

# CLINTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

## REPORT OF MEETING

JULY 23, 2009

**PRESENT:** Kirkanne Moseley, Chairperson  
Ron DiBartolomeo, Vice-Chairperson  
Denise C. Trombley, Secretary  
Stephen Charron  
Timothy Grajewski  
Peter Henderson  
Ernest Hornung  
Ken Pearl

**ABSENT:** Fred Gibson (Excused)

**STAFF:** Carlo Santia, Director  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Moseley called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion by Mr. Pearl, supported by Mr. Charron, to approve the agenda as submitted.  
Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Pearl, Charron, DiBartolomeo, Grajewski, Henderson, Hornung,  
Moseley, Trombley Nays – None. Absent – Gibson. Motion carried.

### **GRATIOT AVENUE ACCESS MANAGEMENT STUDY**

- **PRESENTED BY MACOMB COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING  
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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Mr. Brad Strader, LSL Planning, Inc., explained that they have been contracted to put together an Access Management Plan for Gratiot Avenue and have been working on it since last fall. The corridor extends from Eight Mile Road north to New Haven and Lenox Township. The purpose of this plan is to look at the control and placement of the access along Gratiot to improve the design and lessen crashes along that corridor. There are many benefits, including the reduction of crashes, an improvement of traffic flow, reduction of clutter and an increase in the green space. It will improve the roadway and business vitality, and it is estimated that by implementing the plan, there will be a 10% gain in capacity and a 50% reduction in crashes. Mr. Strader explained that they have provided consistent standards for the entire length of Gratiot Avenue, but it will be up to each community to “tweak” it through their local ordinances. Michigan Department of

Transportation has derived Access Management Standards, and he noted that the cities of Eastpointe and Roseville are built up and driveways are very close together. Some of these need to be closed or consolidated. The northern portion of Gratiot Avenue is not as developed so it will be easier to implement the plan before development.

Mr. Strader explained that there are ways of changing driveway geometrics in ways that can consolidate closely spaced driveways and provide accommodations for mass transit in the future. He reviewed the recommended distances between access points based on the posted speed and other factors. He also noted that many times these distances can be achieved through shared access points, and he also reviewed spacing standards from median crossovers.

Ms. Sherrin Hood, LSL Planning, Inc., explained that they are working to make some of the more dangerous areas along Gratiot safer. She cited one area on Gratiot, south of Remick, which has a high incidence of crashes, and indicated that they feel this hazard can be reduced by extending the left turn lane to Remick a little further and parallel Gratiot longer rather than extending a fourth lane further north. She cited another area on Gratiot, south of Quinn Road, in front of the Clinton Pointe Shopping Center. They have determined that the driveways are poorly spaced so their recommendation is to remove and/or relocate them at the next opportunity. She explained that the bulk of improvements included in the plan will come from improvements to the individual properties as they develop and expand. She added that a community can opt to establish a “Corridor Improvement Authority” so that funds can be allocated for some of these improvements, similar to capturing funds from a Downtown Development Authority.

Mr. John Crumm, Macomb County Planning & Economic Development, explained that they sat down with representatives from the MDOT field office and discussed the projects on Gratiot. This ongoing discussion with them will continue. The question was raised as to why lanes are closed and barrels remain in place when no construction is being done. He noted that MDOT had explained that they did not feel they could require the sub-contractor to remove the barrels if they were not done with the project. He indicated that the agreement is that the barrels are to be removed in time for the Gratiot Cruise. Mr. Crumm informed that a grant will be made available to Macomb County for a pedestrian trail extending from Metropolitan Parkway north through the City of Mount Clemens, up to McArthur Park, situated by the YMCA. They discussed implementation of that, and he noted there is money for the trail, but also for trees, landscaping, lighting and to connect the SMART bus routes together. It is now a dirt path. They will be meeting again in a month.

Mr. Colin Forbes, of MDOT, noted that the contractors are currently working on Gratiot, although the curb-and-gutter work is not as noticeable so people often think the construction is done at that point. They are working on the inside lanes, curb replacement and lane preparation, and anticipate that will be done by next Wednesday, at the latest. The barrels will start coming down at that point, and all resurfacing will be delayed until after the Gratiot Cruise. They will remobilize following the Cruise

weekend. September 4<sup>th</sup> is their anticipated completion date, and if the project is not complete by that date, they will be charged \$200 per hour.

Mr. Santia noted that MDOT is going to help the Township with three or four bus stops.

Mr. Forbes confirmed they are expanding the bus stop pads, and that project is going well.

Mr. Strader commented that, with regard to suggested improvements along Gratiot, it is possible for a DDA to pick up a portion of the cost if the owner is willing to pay the rest. Pilot projects are another way to make these improvements.

Discussion took place regarding M-59 and the difficulties experienced on that stretch.

Mr. Crumm informed that they intend to study the access management along M-59 (Hall Road) this fall.

Mr. Strader explained that the standards apply mainly to Gratiot frontage. Flexibility is given to communities, and they can modify their standards if shared access is not possible, or a traffic impact study shows needs for something other than what is in the plan. He explained the recommendations of the study and how they can be viewed by the neighbors. He discussed areas where the recommendations involve closing driveways, and other areas where cross-access is recommended. He reminded that this is a long-term plan and is not something where MDOT will be coming immediately to close off driveways.

Motion by Mr. Pearl, supported by Mr. Charron, to open the meeting for public comments. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Pearl, Charron, DiBartolomeo, Grajewski, Henderson, Hornung, Moseley, Trombley. Nays – None. Absent – Gibson. Motion carried.

Mr. Santia noted that he received a telephone call from Mr. Pat Moran, of Moran Chevrolet, who expressed concern because one of his driveways is slated to be closed. He felt if he expands his showroom, that driveway may be his principal driveway. He wanted to make sure he is not going to be stopped from using that access.

Mr. Strader responded that the plan needs to be flexible. There may be a good reason to keep that particular driveway open, but they may be able to close off another one in exchange. He admitted that automobile dealerships like to have three or four driveways; however, he cautioned that it should be looked at carefully because there are times when fewer driveways are more effective. If it is examined and is still determined that is not a safe place for a driveway, they may need to look at alternate locations for the principal driveway.

Mr. Santia mentioned that at this time, that driveway is not used and there are cars parked across it; however, Mr. Moran indicated he would like the option to be able to use it in the future.

Mr. Strader replied to inquiry that he is requesting the Planning Commission recommend that the Township Board authorize the Access Plan and work with the County to get a ordinance adopted. He cautioned it does not need to be a large ordinance, possibly only a couple of pages.

Mr. Santia relayed some fears of the business owners along Gratiot that, once the driveway closures are shown on the map, they will be “etched in stone”. He assured them that is not the case and it is a guideline they can use in future planning.

Dr. Kelly, owner of a building on Price and Gratiot, explained that he currently has a driveway off of Gratiot and another off of Price Drive. He stressed he does not want to see his Gratiot access closed off.

After looking at the Access Management Plan, it was discovered that Dr. Kelly’s driveway access from Gratiot is slated to be closed.

Mr. Strader felt that if the driveway on the side street is not sufficient, they may look at keeping his Gratiot access open, unless it has been deemed to be a “severe crash site”. He also suggested the possibility of several neighbors getting together and providing one entrance to all of the businesses, with a service drive to access each separate business. He did not feel it will be a problem to Dr. Kelly unless there is a change of use on his property, which is when it would come into site plan review and the driveway issue would be revisited.

Mr. Santia felt this particular driveway should not be closed off; otherwise, there is no way for Dr. Kelly to use his property.

Dr. Kelly pointed out there is only one small driveway off of Price Drive and that is the only other access he has.

Motion by Mr. Hornung, supported by Mr. Henderson, to close the public hearing. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Hornung, Henderson, Charron, DiBartolomeo, Grajewski, Moseley, Pearl, Trombley. Nays – None. Absent – Gibson. Motion carried.

Mr. Strader pointed out that they can change the language to indicated that this is a guide to be reviewed. He noted that the Township’s ordinance would give them the discretion. He compared this plan to a Master Plan for Future Land Use, where they may not go with exactly what is designated, but a revision may still meet the intent of the plan. He assured they will put a not on the map with regard to the driveway they discussed tonight on Price Drive.

Motion by Mr. Hornung, supported by Ms. Trombley, to receive and file the Gratiot Avenue Access Management Study and forward it to the Township Board to start the public distribution process. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Hornung, Trombley, Charron, DiBartolomeo, Grajewski, Henderson, Moseley, Pearl. Nays – None. Absent – Gibson. Motion carried.

Discussion took place regarding MDOT projects and the fact that they have their schedule up to 2014, but it was also mentioned that with current budget conditions, those projects may not remain on schedule.

### **REPORTS OF MEETINGS**

-- **APPROVAL OF MAY 28, 2009 REPORT**

-- **APPROVAL OF JUNE 25, 2009 REPORT**

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Motion by Mr. Hornung, supported by Mr. Henderson, to approve the reports of the May 28, 2009 and the June 25, 2009 Planning Commission Meetings, as submitted. Roll Call: Ayes – Hornung, Henderson, DiBartolomeo, Moseley, Grajewski, Charron, Pearl, Trombley. Nays – None. Absent – Gibson. Motion carried.

### **DISCUSSION ON NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

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Mr. Santia stated that there are no items for the Planning Commission Meeting scheduled for Thursday, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009 and that meeting may be canceled.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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Motion by Mr. Henderson, supported by Mr. Hornung, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise C. Trombley, Secretary  
CLINTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

ces:08/01/09

ces:08/31/09