement in local government. She invited the Youth Advisory Board Chairperson Maxymilian Stefanski and Vice-Chairperson Zya Williams to give a report.

Chairperson Maxymilian Stefanski reviewed their mission statement to develop and promote programs, services, amenities, events, and civic engagement opportunities that make Sterling Heights a more appealing community for those in the thirteen-to-eighteen age group. They currently have thirteen participants Vice-Chairperson Zya Williams explained they create engagement between young residents and local government, use their voices to advise City Council and City Administration on important youth and teen issues, and they want to develop and

grow. Ms. Williams summarized their four subcommittees: Sustainability; Mental Health; Diversity and Inclusion; and Local Government Awareness.

Mr. Stefanski explained that they took a trip to Lansing with some of the members of City Council joining them, and he stressed it was great to learn about government. He added that their Board has been working on civic involvement, community policy, parks and recreation, and non-motorized transportation.

Ms. Williams stated they want to continue to work on inclusion, work with more community organizations and Parks and Recreation to create a safer space for teens. They want to continue to work with local leaders to educate their residents on sustainable practices, and they want to continue to create opportunities for younger residents to connect with local city leaders. They want to continue to raise awareness about safety in schools and look at strategies to accomplish this.

Mr. Vanderpool thanked the Mayor and City Council for creating the Youth Advisory Board a few years ago and appointing the impressive members who make up this board. He thanked Ms. Russo as well for her work with this board, and stressed they are doing important work the City Council highly values.

Mayor Taylor thanked them for their report, and stated they are looking forward to another good year working with the Youth Advisory Board.

Councilwoman Schmidt stated that Mr. Nathan Inks is the Chairman of the City's Sustainability Commission, and she stated she would love for the Youth Advisory Board's sub-group to meet with the Sustainability Commission to talk about ideas.

Mr. Vanderpool stated his report includes another presentation on the SMART public transportation system, adding that the SMART millage renewal will be on the ballot in the upcoming election on November 8. He explained they felt it is important to get as much information about the program and its impact on Sterling Heights residents, especially the SMART Para-Transit Program. He invited Transportation Riders United (TRU) Executive Director Megan Owens, and Sterling Heights Recreation Superintendent Kristen Briggs to give a presentation.

Ms. Megan Owens, TRU Executive Director, provided information on the value of the Macomb County public transportation millage on the upcoming ballot. She clarified this is largely a renewal of funding for services that Macomb County, including Sterling Heights, has been receiving for the last twenty years. She named the various groups of people who need public transportation, including seniors who want to stay active, people with disabilities, families with one car, families whose car breaks down, students who cannot afford a car, people who want to attend a sporting event downtown but do not want to pay \$40 on parking, and those who do not want to spend the rising costs on cars and their upkeep. A short video was shown to reflect people getting to where they need to go. SMART provides large busses and senior shuttles for community transit programs. She stated their latest program is FLEX, which she referred to as SMART's answer to Uber, where people can use a phone app or call to get a ride directly to their destination. She explained this is being piloted in certain zones, and showed a map of the FLEX zones, which includes the northeast portion of Sterling Heights.

SMART hopes to expand it throughout their entire service area in the coming years, currently operating from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. seven days a week, with most rides costing \$2 and never more than \$8. Ms. Owens explained some of SMART's technological upgrades, including the DART app, which works on SMART, DDOT, and the Q-Line, so people can pay by using the app rather than carrying cash. The app also provides real-time bus tracking. The SMART funding is made possible by the Macomb County Public Transportation millage, and they are requesting a renewal of 0.95 mills, which is a slight decrease from 0.99 mills, so this is not an increase to taxpayers of Sterling Heights or Macomb County. She added that it has not gone up in eight years, and it averages less than \$10 per month for the average household. She concluded her presentation with another short video emphasizing the importance of people getting to where they need to go.

Sterling Heights Recreation Superintendent Kristen Briggs talked about the long-standing partnership between SMART and the City of Sterling Heights over the last thirty-four years. She stressed their services allow individuals over the age of fifty-five who cannot drive, as well as adults with disabilities, to go to doctor's appointments or shopping during the day on Mondays through Fridays. Senior riders can request evening rides to places such as the Warren Community Center, and to community events such as Farmer's Market or City Council meetings. Ms. Briggs noted they also provide travel experiences to those who are fifty-five or older. She added their mini-bus service transports individuals younger than fifty-five with disabilities to job opportunities and to the Macomb Academy. She

provided details on the other services they provide, including library outings, adaptive recreation summer camp trips, teen nights out, and Sterlingfest. She stressed the FLEX program has given riders more opportunities to go out within the service area. She provided details on their mini-bus service, noting appointments need to be made at least twenty-four hours in advance, and they are often booked well beyond that period. She explained that FLEX has become a wonderful viable addition because it is on demand and can accommodate riders with more immediate needs. Sterling Heights currently has seven hundred fifty-one individual riders registered to use their Para-Transit services, and that number increased by sixteen riders in the last thirty days. They average over 1,000 rides per month, not including Sterlingfest, where they provided over 16,000 rides in three days. Ms. Briggs informed that their partnership with SMART includes the procurement of vehicles and maintenance of their SMART fleet, currently comprised of nine vehicles. They have been approved to use federal grant money and SMART credits to purchase a new replacement vehicle that has been ordered. She concluded that the City's partnership with SMART helps their residents remain moving and engaged in their community and beyond, providing top-level service to their residents.

Mr. Vanderpool stressed the importance of the SMART system in Sterling Heights to their local businesses. He cited an example of the installation of sidewalk and new lighting along 18 Mile Road, between Van Dyke and Mound, because of so many employees working in that area. He stressed the Van Dyke route is one of

the busiest in the SMART system, and because of that, the Sterling Heights Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry Board of Directors recently voted to support the SMART renewal. He emphasized the importance for everyone to be aware of this millage renewal on the November 8 ballot, and the need for good information on this millage renewal to be made public. He concluded his report by assuring they are happy to address any questions the community has on this over the next few weeks.

6. PRESENTATIONS

A. Mayor Taylor stated this is a swearing-in ceremony for a new Sterling Heights Police Officer. He invited Police Chief Dale Dwojakowski to give the presentation and conduct the swearing-in.

Police Chief Dwojakowski stated their department went through a big rebuilding process, with fifty officers being hired in the last five years, and a total of seventy-seven officers within the last seven years. He stressed Sterling Heights attracts some of the best talent in the entire State of Michigan, and they come here because of what the City has to offer. He explained that Officer Nicholas Gushen left another community to come here and was supposed to be sworn in as part of the last group of officers sworn in last month; however, Officer Gushen worked for the Detroit Police Department for the last two years and was dragged by a vehicle for multiple city blocks in the streets of Detroit after he made a traffic stop. He was injured for many months but was fortunate to recover. Chief Dwojakowski stated they waited for Officer Gushen to recover, noting he is a 15-year Army

veteran, worked with the Oakland County Sheriff's Department, the Detroit Police Department, and is now with the Sterling Heights Police Department. He stressed the wait was worth it, and they are glad he is doing well.

Chief Dwojakowski swore in Officer Nicholas Gushen. He thanked the Mayor and City Council for their support.

Officer Gushen thanked the City for this opportunity and thanked his family for their support. He stated he is looking forward to working for the City of Sterling Heights and thanked the Chief for waiting for his recovery. He added he is thankful to be here and ready to serve the City.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sierawski stated as a mother of a Marine Corps officer, she understands how he feels. She welcomed him to the City and appreciates his service, his bravery, and everything he went through to get to this point.

Mayor Taylor stated he loves having officers who could choose anywhere in the State to work and want to come to this City, and he is glad they waited for Officer Gushen to recover and hired him. He emphasized the residents of Sterling Heights, along with City Council, support their police department one hundred percent. He thanked Officer Gushen for his service in the military and wished him well in his career here in Sterling Heights.

B. Mayor Taylor stated this is the presentation of the 2022 Beautification Awards. He invited Beautification Commission Chairperson Gary Isom to give the presentation.

Beautification Commission Chairperson Gary Isom stated it gives him great pleasure to present the 2022 Beautification Awards. He explained their Commission's mission is to encourage all city residents and property owners to preserve and enhance the beauty of public and private properties, and their annual awards ceremony is one way in which they honor those who go above and beyond in beautifying their Sterling Heights properties. He thanked City Council for welcoming this presentation as they showcase the dedication of their residents and business leaders to make Sterling Heights a better place to live, work, and play. He explained that over the last five months, the Commission welcomed nominations from citizens who wish to recognize a Sterling Heights property for outstanding beauty resulting from the planting of annuals and perennials. They reviewed photographs taken of more than forty nominated homes, businesses, and places of worship, and the Commissioners judged nominations and selected the "Best of the Best" from each category that had a "wow" factor when seen from the curb, also being selected based on overall beauty and aesthetics, as well as artistic use of color. Mr. Isom thanked the Beautification Commissioners present tonight for their dedication in this program, and he introduced Henrietta Baczewski, Steve Duncan, Manny Gonzales, Matthew Smith, Lisa Lane, and Susan Hobig.

The nominees were announced as follows:

Commercial Properties: Christian Financial Credit Union; Aperam Automotive; and Roncelli

Multi-Family Properties: American House Sterling Meadows; Arden Courts of Sterling Heights; and Sterling Knolls Apartments

Places of Worship Properties: St. Jane Frances de Chantal Catholic Church

Residential Properties: 8811 Clinton River Road, 8459 Leslie Drive; 11735 Seaton Drive D-21; 11336 Village Drive; 4466 18-1/2 Mile Road; 41215 Fieldview Street; 3521 Leason; 11242 18 Mile Road; 34895 Carbon Drive; 43243 Chardonnay Drive; 11125 Grenada Drive; 36239 Melbourne Drive; 11773 Danforth Drive; 37281 Belcrest Drive; 39039 Vassar Avenue; 42247 Sycamore Drive; 14267 Lakeshore Drive; 43466 Interlaken Drive; 4662 Berwick Drive; 4652 Bennington Drive; 38978 Marlborough Drive; 2708 Farmdale Drive; 42311 Hanks Lane; 33712 Brownlea Drive; 14985 Riverview Court; 38014 Douglas Drive; and 8753 Headley Drive

The "Best of the Best" were announced as follows:

Commercial Properties:	Fraza
Multi-Family Properties:	Fieldstone Apartments
Places of Worship Properties:	St. Matthias Catholic Church
Residential Properties:	33572 Ashton Drive

Mr. Isom thanked everyone for attending tonight's Beautification Award presentations and reminded that the Beautification Commission is once again hosting a Halloween contest, so if anyone would like to nominate any of their neighbors who have gone above and beyond, he urged them to submit those photos.

Moved by Yanez, seconded by Ziarko, **RESOLVED**, to individually and collectively recognize the 2022 Beautification Award winners and thank them for the dedication and effort in making their properties, neighborhoods, and the City of Sterling Heights a more beautiful place to live, work and play.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Councilman Yanez commented on the beautiful pictures of so many properties, and he appreciated their hard work to make their properties look good and bring up the properties around them.

Councilman Radtke stated he is a gardener and appreciates the amount of hard work that goes into these beautiful properties. He thanked everyone for making their city a little nicer, and he hoped to see them back next year.

Mayor Taylor expressed his appreciation to the Beautification Commission, which is just one of their many boards and commissions that are so important to make this a great welcoming, inclusive, dynamic, and vibrant community. He thanked the residents and businesses who are going above and beyond to make their City look even better.

The meeting recessed at 7:49 p.m. and reconvened at 7:57 p.m.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Mayor Taylor stated this is a public hearing to consider the application by Amer Batal, on behalf of ARH Land Holdings, LLC, for a residential Planned Unit Development on approximately 5.6 acres of land situated on the west side of Mound Road, north of Fourteen Mile Road "Icon Park," PPUD21-0003. He invited Assistant City Attorney Alyssa M. Albright to give the presentation.

Assistant City Attorney Alyssa M. Albright explained this is a request for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) which would permit five three-story apartment buildings consisting of one-hundred forty units to be developed in 14 Mile and Mound Roads, noting that twenty-eight of these units are proposed to be micro-units,

anticipated to cost \$850 per month. They are also proposing fifty-six one-bedroom units costing \$1,250 per month, and fifty-six two-bedroom units costing approximately \$1,640 per month. She noted the applicant is proposing one of the buildings to be located directly on Mound Road and would contain second- and third-floor residential, with a community space on the first floor. The community space would include a gym, business center, gaming room, and other amenities. She advised that the applicant is also proposing recreation space throughout the proposed development, and that would include walkway paths, a play area, a plaza space, as well as a reflection pond area. She reviewed the zoning of the proposed site and the surrounding area and noted that the Master Plan designates this area as "Innovation Support," with the intent of that district to provide a comprehensive collaborative planning, zoning, and project review process to create an environment that is supportive to the City's industrial corridor. She added that multiple-family residential in a limited quantity is envisioned in this district.

Ms. Albright showed an aerial view of the subject property and surrounding area, and she presented and provided details on the site plan. She explained that between the four apartment buildings, the applicant is proposing linear courtyards that would include some of the recreation space proposed for the site, and would include benches, tables, and community gardens. She showed an artist rendering of the proposed building that would be along the Mound Road frontage, as well as a rendering of the proposed apartment buildings on the

western side of the property. She pointed out there is not direct access to the residents' apartments, but there will be more centralized entrances and exits that will be secured. Ms. Albright showed floor plans of the two-bedroom units, one-bedroom units, and micro-units. She advised that landscaping is proposed throughout the site, and the applicant is proposing a three-foot-high wall along landscaped plantings fronting Mound Road, a three-foot-high wall with landscaped plantings fronting 14 Mile Road, and a six-foot-high hedge wall along the west side of the property. A zoomed-in plan showing the reflection pond, playscape and community patio was shown, and Ms. Albright explained this would be to the west of the building that would be fronting Mound Road.

Ms. Albright explained that, as part of the application, the applicant is requesting a number of modifications to ordinance requirements, including the following: higher density of the site; front yard setback from Mound Road; proposed micro-units that are smaller than the minimum living space required; less open recreation space; modification to the major impact screening requirements; building height of three stories and thirty-five feet; building separation distance; parking distance from the building; distance of dumpsters from residential building; number of parking spaces; number of parking spaces for recreational vehicles; and number of parking lot trees.

Alexis Richards, City Planner II, reviewed additional planning considerations of the proposed development. She outlined the revisions that occurred from what was approved at Planning Commission. She noted the landscape plan was integrated

within the site plan, including details of plantings. The wall along Mound Road was lowered to three feet to highlight the natural landscaping along the Mound Road frontage and to provide better public safety. The outdoor courtyard space between buildings was added to the recreational space calculations per a request from the Planning Commission. The reflecting pool was separated out from the storm water system, so there will be an underground cistern, and the reflection pool will remain its own amenity separate from the drainage system, so it will not require any fencing. She informed that another underground cistern was added to the western portion of the site to address water drainage concerns.

Ms. Richards reviewed how this proposed development fits in with furthering the goals of Sterling Heights. She talked about the site having a more unique urban design style and outlined some of the outdoor amenities. She explained how it fits into the Innovation Support District, noting that multifamily residential is permitted in a limited capacity and helps to diversify the existing uses, offering affordable options located near industrial and commercial uses by providing potential workforce housing. She added it increases walkability and improves streetscape aesthetics along Mound Road and 14 Mound Road, reducing the number of curb cuts along Mound Road, and consolidates seven smaller lots to allow for a larger development. Ms. Richards explained that from a sustainability aspect, this development will have electric vehicle charging stations, covered rideshare waiting shelter, and is near commercial and industrial uses allows residents to utilize alternative modes of transportation. She added that the

frontage landscaping adds to the beautification of the area. She talked about the proposed development and how it fits into the 2030 Visioning Plan, noting it is distinct from other developments in the City, it expands the non-motorized network by adding sidewalks along the 14 Mile Road frontage and connection the Mound Road Pathway, as well as the Dodge Park Road Trail and the Freedom Trail, which also connects to Lake St. Clair Metropark, the Clinton River Trail system, and the Iron Belle Trail. She added it would serve as a catalyst for future redevelopment in the area.

Applicants Amer Batal and Randy Najjar introduced themselves and spoke of their background experience in development. They indicated they are looking forward to bringing forth their vision of Icon Park Development on 14 Mile and Mound.

Mr. Najjar provided a brief recap of their proposal, and a short video was shown of the proposed development.

Mr. Batal distributed brochures to the Mayor and City Council members.

Mr. Najjar acknowledged that they are seeking variances as part of this Planned Unit Development, but they feel it is a cohesive project at an important entry point of Sterling Heights.

Mr. Batal explained they selected this location for several reasons, noting that Mound Road is the third most important road in Macomb County, after Hall Road and Van Dyke Avenue. He emphasized the location is easily accessible to the area freeway system, including I-696, M-53, M-59, and I-75. He explained there are currently more than 47,000 people working along the Mound Road corridor, and

over 53,000 job openings in Sterling Heights as of September 27, 2022. He noted the new Amazon Fulfillment Center is located directly across the street from this development, and the U.S. Army base and defense contractors such as General Dynamics and BAE Systems occupy the Van Dyke and Mound Road corridor, as well as General Motors, Ford Motor Company, and Stellantis. He stressed there is an immediate need for additional residential units, noting they ran a search on www.apartments.com on September 27, and only found fifty-eight apartments available for rent between 12 Mile and 16 Mile, and between Ryan and Van Dyke. This project would add to that and support a lot of the innovation occurring along the Mound corridor.

Mr. Amer addressed the roads and traffic counts, noting that eastbound and westbound 14 Mile services an average of about 15,000 cars per day, while northbound and southbound Mound Road services approximately 37,000 cars per day. He commented that if all their residents were to leave at the same time from the same entrance or exit, it would only make a small impact of about 2 percent off 14 Mile Road, and less than 0.7 percent off Mound Road.

Slides were shown of the zoning of the subject site, as well as the surrounding properties, and Mr. Amer emphasized the proposed development would serve as a good transition between the commercial along Mound Road and the residential to the west. He showed slides of the current views of the property from both Mound Road and 14 Mile Road, as well as the proposed views of the new development.

Mr. Najjar showed a birds-eye view of the apartments they are proposing, adding that there are about ten units per floor, with three floors per building for a total of thirty units, including micro-units, one-bedroom and two-bedroom units. He talked about the micro-units, acknowledging they are small, but they have done a lot of research on them, and they are very popular and in high demand in urban areas such as Detroit and Ann Arbor. They provide an opportunity for individuals to rent their own space while having an affordable rent monthly. These units could bring in new residents into the City.

Mr. Amer talked about the amenities they will have, including a fitness center, game room, private party room, surveillance and digital security access to all buildings, community lounge, business center with twelve office stations, and an on-site management office. He explained their leasing center is to the left of the artist rendering, and it is a model of their one-bedroom and two-bedroom units, so they will not have to showcase any of the residents' occupied apartments because any potential resident can walk and visit the space right in the leasing office.

Mr. Najjar stated they are proud of the outdoor amenities they are incorporating into the project, including community gardens, pavilions in the center with fireplaces, playground, a nice lawn for movie nights or a place to play, barbeque stations, a reflective pond with a fountain in the center, a lot of walking paths, and a community residents boulevard between the buildings, covered rideshare, as well as electric vehicle charging stations.

Mr. Amer stated they are willing to answer any questions.

Mayor Taylor opened the public hearing and invited public comments.

- Joe Znoy – opposed to micro-units; commented they are unhealthy and can create cabin fever and a feeling of overcrowding, causing feelings of stress, depression, and domestic violence; questioned the occupancy limits for the micro-units and whether families with children will be allowed to rent the micro-units or the one-bedroom apartments; stressed they need robust recreational space to counter the health issues of living in small spaces; expressed concern about disease transmission between people not only in the same apartment, but transmission from apartment to apartment, based on common ventilation; questioned whether they will do about pot odors spreading throughout the complex, and whether the petitioner intends to use any sound remediation materials between the units to limit sound transmission; questioned the affect these micro units will have on the rental market; expressed concern that it will drive up the prices citywide and make larger, more livable apartment space less affordable; suggested that micro-apartments may be a viable solution in ultra-high-density cities like New York, but expressed opposition to these in Sterling Heights; questioned whether the reflection pond will be deep enough for a child to drown.
- Ken Nelson – questioned the one suggested action on the agenda statement to approve this development; questioned a staff report that includes sustainability and visioning plan; opposed to fourteen variances to the City's ordinances; concerned about crunching too many units into a small area; opposed to micro-units, comparing the size of the entire unit to his family room, adding he would like to see a breakdown in the size of each of those rooms; questioned whether there is an actual bedroom or a murphy bed that is stored in the wall of the unit; expressed opposition to the ordinance allowing PUDs.
- Joel Kervoski, - 825 E. 11 Mile Road, Royal Oak; represents the ownership of the vacant Citizen's Bank at 5775 E. 14 Mile Road, and 5661 E. 14 Mile Road, which is vacant land zoned residential to the west of the proposed development; stated they have been in discussions with the applicants because they have some tenants who would like to build on Mound and would like 1.6 acres to extend their building to the north and do a land swap of about 5 acres in the back; commented the traffic count on Mound Road is about 85,000 cars daily, which does not make sense for residential to front that road when they have the ability to acquire more property to

the west; talked about a wetlands report done on their property and assured he will submit it to the City; expressed more concerns about wetlands and flooding in the area, and offered to have his environmental consultant forward a copy to the Mayor and City Council.

Mayor Taylor suggested he provide the copy to the City Clerk, and she will make sure they all receive a copy.

- Mr. Kervoski – emphasized they have a retail user who would be perfect to develop this site and stressed they are trying to make a fair deal.
- Charles Taylor – purchaser of Stober Plaza adjacent to subject property; excited about this development and stated the developers are very good; excited about what this will do for the area, and relayed that his tenants are also excited about possibly having residential units adjacent to them; explained a lot of people he works with are coming from out of state and looking to start their careers in real estate, so they will be happy to have the option of micro-apartments; clarified he has no interest in this development and this is the first he is hearing of it, but he is very much in favor of it.

Mayor Taylor closed the public hearing.

Moved by Ziarko, seconded by Sierawski, **RESOLVED**, to approve the application by Amer Batal, on behalf of ARH Land Holdings, LLC, for a residential Planned Unit Development on approximately 5.6 acres of land situated on the west side of Mound Road, north of Fourteen Mile Road, PPUD21-0003, subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the Planned Unit Development Agreement, and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign all documents required in conjunction with this approval on behalf of the City.

Councilwoman Ziarko stated this is a unique plan, stressing they are all aware of the increasing housing shortage throughout the State of Michigan. She recalled mentioning a couple of weeks ago that, to keep up demand, the State should be approving 75,000-unit applications; however, at the end of this year, they may reach 17,000, so they are not keeping up with the demand. She noted that in 1978, she worked just south of 14 Mile and Mound Road, and that corner has looked

terrible for almost as long. She is in favor of someone who wants to invest to make it look better, while giving people an opportunity to live in the City with their families. She suspected the employment growth in the area could support the proposed development. She stated they will have to have variances, but she felt this is a perfect location. She liked the renderings, and she explained they have worked with Mr. Najjar's father for many years, adding he was very active in the City. Mr. Najjar has been referred to her as "a genius in architecture" when she had a conversation with someone, so he is well-respected in his field. She indicated the micro-units are for business people who travel, and there are seniors who could move in them for less than \$900 per month, whereas if they moved into an assisted living facility, they would be paying \$5,000 per month. She is confident there will be clients for those small units. She questioned the depth of the reflection pool. She further questioned whether the applicants will own the company handling the rental applications, or whether they will be hiring someone to take care of it. She stressed it is important for the owner to handle it, and she inquired as to whether they will have full-time security on site. She questioned whether they will have full-time staff, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. She thanked the applicants for having the traffic study done, and she emphasized that this project has potential. They answered a lot of questions City Council has about housing.

Mr. Amer replied to Councilwoman Ziarko's questions by stating the reflection pond will be very shallow, probably ranging from six to twelve inches. They took

the feedback from the Planning Commission and decided they would not use this pond for water retention purposes but will provide underground detention in a separate tank. The reflection pond will serve as more of a landscaping element. As far as management, Mr. Amer explained they are going to have an onsite leasing office and management office, so all management will be done in house and not outsourced. He added that office will be staffed with full-time employees. Their security plan is to provide surveillance throughout the entire development, and cyber security will be handled through the National Call Center. Any security breach will directly notify the National Call Center, who will then notify the Sterling Heights Police Department.

Councilwoman Ziarko noted that the subject of wetlands was raised, but they are not here tonight to judge wetlands. She added that is a determination to be made by the State of Michigan.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sierawski stated she is interested in this project, but it is a PUD, which allows property owners to have greater responsibility with respect to developing their properties. It allows the Mayor and City Council to allow the properties to be developed at a higher density. She agreed it is a unique plan, and it is in an area of the City that needs some development and improvement. She recommended that possibly they look at their ordinances in the future as they see more high-density developments going up. There are some residential properties abutting this property, and she inquired as to whether the applicants would be

willing to let local residents use some of these amenities. She cited the example of inviting some of the community when they host movie nights.

Mr. Najjar replied they feel strongly about creating a community-type environment, and their property is a gateway to the City. He commented they are beautifying the City, and if they can attract the right type of people to come in and utilize the space and the park, they are open to that idea if it does not become a hindrance to their residents. He noted it is something they are willing to experiment with, and if they can find it still provides for a safe and secure space for their residents and does not exempt their residents from using that space because it is always full, he could see no reason to object to that request.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sierawski clarified she did not mean they would have to let everyone in as a public park, but she thought it would be nice to include the local neighbors.

Mr. Amer agreed it is a fantastic idea, and he would like to build upon that idea. He thought possibly a movie night for the residents of Sterling Heights would be a great value, and possibly bring in an Urban Air tent, noting he is part owner of Urban Air Adventure Park, located on Hall Road in Sterling Heights.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sierawski agreed that community-building is not easy, so she appreciated Mr. Amer's input. She feels this has great potential, so she will be voting in favor of this development this evening.

Councilwoman Schmidt expressed concern about the dumpster location being situated only ten feet from a residential property. She inquired as to whether there

is any other location where it could be placed, and whether there is any type of screening between the residential property and the dumpsters.

Ms. Richards replied there will be landscaping behind the dumpster enclosures, but she assured the dumpster areas will be enclosed.

Councilwoman Schmidt questioned whether there is any other area where those dumpsters could be located where they would not be so close to the residential units.

Mr. Najjar replied they looked at that multiple times, and because of the large density, it is a tight site. They have another dumpster location to the east of the reflection pond that services Building No. 1 as well. They originally had the dumpster locations closer to 14 Mile Road, but there was a lot of pushbacks about seeing dumpsters from the road. He noted it is unfortunate that they are abutting either single-family residential homes or a major road, so they do not have the option to place the dumpsters in a different location.

Councilwoman Schmidt questioned whether the dumpsters could be placed on the west side of the property between the two sets of buildings.

Mr. Najjar replied that they are willing to put them there, but he cautioned the adjacent property is zoned single-family so it would potentially be developed with residential units.

Councilwoman Schmidt pointed out it is vacant at this time, and any future residents would know the dumpsters are there prior to buying the property. She

questioned whether the applicants are willing to limit pickup times for the trash-haulers, so they are not emptying the dumpsters at 6 a.m.

Mr. Najjar assured he has no issue with limiting trash pickup times.

Councilwoman Schmidt recalled instances in the City where trash haulers empty dumpsters at all hours, and she did not feel that is fair. She asked them for their consideration. She also noted that there is no allowance for recreational vehicle (RV) parking on site, and she questioned whether they are eliminating the possibility of anyone parking in regular spaces with trailers.

Mr. Najjar replied that is expressly forbidden per the property owner/tenant agreement.

Councilwoman Schmidt questioned what they have allowed for visitor parking.

Mr. Amer replied they have allocated two spaces for each two-bedroom apartment, 1.5 spaces for each one-bedroom apartment, and one space for each micro-unit, leaving them twenty-six additional parking spaces for guests. He added they do not believe the one-bedroom apartments will require more than one space, so that should free up additional spaces for visitors. He pointed out that since this is near the Van Dyke/Mound corridors, some of their residents may feel the cost of having a car may not be a benefit to them. Mr. Amer noted the earlier discussion about the SMART FLEX system, suggesting they could possibly partner with SMART to allow a rideshare stop at Icon Park to service as a FLEX stop as well.

Councilwoman Schmidt questioned whether they have a limit on the number of occupants for the micro-units.

Mr. Amer replied they have not discussed any limitations, but he felt it would be a great idea to set a limit on how many can occupy the micro-units. He felt it should be occupied by no more than two people.

Councilwoman Schmidt commented that the Mound Road ingress/egress is at the beginning of the formation of the right turn lane. She questioned whether it is a full right-turn lane at this time.

Ms. Richards replied she does not know, but she offered to find out the information for Councilwoman Schmidt.

Councilman Radtke stated he is very impressed with this project, and he felt it is what people are seeking for their living arrangements. He cited The Phoenix at Troy Crossing, which are apartments with an urban-style design on 16 Mile, which is also a large road and seems to be completely full. He liked the tremendous amenities being proposed, and he questioned whether the indoor amenities, including the game room and office center, count towards the recreation space that is calculated.

Ms. Richards replied no, indicating they are only counting the outside recreation space.

Councilman Radtke emphasized what he likes about this project are the amenities. He has not seen anything like the proposed reflection pond, but he felt it will be an interesting communal space for people to gather. He questioned why there is

not a walkway from Mound Road on the northern part of Building One. He felt people will walk across the open roadway rather than walk all the way to the connecting walkway. He suggested extending the sidewalk to the road.

Mr. Najjar replied that is a great recommendation and is something they will be adding.

Councilman Radtke questioned why the applicants did not opt to build up more, adding another story, noting they could have more floors with this urban-style development. He is confident this will become a gateway to the City and a project that will set a new standard in Sterling Heights.

Mr. Najjar replied that parking is a major consideration in limiting the size of the development. He pointed out that they also want to be conscious of their neighbors, noting they abut single-family residential property, and as a resident, he indicated he would not want a five-story building adjacent to him. He explained they are a transitional space between Mound Road and the commercial space to the east, and the residential property to the west. He felt they asked for a slight variance of one additional story, but they are keeping it "a happy medium."

Councilman Radtke pointed out there was mention of parallel parking, and he questioned where it is located.

Mr. Najjar replied it is on the northeast side, and he pointed it out on the site plan.

Councilman Radtke commented that is something new in Sterling Heights, although it is common in Ann Arbor. He appreciated the applicant's calculations

on parking, adding he has been reading that the goal for ideal parking is for it to be eighty percent occupied. He recalled there is a report coming from the Planning Department that will discuss lessening the parking requirements, especially in commercial and multi-family districts. He felt that report is long overdue, noting a lot of developments have too much parking. He pointed out it will be ideal to have a shopping plaza directly adjacent because the residents will be able to walk to it, and it will be good for the businesses in that plaza. He expressed concern about the southern buildings and how they will get to the dumpster, noting it is a long walk across the site. He felt if they can bring a dumpster closer to Buildings Four and Five, it would be better for the residents. Councilwoman Koski stated she lived in that area for over thirty years. She questioned whether "pet-friendly" is referring to dogs, and if so, what provisions will they have for the dogs.

Mr. Najjar replied affirmatively, advising there will be a maximum weight limit, breed type, and quantity of dogs, and these items would be mandated in the rental agreements.

Councilwoman Koski questioned if there are two people, would they be allowed two dogs.

Mr. Najjar replied affirmatively and replied they have not talked about limitations on cats.

Councilwoman Koski questioned whether they will set a limit as to how many animals per unit.

Mr. Najjar assured they will have a limit, and added that as developers, it is to their advantage not to have large animals that could potentially deteriorate the units.

Councilwoman Koski inquired as to whether they are proposing a dog park or walkways designated for dog-walking.

Mr. Najjar replied they do not anticipate providing a dog park, but he indicated he lives in the Aberdeen Condominiums south of M-59, off Mound, and throughout the complex they have little dog baggies throughout so dog owners can clean up after their dogs when they are taking them for a walk. He replied to further inquiry that each micro-unit and one-bedroom unit would allow a maximum amount of two residents.

Mr. Amer replied to inquiry that they would allow a maximum of four people to rent a two-bedroom unit.

Councilwoman Koski expressed concern regarding the buildings being so close together. She questioned whether the benches will be in front of the windows or to the side of the windows. She also inquired as to whether the windows open.

Mr. Najjar replied to inquiry that the benches will be to the side of the windows, and he replied to further inquiry that the windows will open.

Councilwoman Koski questioned what type of coverings will be on the windows.

Mr. Najjar replied they are slider windows, so they do not open into the courtyard but slide open. He assured there will be blinds on all their windows so there is privacy for the residents.

Councilwoman Koski questioned whether the residents will be able to have their curtains or blinds open at any time.

Mr. Najjar replied they will be retractable blinds, and if someone wants privacy in their unit, they can keep the blinds closed.

Councilwoman Koski questioned how much space is in the corridor.

Mr. Najjar replied there is 22.5 feet in width, and one hundred feet in length.

Councilwoman Koski questioned how close the benches will be to the building.

Mr. Najjar replied he does not know the exact number, but they were anticipating keeping them a few feet off the building. The benches would extend into the courtyard.

Councilwoman Koski questioned whether they will have rules prohibiting smoking or vaping in the courtyard areas.

Mr. Amer replied that is to be determined, and they have not given that any thought at this point.

Councilwoman Koski stated she has a problem with micro-units, noting she grew up in a very small house with two bedrooms. She questioned what will be in the micro-units.

Mr. Najjar replied to inquiry that it will have a Murphy bed, a kitchenette, a full bathroom with a stackable washer and dryer, and a laundry/linen closet. He stated that only twenty-eight of the one-hundred-forty units are the micro-units, and they are not for everyone. They are in line or larger than many dorm rooms or senior facility spaces, so it is not uncommon for people to live in a 300-square-foot

space when there are other amenities and places they can go into within the development. He is confident they will be some of the first units rented out.

Councilwoman Koski questioned whether there will be a stove and refrigerator.

Mr. Najjar confirmed they will have a full kitchenette.

Councilwoman Koski explained she is fine with the one-bedroom and two-bedroom units, but she is having a hard time with the micro units. She is also concerned with the close proximity of the buildings in conjunction with the large windows in each unit, which do not offer much privacy.

Mr. Najjar explained that people who look at these apartments and are interested in renting do not have to necessarily select one that is on the first floor of the boulevard. He calculated there are only five units per side that abut that boulevard, so only twenty total units abutting the "resident's boulevard." He acknowledged there will be people who do not have a problem living in those spaces, but it is their prerogative. Mr. Najjar stated they are providing a unique opportunity that does not currently exist in the City, where someone can pay a small amount of rent to live in a small apartment by themselves rather than having to have a roommate so they can afford the rent for a larger unit. He emphasized that it is not an entire complex of micro units but there are only twenty-eight of them. Mr. Najjar explained he is a homebuilder and the biggest challenges they have is to find land available to build. They are providing 140 units in a small space that can help to fulfill the housing need, especially a desirable city like Sterling Heights.

Councilwoman Koski questioned how many of these units Mr. Najjar has built.

Mr. Najjar replied he typically builds single-family residential, and this is his first multi-family development.

Councilwoman Koski questioned the size of the lots that Mr. Najjar generally develops.

Mr. Najjar clarified he generally does not develop the land, but they buy parcels from developer's tear-down properties in Birmingham, Bloomfield, Troy, or Rochester Hills, so the lot sizes vary tremendously.

Councilwoman Koski inquired as to what square footage is the most popular for single-family homes.

Mr. Najjar replied he is a luxury home builder, so his typical homes are larger, ranging in value from \$1.5 million to \$3 million, with an average of 5,500 square feet for the home.

Councilwoman Koski questioned how many small homes Mr. Najjar has built.

Mr. Najjar replied that earlier in his career, they completed a development located not far from the proposed Icon Park, off 14 Mile between Ryan and Mound, and it was an extension of an older, existing neighborhood. It was mainly comprised of 1,500-square-foot ranches, 1,800-square-foot split levels, and 2,200-square-foot colonials. These were selling good even in 2009 during the recession.

Councilwoman Koski was aware of the homes to which Mr. Najjar was referring, and she stated she would like to see those kinds of homes on the subject property.

She recalled they spent years trying to get the right sized home on the right sized

lot, and it is difficult to see where they are proposing to squeeze so much into a small space. She complimented them on the design, but she would like to see more space, more trees, more greenery, and a larger distance between buildings. Mr. Najjar pointed out that a lot of this is based on affordability, pointing out that a single-family home is much more costly, so many people who cannot afford that are provided an alternative to afford to rent one of these units and live in Sterling Heights. He assured they are not trying to fill the need for every person who wants to live in Sterling Heights, but for those who want to rent a space, either short-term or long-term, they can assist them in providing housing opportunities. He pointed out that over all the years when Sterling Heights was experiencing a lot of growth and development, this parcel remained vacant. He explained they feel this is a feasible project for this property, noting that selling single-family homes on Mound Road would be challenging for desirability, but bringing a multi-family rental development, which is more transitory for the residents, is a great use of this space.

Councilwoman Koski pointed out that both Southlawn Drive and Northlawn Drive, off Mound, have beautiful homes.

Mr. Amer thanked the Mayor, Council members and some of the residents for their thoughts and ideas raised today. He recalled the term "cabin fever" being mentioned for those who may live in a very small area, and he assured that was taken into consideration when they designed their development. He pointed out they provided areas where people can congregate, both indoor and outdoor, so if

someone feels closed in and it is cold outside, they can enjoy the lounge in the clubhouse where there will be a fireplace and a television, and they can meet new people. If the weather is nice and allows them to sit outside, they have all the outdoor amenities to enjoy, including "Residential Boulevard" between the buildings where they can sit, congregate, and enjoy the company of others. He agreed "cabin fever" concerns are valid for a development that does not have amenities, but that is not the case in this development. He agreed that most residential development that took place in Sterling Heights in the 1980's and 1990's was single-family homes; however, housing costs for single-family homes remains very high, and many people cannot come to this City for that reason. He stressed this provides an opportunity for people who cannot afford a home to live and work in Sterling Heights, enjoying smaller spaces at less money per square foot for rent. He added that there are people who like to live by themselves but cannot afford a lot on their own, and this will allow them the opportunity to rent a smaller unit that will be affordable for them.

Councilman Yanez commented that the reflection pond is a "nonstarter" for him, noting that it is possible to drown in six inches of water. He indicated there will be children in the complex, as well as children in the neighboring area who will be coming to the apartment complex. He pointed out there is a playscape just a short distance from this reflection pond, and some children may look at this pond as a pool. He inquired as to whether this reflection pond would be considered an attractive nuisance.

Mr. Kaszubski replied that an attractive nuisance would be something that would be unsecured or otherwise would not be heavily controlled because of vacancy. He cited the example of a construction site with a large pit that was not secured, that would be an attractive nuisance. He clarified this would be an amenity that, according to the petitioner, will have twenty-four-hour surveillance and people living on site, so it would not be considered an attractive nuisance.

Councilman Yanez questioned whether there will be a fence around this pond.

Mr. Amer replied one of the items brought forth by the Planning Commission was a fence around the reflective pond, and his answer was that he would prefer not to have a fence. The Planning Commission agreed to it because if there was a fence around it, the pond would not be considered part of the recreational amenities this development will offer. They met with Engineering and explained they do not want to use this pond as a detention basin, where water can range in depth, so they revised their plans to detain the water underneath the actual reflection pond and make the pond shallow enough, so it is no longer a concern. He compared it to any pond or fountain found in a shopping mall, such as Somerset, Lakeside, or Partridge Creek. He has witnessed children using those as a pool, so he does not feel they are bringing something out of the ordinary.

Councilman Yanez questioned whether there are any other apartment complexes with a reflection pond.

Mr. Vanderpool replied there are areas of the City where there are ponds, and he cited one at the corner of 14 Mile and Van Dyke at Sterling Ponds. He believed

Lakeside Mall either has or used to have a reflective pond inside. He stated he would have to give that some thought and report back to Council some other similar locations they can look at, but he noted there are reflective ponds across the country, notably The National Mall in Washington DC.

Councilman Yanez questioned whether the applicants anticipate that children will live in this development.

Mr. Najjar replied affirmatively.

Councilman Yanez noted they are asking to replace the required six-foot-high masonry wall with a vinyl fencing, and he questioned whether that is along their entire property line from Foss to Stober and to Mound Road.

Mr. Najjar replied it is abutting the Stober Cleaner, on the northern property line, although there is a walkway between their site and the Stober Plaza site.

Mr. Amer clarified the 6-foot-high vinyl fencing will be where the parallel parking is located. It will extend all the way around the corner, and where the landscape greenbelt starts, they will be using a landscape buffer instead of vinyl fencing to go all the way across the dumpster wall to the west corner. They will be lining the west side of the property with arborvitaes and will be heavily landscaped and dense. He confirmed there will be vinyl fencing where the subject property abuts the residential homes.

Councilman Yanez questioned whether there is a reason they do not want to use cinder block walls.

Mr. Amer stressed it is not an appealing look and appears to have a confining look rather than a landscaped appearance.

Councilman Yanez questioned whether the applicants are requesting a total of thirty-five trees in the parking lot rather than the required fifty trees.

Mr. Amer clarified that he sent a tree table to the Planning Office, but it was not updated on the presentation, and it now shows forty-seven trees in the parking lot.

Councilman Yanez felt that as far as the micro units, the market will determine whether those apartments will be rented, and he suspected they will be rented. He emphasized he has a problem with the reflection pond and its potential hazard for kids. He does not feel the retention pond is worth scrapping this entire project, but he will not support it if the pond is included.

Mr. Najjar explained that most subdivisions now require retention ponds. He stated he grew up on Pondview in Sterling Heights, between Ryan and Dequindre, and there were multiple ponds in the subdivision where they would ice skate in the winter and fish in the summer. He added those ponds were very deep and in a residential community abutting Delia Park. He emphasized it is not a unique idea, although it is a unique amenity to the proposed development. He cited a large fountain and reflecting pond at the central plaza in Royal Oak, and it is directly adjacent to a playscape. He stressed it is ultimately the parent's responsibility to watch over their children, but they will have camera surveillance on site to monitor, if necessary. He anticipated most people, especially those with

small children, will find this to be a beautiful amenity and addition to their lifestyle rather than a detriment.

Councilman Yanez commended Mr. Najjar for his incredible work, and he is a family friend of his father; however, he stressed he has his concerns and wanted to address them.

Mayor Taylor stated he is in support of this great project, and they should not turn it down. He noted there have been several apartment and residential developments come in front of them over the last several months, and he felt this is toward the top of that list in terms of curb appeal, architecture, design, amenities, and the unique nature of the development. He added he likes the reflective pool and the proximity of the buildings to each other with the unique walkways. He stressed the fitness room and clubhouse are very nice, and the location is good. Mayor Taylor admitted the 300-square-foot micro unit may not be appealing to all, but with so many amenities on site, the residents of these smaller units will not feel so closed in. He stressed the City needs to adapt with the times. He pointed out that the developers are putting their money on the line, so if they did not believe they could rent the smaller units, they would not be here requesting approval of them. He added the 14 Mile/Mound corner has been underutilized for a long time, and he appreciated the applicant's response that they want a transitional use between commercial on one side and residential on the other. He emphasized there is a huge housing demand and Sterling Heights has talked for years about being a welcoming, vibrant city that is distinctive and

unique, and he appreciated this opportunity for housing spaces where people can live and recreate in a unique way.

Councilwoman Ziarko noted there will be a discussion about “pattern book homes,” modeled after the World War II era. They are ideal for little parcels that cannot be developed any other way, and they are multiple-family homes. She felt they will be talking about these soon.

Councilman Radtke explained he lived in an “efficiency,” or micro-unit, in London. It was a very small area, but there were open space areas, and he never felt confined. He felt they need to expand their views and realized that not everyone can afford or wants a large home on a huge parcel of land. He addressed the concern about a reflection pond and pointed out there are houses that back up to the Clinton River. He does not understand why they are being so restrictive to prevent people from building their vision.

Councilwoman Schmidt stated she hopes the applicants will reconsider the dumpster relocation, and she suggested they could possibly consider pickleball courts in lieu of a reflection pond.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: Sierawski, Taylor, Ziarko, Radtke, Schmidt.
No: Yanez, Koski. The motion carried.

10. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS

Mayor Taylor noted that since it is past 9:43 p.m. and their rules require them to take comments from citizens at 9:30 or as soon as possible after an agenda item is finished, they will move to Communications from Citizens at this time. He opened the floor for public comments.

- Unidentified resident of Sterling Heights - recommended everyone vote yes on the special needs bond, which helps all children; this money goes to help children with special needs, hearing impairments, physical impairments, and brain injuries; stressed these children have a harder time than everyone else and need the love and attention; the bond costs five cents per day per household, or \$20 per year; urged everyone in Macomb County to vote yes.
- Giulio Russo – stated his business received a violation for feather flags, and they recommended installation of a digital sign; complained about the City’s rules on digital signs, noting only twenty percent of the sign can be digital, and there are regulations on the frequency of changing the digital images; complained it would cost him \$30,000; questioned if any of the City Council members own a business.
- Ken Nelson – opposed to Planned Unit Developments (PUD); complained about the Wedge, a proposed PUD to be located on Hall Road; recalled the PUD was denied by City Council, yet it is coming back to Planning Commission with increased density; stated the neighbors are upset; questioned why the City is hiring a Planning and Zoning consultant, adding the Planner II and Planner I are doing a good job.
- Sanford Williams – questioned whether the Marijuana Task Report will be coming out on October 31.

Mayor Taylor replied affirmatively.

8. **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Taylor stated this item is consideration of the Consent Agenda. He opened

the floor for public comments, but no one spoke.

Moved by Koski, seconded by Ziarko, **RESOLVED**, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented:

- A. To approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 20, 2022.
- B. To approve payment of the bills as presented: General Fund - \$844,966.11, Water & Sewer Fund - \$2,024,170.30, Other Funds - \$1,949,101.88, Total Checks - \$4,818,238.29.
- C. **RESOLVED**, to:
 1. Purchase four (4) police investigative vehicles at pricing available through State of Michigan MiDeal cooperative purchasing contracts,

- #071B7700184 and #071B7700177, at a cumulative cost of \$125,754.70;
and
2. Waive the competitive bidding requirements in accordance with City Code §2-217(A)(9)(b) and purchase three (3) police investigative vehicles at the cumulative quoted cost of \$80,369.
- D. **RESOLVED**, to purchase one (1) Apollocast player and fourteen (14) two-year licenses, with installation services, from InLighten, Inc., 96455 Wehrle Drive, Clarence, NY 14031, at a cumulative cost of \$10,472.
 - E. **RESOLVED**, to award the bid for storm and sanitary sewer repairs to Superior Excavating, Inc., 2420 Auburn Road, Auburn Hills, MI 48326, as primary, and Strata Underground LLC, 35443 Cordelia, Clinton Township, MI 48035, as secondary, based on the respective unit prices bid for a one-year period, with an option for the City Manager to extend the bid term one additional year upon mutual consent under the same terms and conditions.
 - F. **RESOLVED**, to accept the proposal by Giffels Webster for professional consultant planning services and authorize the City Manager to sign all required documentation on behalf of the City.
 - G. **RESOLVED**, to adopt the resolution designating October 2022 as National Disability Employment Awareness Month in the City of Sterling Heights.
 - H. **RESOLVED**, to adopt the resolution designating October 2022 as Filipino American History Month in the City of Sterling Heights in recognition of and appreciation for the rich history and significant contributions made by the Filipino American community.
 - I. **RESOLVED**, to adopt the resolution designating October 2022 as "Global Diversity Awareness Month" in the City of Sterling Heights.
 - J. **RESOLVED**, to adopt the resolution designating October 2022 as "LGBTQ+ History Month" in the City of Sterling Heights.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

9. **CONSIDERATION**

- A. Mayor Taylor stated this is to consider appointments to the City of Sterling Heights Boards and Commissions. He opened the floor for public comment, but no one spoke.

Arts Commission

Moved by Ziarko, seconded by Radtke, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Lisa Stout to the Arts Commission to a term ending June 30, 2025, subject to the appointee

meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Historical Commission

Moved by Ziarko, seconded by Schmidt, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Theresa Krol to the Historical Commission to a term ending June 30, 2024, subject to the appointee meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Elected Officials Compensation Commission

Mayor Taylor explained there are three openings for three partial terms with different endings. He questioned the Clerk as to whether this Commission meets in February 2023.

Clerk Melanie Ryska replied affirmatively. She replied to further inquiry that they went from two-year terms to four-year terms.

Mayor Taylor stated he would like to postpone this to the first meeting in December, and he inquired as to whether that will give them enough time to get sworn in.

Clerk Ryska replied affirmatively.

Youth Advisory Board

Moved by Radtke, seconded by Yanez, **RESOLVED**, to appoint Cameron Orjada and Sabria Chowdhury to the Youth Advisory Board to terms ending June 30, 2023, subject to the appointees meeting the qualifications set forth in Charter §4.03 and taking the oath of office within two weeks.

Councilman Radtke stated these appointees come highly recommended, and he is confident they will do a great job.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

Elected Officials Compensation Commission

Moved by Ziarko, seconded by Radtke, **RESOLVED**, to postpone the appointments to the Elected Officials Compensation Commission to the December 6, 2022, regular City Council meeting.

Yes: All. The motion carried.

11. REPORTS FROM CITY ADMINISTRATION AND CITY COUNCIL

Mr. Vanderpool stated he has nothing further this evening.

Mayor Taylor questioned whether the Marijuana Task Force report, which was referred to by a resident during Communications from Citizens, is scheduled to be delivered October 31 and whether there will be any public presentation.

Mr. Vanderpool replied that they will submit the report to City Council as required by October 31, 2022, and it will be up to City Council if they want City Administration to present it publicly at a meeting in November. If so, they will probably be looking at a presentation at the second meeting in November or the first meeting in December. He assured they will have the final report on October 31, and it could be available to the public as well.

Councilwoman Ziarko reminded everyone that there are proposals on the ballot for the upcoming November election, and the ballot is two-sided. She attended the Macomb Business Awards a couple of weeks ago, and she is proud that the three finalists were all manufacturers from Sterling Heights, with AGS Automotive

winning the award. She added there were a lot of other businesses throughout the City that were nominated in different categories.

Councilwoman Ziarko questioned whether there will be an official ribbon-cutting opening the trail off 15 Mile Road that traverses behind Freedom Hill.

Mr. Vanderpool replied that he does not have a definitive answer, although he hopes to have more information soon. He added they are finishing some punch list items, and he anticipated they will have a ribbon cutting. He stressed it is a fantastic addition to the City, and he assured he will report back to City Council as soon as he receives that information from the County on a definite date and time.

Councilwoman Ziarko commended the job they did on that path, adding that the surface is very good. She stated it is getting to be a busy trail, and she added being on the trail gives the feeling that you are somewhere up north. She addressed the discussion on the shortage of housing and explained there was a plan presented at a press conference sponsored by Michigan Municipal League (MML) called "Pattern Book Homes." She commented that she hopes there will be pockets within the City where this becomes a reality.

Councilman Radtke commented that the "Pattern Book Homes" is amazing. He indicated he grew up in a home in Detroit where there were many duplexes on his street, but they had the appearance of single-family homes. He felt they should amend the zoning ordinance to allow them in Sterling Heights. He asked Mr. Vanderpool when the report will come to them on parking minimums.

Mr. Vanderpool replied they are currently in a transition with the City Planner's recent departure, so there is a delay. He assured he will get them an update on the time frame, and it is on their list of things to do.

Councilman Radtke commented that they need to update their zoning ordinance and master plan, and he emphasized the recent plans that have come before them have demonstrated the need for these updates. He suggested the elimination of the RV parking requirements in multiple-family developments, and he noted setback requirements should be updated. He pointed out that Troy, Royal Oak, and other cities do not require these setbacks. He recommended hiring a consultant to bring their zoning ordinance and master plan "into the twenty-first century" by reducing parking minimums, lot size, and give people the opportunity to build what they want on land they own.

Councilman Radtke talked about a pedestrian refuge island being constructed on 15 Mile Road, east of Van Dyke Avenue, noting it is being built because there have been two fatalities crossing from the hotels on the north side of 15 Mile Road to the businesses on the south side. He hoped they will have a traffic study done to identify dangerous pedestrian crossings.

Mr. Vanderpool replied that Councilman Radtke is correct, and there are three areas they have studied. He advised the studies are complete, and they are reviewing the results and recommendations from the consultants. Those locations include Utica Road/Dodge Park Road by Stevenson High School, an area by Henry Ford II High School, and an area along Riverland, and he assured there

will be improvements in all three of those areas. He indicated the City Council will be receiving an update on that very soon.

Councilman Radtke stated he is firmly in support of public transit, and their corporate partners, including Stellantis, BAE Systems, and others are strongly in support of transit, recognizing it creates jobs. He emphasized how many people use the transit along Van Dyke, and he urged the residents to support it.

Councilwoman Schmidt reminded everyone that the next City Council meeting will be on Monday, October 17, 2022, due to most Council members attending the MML convention in Muskegon, so they adjusted their schedule some time ago.

Councilman Yanez reminded everyone that on Sunday, October 9, the Fire Department will hold an Open House at Fire Station #4. Cider and donuts will be provided, although he expressed disappointment that they no longer have the smoke trailer for children to go through. He would like City Council to consider purchasing one and that they can continue to provide the health safety education that the Fire Department has been providing since he was a child in elementary school. Councilman Yanez apologized for not being at the last meeting, but he appreciated the City's recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, which is the last two weeks of September and the first two weeks of October. He stated on Saturday, October 15, there will be a Day of the Dead Fiesta held in downtown Mount Clemens adjacent to Anton Art Center. He informed it is free, and there will be Hispanic art, food trucks, and a number of vendors. He hoped for good weather

and encouraged residents to attend to learn a little more about the Hispanic culture.

Councilwoman Koski reminded everyone that the Drug Free Coalition is holding a "Vaping 101" townhall meeting on October 19, 2022, at 6 p.m. at the Community Center. She explained this is to let parents know what vaping is all about, and Mr. Kaszubski will be taking part in that event.

Mr. Kaszubski confirmed that the Drug Free Coalition is putting on their second annual townhall for vaping, and it is geared for the parents of children so they can look at what is going on with vaping, how to speak to their children about it, and try to get them to understand the dangers. He explained this past month, they had a nice presentation at Sterling Heights High School with about 1,500 students who got to hear about a gentleman who lost both lungs and had to have a lung transplant at a young age because of vaping. He cautioned there is an epidemic in the schools and in the community, and the Drug Free Coalition is trying to fight it by educating everyone on the dangers of vaping.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sierawski commented that most people who applied for absentee ballots have received them in the mail. She urged everyone to vote the entire ballot, which is two-sided. She stressed the transportation millage is important for those who do not have the ability to be as fully mobile as others and need it, so she urged everyone to consider voting in favor of it.

12. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
There was no unfinished business.

13. **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

14. **CLOSED SESSION PERMITTED UNDER ACT 267 OF 1976**

Mr. Kaszubski stated there are no items for tonight.

15. **ADJOURN**

Moved by Ziarko, seconded by Schmidt, **RESOLVED**, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 10:11 p.m.

MELANIE D. RYSKA, City Clerk