

October 2, 2006

Commissioner Sue Ann Douglas, Chairperson
Oakland County Coordinating Zoning Committee
1200 North Telegraph Road
Pontiac, MI 48341

SUBJECT: County Code No. MP 06-06, Planning and Economic Development Services' review of an amendment to the City of Troy Future Land Use Plan

Dear Chairperson Douglas and Committee Members:

The City of Troy Planning Commission proposes to amend its 2002 Master Plan to add an overlay district to Rochester Road from South Boulevard to Long Lake Road. The following is a review and analysis of the plan amendment, which consists of two pages of text and a map.

Under the amendments to the Municipal Planning Act, which took effect January 9, 2003, the City of Troy is required to send a copy of the draft amendment to Oakland County and neighboring communities for comment prior to adoption. Oakland County has between 55 and 75 days to submit comments on amendments. The October 10, 2006 Oakland County Coordinating Zoning Committee (CZC) meeting falls within our 75-day comment period. Neighboring communities have 40 days to submit comments directly to Troy and are required to send a copy of any comments to the County as well. Once the County's 75-day comment period has expired, the Planning Commission can hold a public hearing on the amendment and take final action to amend the plan.

According to the Troy Planning Department, the Cities of Clawson, Madison Heights, Royal Oak, Auburn Hills, Rochester Hills, Birmingham, Sterling Heights, and Warren; Bloomfield and Shelby Townships; Macomb County Planning and Economic Development; and SEMCOG were sent a copy of the draft amendment. All of these communities and agencies have received notice of the CZC meeting. Comments have been received from Auburn Hills, Madison Heights, and Shelby Township and are attached.

Background Information

This master plan amendment is the result of a rezoning request in 2005. The applicant requested a zoning change for property at the northwest corner of Rochester Road and Marengo from R-1B, One Family Residential, to B-1, Local Business. The Planning Commission recommended denial because the request was not consistent with the master plan. The Troy City Council denied the rezoning request, supporting the finding that the rezoning did not comply with the City's master plan. However, the City Council also directed "*the Planning Commission to consider amending the Future Land Use Plan in the Rochester Road Corridor between Square Lake and South Boulevard.*" (August 1, 2005 City Council Minutes)

Study Area

From March to May 2006, the Planning Commission discussed the Rochester Road corridor at three planning commission study meetings. The original study area was defined as both sides of Rochester

Road from South Boulevard to Square Lake Road. The Planning Commission later expanded the study area to include an additional mile south to Long Lake Road.

Rochester Road is a major north-south thoroughfare in the eastern part of the City and carried a little over 48,000 vehicles per day in 2003. The northern boundary of the study area is approximately ¼ mile south of the M-59 interchange in the City of Rochester Hills. The study area consists of a mixture of land uses and multiple curb cuts. From South Boulevard to Square Lake Road, there are several commercial strip centers, some small office buildings, a large apartment complex, a very large church complex, attached condominiums, some single family homes fronting on Rochester Road, and vacant land. A similar mixture of land uses can be found from Square Lake to Long Lake Roads with the addition of two large areas of open space. The City of Troy Sylvan Glen Park and Golf Course are located at the southwest corner of Square Lake and Rochester Roads, and a retention basin controlled by the Oakland County Drain Commission is on the east side of the road about a ¼ mile north of Long Lake Road.

During the study sessions, City staff presented maps showing land use and zoning along the corridor. The planning commission raised several issues and concerns about this stretch of Rochester Road, including walkability along the corridor, flexibility in allowing new uses, and buffering adjacent residential uses from new development. Access management was a key concern as well with interest in reducing the number of curb cuts and providing better access between parcels. Goals were prepared to address these concerns, and a recommendation was made to establish a Rochester Road Overlay District.

Comparison of Master Plan Amendment to the 2002 Master Land Use Plan Map

The only change to the map is the addition of the Rochester Road Overlay District. Underlying future land use classifications were not changed. Most of the frontage is planned for Medium Density Residential, which allows for 5-10 dwelling units per acre. Commercial classifications of varying intensity are planned for the intersections. Non-center Commercial is planned at South Boulevard and Rochester Road. This classification allows commercial and service uses, not necessarily associated with a shopping center, that serve the whole city. Local Service Area, the Golf Course, and Low Rise Office are planned at Square Lake Road. These are less intense commercial and office classifications geared more to the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Finally, Community Service Area is planned at Long Lake Road. This classification is intended to allow uses that serve the convenience shopping needs of the entire community and may include planned shopping centers. Low Density Residential is planned behind these uses and for limited locations along the frontage both north and south of Square Lake Road on the eastern side of Rochester Road.

Coordination with Adjacent Community Boundary:

Under state law, the county's review is required to include a statement indicating whether the proposed plan is "inconsistent with the plan of any city, village, or township" that received notice of the draft plan. The proposed amendment is only adjacent to the City of Rochester Hills.

North Boundary – City of Rochester Hills: The draft City of Rochester Hills Master Land Use Plan 2006 is currently out for neighboring community and county review. At Rochester Road and South Boulevard, the City of Rochester Hills is planning for Office for the frontage and Residential behind the office. To the south in the City of Troy, Non-Center Commercial is planned for the frontage, with Low Density Residential behind the Non-center Commercial. The overlay district is then on top of the frontage classification of Non-center Commercial. The addition of the overlay does not affect the compatibility between the two plans.

Analysis

This stretch of Rochester Road has a residential feel as many of the uses are single family homes either fronting on Rochester Road or subdivision entrances off the road. A large apartment complex and recently developed attached condominiums also contribute to this residential feel. Commercial uses are mainly confined to the intersections but there are some commercial and office uses scattered along the frontage. A few vacant parcels exist. Frontage lot depths tend to be shallow; however lots are deeper on the east side of the road from South Boulevard to Square Lake Road, which could allow for more flexibility in design and building placement if these lots are developed or redeveloped in the future. Ensuring that new development is compatible with the existing neighborhoods is a key concern expressed in the amendment.

Given current development pressures, plus the potential for redevelopment, it is appropriate that the Troy Planning Commission reviewed this area to determine ways to accommodate development that is compatible with surrounding uses. This master plan amendment lays the foundation for the City to take the next step of adopting an overlay zoning district. An overlay district respects the underlying zoning classifications but adds additional requirements for those parcels in the overlay district boundaries. These regulations may relate to items such as, additional landscaping, buffering, pedestrian circulation, access management, and mixed uses. The City of Troy followed good planning principles by first addressing a concern in its master plan, and then identifying an implementation strategy that can be accomplished through one of its planning and regulatory tools.

Conclusion

Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services staff commends the City of Troy for preparing this master plan amendment.

Based on the review of the surrounding communities' master plans, the Rochester Road Overlay amendment is **not** inconsistent with the plan of any city, village, or township that received notice of the draft plan. Comments were received from Shelby Township and the Cities of Auburn Hills and Madison Heights and are attached. The comments do not contain any objections to the amendment.

Oakland County has not prepared a countywide development plan, so there is no countywide plan to which to compare the City of Troy Draft Master Plan amendment.

Sincerely,

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