



Carlisle | Wortman
ASSOCIATES, INC.

117 NORTH FIRST STREET SUITE 70 ANN ARBOR, MI 48104 734.662.2200 734.662.1935 FAX

Date: October 28, 2021

**Planned Unit Development (PUD)
Eligibility Review
For
City of Northville, Michigan**

Applicant:	Hunter Pasteur Northville LLC 32300 Northwestern Highway, Suite 230 Farmington Hills, MI 48334
Project Name:	The Downs Planned Unit Development (PUD)
Plan Date:	June 25, 2021
Location:	Vacant parcels on the south side of Cady St. (between S. Center and Griswold), the Northville Downs racetrack property south of Cady St. (between S. Center St. and River St.), and two areas on the west side of S. Center St.
Zoning:	CBD – Central Business District CSO – Cady Street Overlay District RTD – Racetrack District R-2 – Second Density Residential District
Action Requested:	PUD Eligibility
Required Information:	As noted within this review

PROJECT AND SITE DESCRIPTION

The applicant is requesting review of Planned Unit Development (PUD) Eligibility for a residential and commercial project on 48.05 acres of land that is currently vacant or occupied by the Northville Downs Racetrack. The applicant submitted plans for a similar project on this site in 2019. The Planning

Commission determined that, in their view, the project was PUD Eligible at the April 16, 2019, meeting. The applicant subsequently withdrew the project from consideration.

The project is returning with a mixed-use project that proposes 10,070 – 12,154 square feet of commercial space, and a variety of residential living styles:

- Apartments: 174 units along Cady St. (*130 fewer units than previous plan*)
- Condominiums: 53 units along Cady St. (*Not proposed in previous plan*)
- Row houses: 28 units along Cady St. (*Not proposed in previous plan*)
- Townhomes: 170 units, with 12 units in the vicinity of Cady St., and 154 units on the south end of the project site (*13 fewer units than previous plan*).
- Single-Family Dwellings: 56 units (*3 more than previous plan*)
Total: 481 units (*55 fewer units than previous plan, or 10% reduction*)

An aerial of the subject site is provided below:



PUD PROCESS

The PUD review process is described in Article 20 of the Zoning Ordinance. In general, a “PUD” is a planning tool that rezones a property to a specific site plan. This planning tool allows for flexibility in application of the zoning requirements to create a better project.

As a rezoning (to PUD), it must follow the required steps outlined in the state Zoning Enabling Act, and in the City’s Zoning Ordinance. The PUD review process has several steps. These steps are generally described below. We have highlighted the step the project is currently in.

Step 1: Pre-Application Conference (*completed on July 21, 2021*)

Step 2: PUD Eligibility determination by the Planning Commission

Step 3: Preliminary Site Plan/PUD Plan review by Planning Commission

Step 4: Public Hearing at Planning Commission & recommendation to City Council of Preliminary Site Plan/PUD Plan

Step 5: Preliminary Site Plan/PUD Plan review & action by City Council

Step 6: Final Site Plan review by Planning Commission

Note that the steps may or may not occur at a single meeting.

Currently, the Planning Commission is evaluating the proposal against the PUD Eligibility Criteria in the ordinance (Step 2 of the PUD review process). The eligibility criteria are broad-based criteria. They are to be used to determine if the benefits of the project justify the requested deviations from the zoning requirements, and that the project couldn’t be built without these deviations.

Note that the “eligibility” determination does not set the proposed site plan in stone. Changes to the design, density, building, pedestrian amenities, and all other items can still be made during the Preliminary and Final Site Plan review stage. The eligibility stage simply determines a general concept. Adding details to the concept is done during the next stages of the process.

PUD ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Section 20.05(2)(1) of the City's Zoning Ordinance establishes PUD criteria which determine the overall eligibility for a PUD. The applicant for a PUD must demonstrate that all the following criteria are met to be entitled to PUD treatment. These criteria are provided below.

Criterion No. 1: Granting of the planned unit development will result in one of the following:

- a. A recognizable and material benefit to the ultimate users of the project and to the community, where such benefit would otherwise be unfeasible or unlikely to be achieved without application of the planned unit development regulations; or**
- b. Long-term protection and preservation of natural resources and natural features of a significant quantity and/or quality, where such benefit would otherwise be unfeasible or unlikely to be achieved without application of the planned unit development regulations; or**
- c. Long-term protection of historic structures or significant architecture worthy of historic preservation; or**
- d. A non-conforming use shall, to a material extent, be rendered more conforming, or less offensive, to the zoning district in which it is situated.**

The PUD submittal identifies the following features as recognizable and material benefits of the project to the users of the project and the community:

1. Various housing types, including apartments, condominiums, row and town houses, and single-family homes. Multi-family apartments and condominiums offer underground parking.
2. Commercial space of just over 16,000 square feet.
3. Open space
 - a. 15.94 acres of open park space (33.1% of site)
 - b. 1.25-acre "Central Park" near Cady St. with 20-foot promenade along east side.
 - c. 9.22-acre river park, including daylighting the Rouge River
 - d. Internal park south of Fairbrook street.
4. Pedestrian connections, including sidewalks, street trees and on-street parking along streets, and a pedestrian connection through the river park (along River St.) to facilitate access from Ford Field to Hines Park.
5. Economic benefits, including job creation through construction of the project, local business support by increased number of residents close to downtown, and tax revenue to City, DDA, and schools.

We have provided comments (in italics) below regarding the benefits offered by the project and compared these benefits to the ordinance deviations shown on the plans. As mentioned above, the criteria are weighing the benefits against the deviations to determine if they both produce a better

project for the City. These comments also include questions that may better be addressed during the site plan review stage. At the end of this report, we have summarized the issues regarding PUD Eligibility. However, this review includes questions and ideas to refine the site plan as well.

Benefit #1: Various housing types.

CWA Comments. The Cady St. Overlay (CSO) District permits a mix of commercial and residential land uses; therefore, the apartments, condominiums and townhouses/rowhouses would be permitted outside of a PUD. However, development of the racetrack area and farmer's market property (outside of the Cady St. Overlay District) does require some type of rezoning to allow the townhomes and single-family homes in this area. Based on the City's Master Plan, residential uses were envisioned in this area, and a PUD rezoning to permit this land use is consistent with the Master Plan.

Regarding the number of residential units in the project, see our comments under "Benefit #5: Economic Benefits."

Cady St. Area Parking

We address parking here because it a requirement of the proposed land uses. Also, one benefit (underground parking) can be directly associated with a proposed deviation in the number of parking spaces.

We compared the proposed parking to the required number of spaces (See table in Appendix of this review for details). Parking requirements for the single-family homes, townhouses, and row houses are accommodated fully in attached garages of each individual unit. However, in the Cady St. area, the parking for the apartments, condominiums, and commercial space don't meet ordinance requirements by approximately 112 spaces (622 req.; 510 proposed). The project proposes to place slightly more than half of the proposed parking spaces under the buildings to take advantage of the change in grade on the site. This configuration will help reduce the impact of parking on the Cady St. area and meet the goal of screening parking from view of the street.

However, we have several questions regarding the proposal:

- a. The developer has a purchase agreement with the City to buy the public parking lot on Cady St. One requirement of this agreement is to provide 92 public parking spaces (in addition to other required parking) within 600 feet of this lot. The narrative states that public streets will have on-street parking; however, parking spots are not shown south of Beal on the new westerly street, or the extension of Hutton. These spaces may be considered to meet the purchase agreement requirement as they are within 600 feet of the existing City lot and should be shown on the plans.*
- b. The new north/south streets south of Beal have narrower right-of-way widths at 50-feet (vs. required 60-feet). While narrow road pavement widths facilitate walkability (an important goal of the City), the 50-foot right-of-way isn't wide enough to accommodate two-way traffic and parking on both sides of the street. Are these streets proposed as one-way? Is parking only proposed on one side? A road cross-section of a 60-foot right-of-way is provided, but not a 50-foot right-of-way; a detail of this narrower right-of-way should be provided. Also, a 60-foot*

right-of-way is the minimum in the City's General Code for a local street and would also accommodate more space for bicycles.

Racetrack Area Housing

The proposal locates 56 single-family lots, and 158 townhouse units south of Beal St. We have compared the dimensions of these land uses to their respective zoning districts:

- a. Single-family lots compared to requirements of R-1B, First Density Residential District; and*
- b. Townhomes compared to requirements in R-4, Fourth Density Residential District. We have used this zoning district because the townhomes are proposed at 3-stories.*

(Note: Sec. 20.04 of the PUD General Design Standards states that the respective land use in the development is compared to the zoning district in which the use is listed as a Principal Uses Permitted.)

Approximately 55% of the single-family home lots deviate from the R-1B zoning requirements in lot area (7,200 s.f. required; 6,240 s.f. proposed) and lot width (60-feet required; 52-feet proposed). It also appears that the setbacks are proposed at a narrower width (15-foot front and 19-foot rear), but this should be confirmed. (Note that since these lots are less than 7,200 s.f., the maximum house size allowed by the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Requirement is 2,500 s.f.).

The townhomes in this area exceed the maximum floor area ratio (0.50 required; 0.79 proposed), have a narrower distance between buildings than allowed, and have a narrower front-yard setback (30-feet required; 15-feet proposed). It also appears that the townhouse development will function as a site condominium, including self-governance through Master Deed and Bylaws. The applicant should confirm this. If so, will the main u-shaped street be a public or private street?

As part of a PUD, the Planning Commission needs to determine if the deviations proposed by the project result in a better project overall. For example, does the underground parking, while offering a smaller number of spaces, create a better project than if the required number of spaces were offered on a surface lot? In our opinion, the parking deviation can be further refined with additional information. Regarding the single-family home lots, increasing the right-of-way widths to 60-feet (if deemed appropriate) may modify this layout anyway. One deviation we would support is a narrower front yard setback, as it puts front porches closer to the sidewalk, increasing community interactions.

Benefit #2: Commercial Space.

CWA Comments. *The narrative states that there is slightly more than 16,000 square feet of commercial space offered in the project. Commercial space is a key component of the Cady Street Overlay District; to create a dynamic street front that extends the downtown. The floor plans show three "retail" units of various sizes, and "flex" space in the row houses on the east end of Cady St.:*

Apartment Building	3,220 s.f. retail space (west side of building) 3,600 s.f. retail space (east side of building, next to Central Park)
Condominium Building	3,250 s.f. retail space (west side of building, next to Central Park)
Row Houses	2,084 s.f. ("flex space" that can be used as either commercial or residential)
TOTAL	10,070 – 12,154 s.f.*

**In our view, we don't consider the apartment/condo building lobbies or leasing offices as "commercial" space, as they are only used by residents of the building and not the general public.*

Regarding the amount of commercial space offered, the applicant should provide any market analysis conducted to better evaluate whether this amount of space is economically viable.

Including commercial space in the project is a positive aspect of this proposal. However, it would be permitted under the current CSO zoning.

Regarding parking, the project is deficient in the number of spaces serving the commercial uses for the Cady St. area. The 17-space lot on Cady Street helps meet the parking needs of the commercial uses; however, in our view, it has a negative impact on the streetscape, the significant "Central Park" amenity, and the views from outdoor dining if restaurants are proposed in either of the corner retail units. As mentioned above regarding parking, additional information should be provided regarding parking on the single-family streets.

Benefit #3: Open Space.

CWA Comments. *The narrative lists the following open spaces as benefits of the project.*

- a. 15.94 acres of open park space (33.1% of site)*
- b. 1.25-acre "Central Park" near Cady St. with 20-foot promenade along east side.*
- c. 9.22-acre river park (exclusive of stormwater basins), including daylighting the Rouge River*
- d. Internal park south of Fairbrook street.*

Parks and open space don't directly generate revenue for a development project. See our comments under "Economic Benefits" regarding this topic. If the developer is offering the open spaces as shown (fully developed public Central Park, River Park, and daylighted river) at no cost to the City, then we would consider these significant benefits of the project. In our view, another key characteristic of these amenities is that they would be available to all Northville residents.

It appears that the remaining "internal" park south of Fairbrook will not be available to all Northville residents. The applicant should confirm this.

The boulevard in the Fairbrook extension is identified as a "pocket park" on the landscape plan. The boulevard is only 12-feet wide, and being between two vehicle travel lanes, we have concerns about inviting pedestrians, especially children, into this space. Has the developer investigated locating a linear pocket park on one side of the new Fairbrook? This would create a space at least 24-feet wide, that would create a safer environment for pedestrians to gather and move through. Also, the

Fairbrook travel lanes are 16-feet wide, which isn't wide enough for on-street parking, but is a wide travel lane. Width from the travel lanes could be added to the linear park.

Benefit #4: Pedestrian Connections.

CWA Comments. *The project is offering sidewalks along all existing and new street frontages, and all streets will include street trees. We consider the sidewalks and trees positive, although they would be permitted (and required) without the PUD rezoning.*

In the Cady St. area where sidewalks abut higher-density uses, the sidewalks go up to the curb with no grass between the walk and the curb. All these streets have on-street parking, which help to protect pedestrians from traveling vehicles. In this area, we consider this configuration desirable to accommodate the larger number of pedestrians and streetside uses (such as outdoor dining, etc.).

Sidewalks are shown along the new streets proposed in the racetrack area at 5-feet away from the curb. We consider this appropriate for a residential neighborhood. However, the plans are not detailed enough regarding the treatment of S. Center St. This street needs vegetation between the walk and traveling cars, as it's a higher-speed roadway. The plans should be amended to show the sidewalk away from the curb along S. Center St.

The engineering plans and landscape plans are not consistent regarding the pedestrian improvements along River St. The landscape plan shows a sidewalk, and a new edge along River St. (which we assume to be a curb). The details of the improvements to this street frontage also need to be better illustrated on the engineering plans.

The narrative states that the applicant has been working with the River Taskforce to incorporate a portion of a pedestrian connection between Ford Field and Hines Park. The sidewalk along River St. would accommodate this connection and is a positive aspect of the plan.

There are also sidewalks on both sides of Fairbrook, and a sidewalk through the boulevard pocket park. See our comments above regarding the boulevard sidewalk/feature.

Benefit #5: Economic Benefits.

CWA Comments. *The narrative states that this project will generate considerably more in tax revenue than the existing racetrack operation. While this makes logical sense, we would ask the developer to share their calculations with City Staff (such as the Assessor or Finance Director) to get their opinion on the matter.*

As mentioned above, a project must generate sufficient revenue to pay for the project's amenities that don't generate revenue, but have a cost, such as parks and public open space. The flexibility in the PUD ordinance helps to facilitate this trade off. However, some developers request funding assistance from the local municipality to finance the "non-revenue-generating" aspects of the project. Then the question becomes, if the City is paying for the public benefits, are the permitted deviations being offset by the benefits? To better understand the financial expectations for this project, the applicant should identify the following, in general terms:

- a. *The value of the proposed “public” benefits (i.e., value of dedicated land, park/benefit construction costs, etc.),*
- b. *The funding they are committing to pay for these benefits, and*
- c. *The amount of funding/tax abatements/financial assistance that the developer is asking from the City.*

With this information, it will become clearer how the deviations from the zoning requirements are going to benefit the community at large. (Note that the submitted narrative states that the traffic impact study will be concluded soon, and the applicant will participate in the cost of implementation of any traffic improvements decided upon by the City and Wayne County. The cost, and responsibility for, these improvements should be included in this analysis once the improvements are identified.)

In summary, the project is offering some significant benefits; however, additional details should be provided to determine how those benefits will be funded, as well as information that could potentially reduce the requested ordinance deviations.

Criterion No. 2: The proposed type and density of use shall not result in an unreasonable increase in the need for or burden upon public services, facilities, roads, and utilities.

CWA Comments. *The applicant lists ways that the development will not place an undue burden upon public services, facilities, roads, and utilities. We have the following comments:*

Public Services:

The applicant doesn’t specifically mention public services, such as police and fire in their narrative. In general, these services are covered by property taxes paid by the new property owners in the development.

Public Facilities:

Public facilities generally include public parks, public roads, and utilities. As mentioned above, the project will create two new public parks. We believe it’s the developer’s intention to deed the land for the Central Park and the River Park to the City once the parks are built as illustrated on the site plan. The applicant should confirm this. City Council will decide to accept the dedication. If they do, the City will maintain these parks. These two areas will increase available parkland in the City by approximately 26%.

Another thing to keep in mind is that the new infrastructure for the development won’t be needing repairs for possibly 15-20 years, leaving taxes paid by residents of the new development to be available for repairs of the older parts of the system throughout the City.

Public Streets:

The plans should indicate which new streets will be public and which will be private. All streets will be constructed by the developer per City standards, and construction oversight provided by City

inspectors. Public streets will be dedicated to the City. Public street maintenance is funded through the state (Act 51) that allocates funding based on population and street mileage.

Parking:

The narrative also identifies the number of new parking spaces as a way that the project will not burden the City by the development. (See our discussion of parking in the previous section of the review.) In summary, the Cady St. area may not fully meet ordinance requirements for parking, and we've asked for additional information. Conversely, the townhomes and single-family homes offer two garage spaces and two driveway spaces for each dwelling (or two more per dwelling than required). See our comments regarding environmental impacts under Criterion #4.

Traffic Improvements:

The narrative also states that the developer is collaborating with the City and Wayne County traffic engineers to identify needed intersection improvements and intends to share the cost of implementing the preferred improvements. An updated traffic study has not been submitted at the time this review was prepared. Once the study is provided, the City's traffic engineers will review and comment on the proposed improvements for the Planning Commission's consideration. (As mentioned above, the cost of the improvements, and responsibility for these costs, should be included in the economic analysis discussed in Criterion #1).

Utilities:

All new utilities and improvements to the City's system that are necessary to serve the project will be paid for and constructed by the developer. As in road construction, the City will inspect the work during construction. The cost of maintenance of the utilities will be borne by the relevant owner – the City will maintain its system, and the property owner will maintain their own leads to the City's system. The project narrative identifies an improvement proposed by this project to the City's sanitary sewer system, which is removal and relocation of a sanitary pipe that currently spans above the Rouge River (where the river crosses Beal St.) We would agree that replacing the sanitary sewer pipe located above the river will be beneficial to the City while, at the same time, serve the project.

In summary, to better determine whether the project will not put undue burden on the City for services and the like, we recommend that the City Staff review the applicant's calculation of anticipated tax revenue and determine how well that will cover the City's anticipated costs. To assist in this, the applicant should confirm:

- They will dedicate the constructed Central Park and River Park to the City.*
- Which streets are proposed as public and which as private?*
- Project team, working with City and County traffic engineers, identify intersection improvements, estimated costs, and funding responsibilities.*

Criterion No. 3: The proposed planned unit development shall be harmonious with public health, safety, and welfare of the City.

CWA Comments. *Constructing a residential project in this part of Northville does not in itself raise any concerns regarding health, safety, and welfare. However, the proposal could have impacts on*

traffic, and traffic safety of surrounding residential neighborhoods. As mentioned above, the traffic question is still being studied. We defer evaluation of traffic safety issues and solutions to the City's traffic engineer.

We would consider this criterion met (given the proposed land uses) as long as any traffic improvements are agreed to by the City's traffic engineer and Wayne County. And as mentioned above, financing of these improvements will need to be identified and included in the proposed financial information outlined under Criterion #1.

Criterion No. 4: The proposed planned unit development shall not result in an unreasonable negative environmental impact or loss of a historic structure on the subject site or surrounding land.

CWA Comments: The project is proposing to improve several environmental issues on the site. These include improved stormwater management, daylighting the Rouge River, and modifying the floodplain, which eliminates it from the east side of River Street. The applicant is also open to repurposing the existing log cabin on the property.

Overall, we don't consider the proposal to be environmentally detrimental to the area, and that the proposal will improve the existing environmental conditions. However, we have several comments regarding the site design:

1. The amount of pavement behind the townhomes is, in our opinion, excessive. We estimate the pavement to total almost 1.5 acres just in the driveway parking areas. Impervious surfaces negatively impact surface water. The stormwater basin will help mitigate stormwater runoff, but the basin will still discharge stormwater over a 24-hour period (along with all the other basins in the watershed), which will still increase flows in the Rouge River. Accommodating four parking spaces for each townhome is, in our opinion, not necessary, and does not contribute to meeting this criterion.
2. The width of the Fairbrook boulevard travel lanes (16-feet between face of curb) could be reduced significantly to further reduce impervious surfaces.
3. The underground detention basins could infiltrate stormwater into the ground. The soil conditions in this area should be studied to confirm if this would work.
4. Johnson Creek is a high-quality tributary. The plans currently show a grading line 20-feet from the waterline. This area looks to be already disturbed; however, no grading or disturbance should remove any vegetation existing along the creek to maintain a watercourse buffer.

Criterion No. 5: The proposed planned unit development shall not result in an unreasonable negative economic impact upon surrounding properties.

CWA Comments: The applicant states that the new development will increase surrounding property values, support downtown businesses with new residents, and increase tax revenue as economic benefits of the project.

Please see our comments regarding tax revenues under Criterion #1.

Regarding property values in this part of Northville, the proposal will change a large area of vacant land to a mixed residential project. This change has the potential for positive economic impact on the surrounding properties as long as the development is in harmony with the surrounding area and does not negatively impact the functioning of the area. A key functional issue is the amount of new traffic generated by the proposal, and its effect on surrounding neighborhood streets. The applicant states that a revised Traffic Impact Study is forthcoming. Its logical that since the number of residential units has been reduced, that the traffic impacts will also be reduced. However, the City's Traffic Engineer will review and comments on the revised Study.

Criterion No. 6: The proposed planned unit development shall be under single ownership and/or control such that there is a single person, corporation, or partnership having responsibility for completing the project in conformity with this Ordinance.

CWA Comments: The narrative states that the proposed PUD is being proposed by a single ownership entity. The application form submitted to the City lists the applicant as "Hunter Pasteur Northville LLC." The previous time this project was before the Planning Commission, the developer's attorney worked with the City's attorney to confirm that this criterion had been met. We would recommend that the applicant follow this same process this time as well.

Criterion No. 7: The proposed planned unit development shall be consistent with the Goals and Policies of the City of Northville Master Plan.

CWA Comments: The submission for this project was made on September 24, 2021. The Master Plan in effect on that date is the 2018 Master Plan. Therefore, our review has compared the proposal to the vision in the 2018 Plan. However, the applicant has been following the Planning Commission's work on updating the Master Plan, and as mentioned in the narrative, refined their overall plan to respond to specific comments provided to the developer. We have also provided comments on principles that are consistent between the existing and new Master Plans.

For clarity, we have divided the project into three areas according to the Sub Areas found in the Master Plan. Cady St (in blue), the Racetrack property (in yellow), and the S. Center Street area (in red). An illustration of the three areas is shown on the next page.



Residential Density:

Section 20.02 of the PUD Ordinance states that density is calculated exclusive of road rights-of-way. The table below compares the proposed density and the density permitted in zoning districts of similar residential land uses. This comparison also shows the densities identified in the Master Plan.

Residential Type	Proposed Density – Using PUD Density Standard (Excludes ROW)¹	Estimated Permitted Density: R-4²	Permitted Density: R-1B³	Master Plan Density
Apartments (174 units)	28 DU/acre (3.4 ac. + 2.75 ac.)			No specific density along Cady St.
Condominiums (53 units)	11 DU/AC 1.99 ac. + 2.75 ac.)			
Row Houses (28 units)	7 DU / AC (1.46 ac. + 2.75 ac.)			10-15 DU / AC
Townhomes (170 units)	11 DU / AC (12.5 ac. + 2.75 ac.)			
Single-Family Dwellings (56 units)	5 DU / AC (9.15 ac. + 2.75 ac.)		6 DU / AC	6 – 12 DU / AC
TOTAL	481 units = 11.4 DU / AC (28.5 + 13.77)			7.6 – 14 DU / AC

¹Acreage for the parks (11.47 ac.) and detention basin (2.3) has been evenly divided between the five residential types.

²Density in the R-4 District is determined through setback, height, and parking limitations. A comparison figure cannot be calculated using the information provided. However, the FAR and distance between building requirements are not met by the proposal.

³Density for single-family residential units is calculated by using a minimum lot size of 7,200 s.f.

- As indicated, the proposal's density is toward the top end of the range but is within the maximum density for the project area, as called for in the Master Plan. It is understood that the project needs to generate a certain amount of revenue to "afford" the public spaces that will be paid for by the project. That said, the density figures provided in the Master Plan are a beginning point to help establish a general understanding between the community and prospective developers. The design of the project will also have an equal influence on determining whether the proposed density is consistent with the Master Plan.

The reductions in densities along Cady St. has been a positive change to the plans. Reducing the density addresses concerns about the amount of traffic generated by the project, which was a main concern of the previous plan.

The concept plan "generally" follows the residential density pattern in the Master Plan. However, that does not mean that they layout is optimal. We would expect that the layout and density will be further refined during the Site Plan Review process.

- *The Master Plan calls for reduction in density as you move from Cady Street south. In the previous review process, the applicant's engineer provided the following information to support the proposed configuration:*
 - a. *If townhomes were located between Beal and Fairbrook, they would require 4-6 feet of fill to accomplish the necessary grading.*
 - b. *If single-family homes were located south of Fairbrook, the grades around the homes would need to be elevated between 6-8 feet above the existing groundwater elevation.*

Switching the location, in our opinion, makes sense from an engineering standpoint. However, couldn't another small multi-family building type (such as a four-plex or six-plex) be interwoven into the single-family area to help create a more logical progression of residential density? For example, these small, but higher density buildings, could be located at the corners of Beal St., and the north/south streets as a transition from the higher-density Cady St. area. Also, the four- or six-plexes could also create a slightly higher density along Hutton moving south. This would make sense if Hutton were treated as a more significant street (with the boulevard). Interspersing the four- or six-plexes would create a neighborhood that offered various unit types for people in all stages of life, as well as "feel" as if the neighborhood organically grew over time, rather than built all at once. The developer should respond to these ideas. Also, see our comments below regarding single-family homes on S. Center St., and residential units that appear as if they are "in" the River Park.

Cady St.:

- *The apartment building is proposed at five-stories as it moves down the slope toward Beal St. The Cady Street Overlay District permits five stories (65-feet maximum) if the project offers three or more of the following features:*
 - 1. *Dedication of improved plaza.* The project is offering a Central Park.
 - 2. *A mixed-use building that provides residential dwelling units above first-floor commercial where a minimum of 50% of the building's floor area is residential.* The apartment building is offering this mix of uses.
 - 3. *Through-block pedestrian connections.* The plans show a sidewalk along the west side of the apartment building, and another on the east side of the condominium building (next to the row houses).

We believe the project is offering the required features for the height bonus. However, the fifth story on the apartment along Beal Street should be stepped back so it is not as imposing on this corner.

- *The Master Plan states that the height, scale, and mass of the buildings along Cady St. must be similar or compatible with surrounding existing buildings. The applicant has provided a cross section illustrating how the new buildings coordinate with the existing parking structure on Cady Street, with Cady Centre and Maincentre buildings in the background. The new buildings on Cady St. would not be visible to a pedestrian standing on E. Main St. in the downtown.*

- *It appears that the “rear” of the apartment building will be partially visible from the lower elevations along S. Center St. In future submissions (when the S. Center St. building configuration is better developed), views of the Cady St. buildings from S. Center should be provided.*
- *The Master Plan also calls for a pedestrian connection with the downtown. A road bump-out and north/south sidewalk segment is shown where the stairs from Town Square meet up with Cady St. The proposed promenade on the east side of the Central Park is not centered on the pedestrian crossing at Church St., but they do share a common boundary.*

Racetrack:

- *See our comments under “Residential Density” for a discussion of the location of various housing types in the Racetrack Sub-Area.*
- *The Master Plan calls for extending City streets. This proposal extends Hutton St. south, Beal Street west, and Fairbrook Street east to complete the existing street grid, which is positive. However, in our opinion, Fairbrook is not a major street, and shouldn’t be treated as such with a boulevard. Also, the boulevard “pocket park” is not wide enough for safe use by pedestrians and children. In our opinion, Fairbrook should be treated as a local street, and Hutton as the major street, worthy of boulevard treatment particularly given its role as the major north/south travel way and the townhouse park at the terminus.*

A small detail, but with significant ramifications, is removing the entry sign shown in the Fairbrook boulevard. The Master Plan does not envision a subdivision, but a neighborhood, and a subdivision sign is not appropriate.

- *Heights for townhome units in the Master Plan are listed as at up to three-stories on the north side of Beal Street, but 2.5 stories south of Beal St. The proposal is inconsistent with the Master Plan on the south side of Beal. The Planning Commission will need to determine if the three-story townhomes are a desired deviation. If the Planning Commission is not in favor of this deviation, it can be identified in a motion for “eligibility” as a needed change during the Site Plan Review process.*
- *The Racetrack Sub Area Plan also calls for walking/biking connections from Hines Drive to the downtown. This is consistent with the City’s 2014 Non-Motorized Plan, which shows a pedestrian crossing at 7-Mile/River Street, as well as a sidewalk along the north side of 7-Mile Road. To create a safe 7-Mile crossing at River St., we would suggest the City’s Traffic Engineer be consulted about the need for some type of pedestrian-activated crossing signal.*

S. Center St.:

- *The Master Plan calls for 10-15 residential dwelling units on the east side of S. Center Street; therefore, a townhome, or other “attached” dwelling unit type is appropriate here. Locating single-family homes along S. Center St. is not consistent with the Master Plan’s vision.*

Another design feature that is inconsistent with this vision are the single-family units (#17 - #21), and the 22 townhomes that appear to be “in” the River Park. These 22 units could be removed from the park area and relocated to the single-family lots on the east side of S. Center St. as a four-plex or six-plex (or small multi-family building) to create a higher density environment along this busy corridor. Switching to a different building type is an attempt to avoid so many buildings that look the same. The proposal also locates the townhomes facing S. Center Street, and within the desired 10–20-foot setback.

- *The Master Plan calls for heights of 2.5 stories; the townhomes are proposed at 3 stories. This deviation will need to be considered by the Planning Commission.*
- *The proposal does not provide an alternative location for the Farmer’s Market. However, the Farmer’s Market Taskforce is investigating other locations that may provide more space.*
- *As stated in the Master Plan, parking for the townhomes is in the rear of the buildings and screened from view of the street.*
- *An entryway plaza or feature is called for at the corner of S. Center Street and 7 Mile. The Landscape Plan shows space for an entryway feature, but a note should be added to the engineering drawings indicating that the space is reserved for this use. A design for the entryway will need to be provided with the Preliminary Site Plan.*
- *How the intersection of Seven-Mile and S. Center St. will be addressed is most likely included in the revised Traffic Impact Study. The City’s Traffic Engineer will make a recommendation on the preferred design.*
- *The Landscape Plan shows street trees along the S. Center St. developed area; however, the sidewalks appear to abut the roadway curb, making installation of street trees between pedestrians and travel lanes difficult. If the developer is proposing any improvements along S. Center St., they need to be better detailed on the site plan. To improve walkability along this busy corridor, the sidewalk should be moved away from the travel lanes, and turf grass/street trees installed along the corridor.*

In summary, the proposal meets some of the Master Plan vision, but there are also deviations from this vision. The location of the single-family homes divides the two higher-density areas of the project, and more could be done to provide a more logical and progressive transition between the north side of Beal St., and the south side. The Planning Commission and applicant should discuss the following:

1. *Possibility of locating another building type (small multi-family buildings such as a four- or six-plex) on the corners of Beal and the north/south streets, and along Hutton to create a more logical transition between high-density and lower density.*

2. Location of residential units “in” the River Park.
3. Land uses along S. Center St., and the option that small multi-family buildings (vs. more townhomes) located on the single-family lots that abut this street in the design.
4. Hutton St. as a more major road (with boulevard), and Fairbrook as a local road.
5. Height of the townhomes south of Beal St. (3-stories vs. 2.5 stories called for in the Master Plan).

Criterion No. 8. The proposed use or uses shall be of such location, size, density and character as to be in harmony with the zoning district in which it is situated, and shall not be detrimental to the adjoining zoning districts.

CWA Comments: A Planned Unit Development rezones property to “PUD” in an effort to accomplish a better development than either the underlying zoning would allow, or that straight zoning of another district would allow without deviations.

In the Cady Street area, the underlying zoning is mixed (Central Business District (CBD), Cady Street Overlay District (CSO), and Racetrack District (RTD)). The Cady Street Overlay District does allow mixed-use (commercial/office/residential) buildings to create a more urban character that has a dynamic pedestrian environment. We consider the proposed use to generally be in harmony with the CSO.

In the Racetrack area, the underlying zoning is Racetrack District. This district does not permit residential development. However, the Master Plan calls for a residential re-development of the site and provides guidance as to the configuration and density of such development. As mentioned above, we have discussed a number of issues that should be discussed during the “Eligibility” stage, as well as during Site Plan Review to ensure that the development is the right scale and intensity to be in harmony with adjoining land uses.

In the S. Center Street area, the underlying zoning is Racetrack District on the east side of Center St. and on the Farmer’s Market property. The underlying zoning of the mid-block parcels further north is R-2, Second Density Residential District. As stated above, we believe that the concept plan “generally” follows the residential density pattern in the Master Plan. However, that does not mean that the layout is optimal. We would expect that the layout and density will be further refined during the Site Plan Review process.

In general, we consider this criterion met by the concept plan, but expect that layout, density, site features, and other plan details will be further refined during the Site Plan Review process.

Criterion No. 9. The planned unit development is not proposed in an attempt by the applicant to circumvent the strict application of zoning standards.

CWA Comment: While we haven’t reviewed the plans as if this were a site plan review, the project is proposing deviations from the zoning ordinance in exchange for various public benefits. The PUD

process is used to determine if the deviations are justified by the development and public benefits offered.

Proposed public benefits are:

- 1. Various housing types, including apartments, condominiums, row and town houses, and single-family homes. Multi-family apartments and condominiums offer underground parking.*
- 2. Commercial space of just over 16,000 square feet.*
- 3. Open space*
 - a. 15.94 acres of open park space (33.1% of site)*
 - b. 1.25-acre "Central Park" near Cady St. with 20-foot promenade along east side.*
 - c. 9.22-acre river park, including daylighting the Rouge River*
 - d. Internal park south of Fairbrook street.*
- 4. Pedestrian connections, including sidewalks, street trees and on-street parking along streets, and a pedestrian connection through the river park (along River St.) to facilitate access from Ford Field to Hines Park.*
- 5. Economic benefits, including job creation through construction of the project, local business support by increased number of residents close to downtown, and tax revenue to City, DDA, and schools.*
- 6. Removal of sanitary sewer from spanning Rouge River and relocating the pipe.*

Requested ordinance deviations are:

- Consistency with Master Plan – Location of single-family homes and townhomes on Racetrack property and S. Center St.*
- Number of parking spaces for apartments/condominiums/commercial space.*
- Lot area, width, and front setback on single-family lots (compared to R-1B).*
- Townhomes exceed Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and propose a narrower space between buildings, and narrower front setback than required in R-4.*
- Proposed height of townhome buildings – 3 stories vs. 2.5 stories.*
- 50-foot right-of-way vs. 60-foot right-of-way of new roads.*
- Single-family homes along S. Center St., and "in" River Park.*
- Townhomes "in" River Park.*

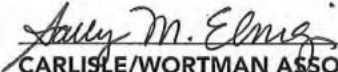
The number of units is within the Master Plan range, and we understand that density has a direct relationship to how much revenue the project will generate, and how much is available to pay for the public benefits. However, the deviations above may not have so much to do with the number of units, but how the units are housed (types and variety of multi-family building styles), and the location of the denser housing types. We think there may be additional ways to create a design that requires fewer deviations but still provides the needed revenue for the public benefits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The project has a number of positive qualities that, in our view, are improvements over the previously submitted design. The main issues regarding PUD Eligibility are the funding questions, and the Traffic Study recommendations. We recommend that the Planning Commission discuss the following with the applicant to determine if the following issues need to be addressed before a decision on Eligibility is made:

1. Submittal of Traffic Study and City Traffic Engineer's recommendations.
2. Funding of public benefits: Applicant to provide (in general) value of benefits, funding they are committing to pay, and funding being requested of City.
3. City staff evaluation of tax revenue to City generated by project, and comparison to estimated costs.
4. Consistency with Master Plan:
 - a. Provide retail market analysis, if available, to support proposed amount of commercial space.
 - b. Opportunity for improving gradual change in density by adding small multi-family buildings (four-plex or six-plex) to south side of Beal, and along Hutton St.
 - c. Multi-family residential buildings along east side of S. Center St. (in place of single-family lots).
5. Street Design:
 - a. Provide 50-foot road right-of-way cross section to identify parking, travel lanes, and bicycle amenities (if any).
 - b. Identify which new streets will be public, and which private.
 - c. Discuss modifying Fairbrook to local street and modifying Hutton St. to a more major street (with boulevard).
 - d. Confirm proposed improvements to S. Center St. streetscape (grass verges, sidewalks, street trees, etc.).
6. Open Space:
 - a. Confirm intention to deed Central Park and River Park to City once the parks are built, as illustrated on the site plan.
 - b. Investigate locating Fairbrook St. linear pocket park on one side of the street, for user safety.

- c. Confirm if internal park in townhouse area will be available to all Northville residents.
- 7. Environmental: Opportunities to reduce impervious surfaces and stormwater infiltration in project design.
- 8. Ownership: Applicant to work with City Attorney to confirm single ownership entity.


CARLISLE/WORTMAN ASSOC., INC.
Sally M. Elmiger, AICP, LEED AP
Principal

Cc: Pat Sullivan
Dianne Massa
Brent Strong
Mike Domine

Appendix: Parking Calculation Comparison

	Cady St. Overlay – CBD Underlying Zoning	Cady St. Overlay – RTD Underlying Zoning	Cady St. Area Proposed Parking	Diff.
Replacement spaces for City Parking Lot w/in 600 feet (Per Purchase Agreement between City and HPH to purchase City parking lot)	92 spaces		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 sp. (of 17) Cady St. surface lot • 0 sp. Cady St. * • 27 sp. Hutton St. • 55 sp. Beal St. 	-0-
Commercial Uses				
General Retail	3,220 s.f. x 1 sp./250 s.f. or 13 sp.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 sp. (of 17) Cady St. surface lot • 8 sp. Griswold St. ** 	
Restaurant	3,600 s.f. x 1 sp./150 s.f. or 24 sp.	3,250 s.f. x 1 sp./100 s.f. or 33 sp.		
Commercial Subtotal	37 sp.	33 sp.		-55 sp.
Average	1 sp./143 s.f.			78% fewer than req.
Multi-Family – Apts.				
Studio	6 units x 1 sp./unit or 6 sp.	2 units x 1 sp./unit or 2 sp.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 187 sp. parking garage • 108 sp. surface lot 	
1 Bedroom	45 units x 1 sp./unit or 45 sp.	40 units x 2 sp./unit or 80 sp.		
2 Bedrooms	38 units x 2 sp./unit or 76 sp.	34 units x 2.5 sp./unit or 85 sp.		
3 Bedrooms	3 units x 3 sp./unit or 9 sp.	6 units x 3 sp./unit or 18 sp.		
Apartment Subtotal	136 sp.	185 sp.	295 sp.***	-26 sp.
Average	1.8 sp./unit		1.7 sp./unit	8% fewer than req.
Multi-Family – Condos.				
Studio & 1 Bed.		15 units x 2 sp./unit or 30 sp.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 42 sp. parking garage • 66 sp. surface lot 	
2 Bed.		20 units x 2.5 sp./unit or 50 sp.		
3 Bed.		18 units x 3 sp./unit or 54 sp.		
Office/Clubhouse		5 sp.		
Condo Subtotal		139 sp.	108 sp.	-31 sp.
Average	2.6 sp./unit		2.0 sp./unit	22% fewer than req.
Row Houses		28 units x 2 sp./unit or 56 sp.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 56 sp. Individual garage • 18 sp. surface lot 	+18 sp.
Townhomes		170 units x 2 sp./unit or 340 sp.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 340 sp. Individual garage • 60 sp. On-street (WHERE?) 	??
Single-Family Dwellings		56 units x 2 sp./unit or 112 sp.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 112 sp. individual garage • 51 sp. On-street (WHERE?) 	??

*If a developer builds a street, the parking spaces on that street are counted toward parking requirements. If parking spaces are located on an existing street, then the parking spaces are not counted toward parking requirements.

**The engineering plan shows that the developer is proposing to relocate approximately 4,500 s.f. of the Griswold St. right-of-way and construct new curb and parking spaces. We assume that the developer will purchase this land from the City and reconstruct at least the west side of this road with new curb/gutter and parking spaces. This should be confirmed. If so, we think these spaces would count toward the parking requirements.

***There are discrepancies between the architectural and engineering plans for number of apartment parking spaces, and a driveway along the west side of the apartment building. We discussed this with the Project Engineer, and he stated that the engineering plans are correct.