

REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMISSION

Dearborn, Michigan

August 11th, 2025

This regular meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairperson Easterly. Upon roll call, the following members were present: Present: (7) (Commissioners Easterly, Fadlallah, Kadouh, King, Mohamed, Phillips, & Saymuah). Absent: (2) (Commissioners Abdallah & Abdulla).

Also present were Bradley Mendelsohn, Deputy Corporation Counsel; Kaileigh Bianchini, Planning & Zoning Manager; Massara Zwayen, Assistant Planning & Zoning Manager; Nolan Kukla, Senior Planner; Kobi Sunday, Planner; and members of the public.

Chairperson Easterly announced that Item II.1 on the agenda is the consideration of the approval of the July 7th, 2025 Planning Commission meeting minutes.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kadouh, supported by Commissioner Fadlallah, to approve the July 7th, 2025 minutes. Upon roll call the following vote was taken: Ayes: (7) (Commissioners Easterly, Fadlallah, Kadouh, King, Mohamed, Phillips, & Saymuah). Nays: (0). Absent: (2) (Commissioners Abdallah, & Abdulla). The motion was adopted.

Chairperson Easterly announced that Item III.1 on the agenda is consideration of the request of Michael Tsakoff, on behalf of Wayne Rental & Development LLC, to review and approve the expansion of a Special Land Use and site plan for a gas station located 100 N. Telegraph Road.

Ms. Bianchini introduced Staff Report B-1 and the accompanying exhibits dated August 11th, 2025. Ms. Bianchini stated that the Planning Commission had previously approved a rezoning on this site to bring the use to conformity. She explained that the applicant is proposing modernizing existing infrastructure, altering the site's configuration to improve vehicle circulation, and reconstruct the retail structure. Ms. Bianchini explained that any changes to an automobile filling station in a Business – B zoning district would be a Special Land Use, requiring Planning Commission approval.

Chairperson Easterly invited the petitioner to speak.

Michael Tsakoff, project architect, explained that their intention is to reconfigure the existing gas station. Mr. Tsakoff added that they will add stormwater infrastructure, consolidate the gas pumps under one canopy, move the dumpster to the neighboring property, and construct the retail building further back on the property. Mr. Tsakoff explained that the site was redesigned to increase safety and encourage better vehicle circulation on the smaller lot.

Commissioner Fadlallah stated that he was glad to see better safety at this site.

Chairperson Easterly asked if any additional approvals, other than the city, would be needed.

Ms. Bianchini replied that she believed there was an additional environmental review needed to replace underground storage, but no additional reviews were needed for the underground storage by the retail building.

Commissioner Saymuah asked the applicant if they needed EGLE's review for the underground tanks.

Mr. Tsakoff replied yes.

Commissioner Saymuah asked for additional information regarding the location of the dumpster.

Mr. Tsakoff confirmed that, given the small lot, the only place that made sense was the neighboring lot with an easement. He added that if it was located on-site it would lose an additional 2 parking spaces.

Ms. Bianchini added that dumpsters are not allowed in front yards which, given the parcel is a corner lot, strictly limited where the applicant could have placed it.

Chairperson Easterly asked if the Commission should condition the approval on a signed access easement with the owner.

Ms. Bianchini explained that an easement binds the property in perpetuity, regardless of who the property sells to. Ms. Bianchini added that the applicant is bound by their site plan, which indicates an access easement, any change to that would require an approval by the Planning Commission. She further explained that a permit would not be signed off on without a signed and recorded easement agreement.

Mr. Tsakoff explained that they've submitted the shared access easement for review. He noted that once the draft was acceptable, the surveyor would file the necessary paperwork to make it official.

Commissioner Saymuah asked what would happen if they approved the request, and the owner does not sign the agreement.

Ms. Bianchini explained that no permits would be issued until they had seen a finalized agreement that was signed and stamped.

Chairperson Easterly opened the public comment period and seeing no comment, Chairperson Easterly closed the public comment period.

A motion was made by Commissioner Phillips, supported by Commissioner Fadlallah to approve the request of Michael Tsakoff, on behalf of Wayne Rental & Development LLC, to approve the expansion of a Special Land Use and Site plan at 100 N. Telegraph for a gas station.

Upon roll call the following vote was taken: Ayes: (7) (Commissioners Easterly, Fadlallah, Kadouh, King, Mohamed, Phillips, & Saymuah). Nays: (0). Absent: (2) (Commissioners Abdallah, & Abdulla). The motion was adopted.

Chairperson Easterly announced that Item III.2 on the agenda is consideration of the request of Mike Shehadi, on behalf of AMS Regent Court LLC, f/k/a AMS Ford LLC, to review and approve the expansion of a Special Land Use and site plan for a drive-through pharmacy and grocery store located at Units 6 & 7 of the Regent Court Condominium.

Ms. Bianchini introduced Staff Report C-1 and the accompanying exhibits dated August 11th, 2025. She explained that the applicant has re-platted this area, and is proposing that 2 of the lots be developed for a drive-through pharmacy and grocery store. Ms. Bianchini explained that drive-through uses in a Business – C zoning district are a Special Land Use, requiring Planning Commission approval.

Chairperson Easterly invited the petitioner to speak.

The petitioners introduced themselves as Brandon Hallaq, project attorney; and Gassan Khalaf, design engineer. Mr. Hallaq stated that they'd be happy to elaborate on any of the Special Land Use criteria, and answer any questions from the commissioners.

Seeing no one from the public, Chairperson Easterly opened and closed the public comment period.

A motion was made by Commissioner Saymuah, supported by Commissioner Phillips to approve the request of Mike Shehadi, on behalf of AMS Regent Court LLC, f/k/a AMS Ford LLC, to approve the Special Land Use and site plan for a drive-through pharmacy and grocery store located at Units 6 & 7 of the Regent Court Condominium.

Upon roll call the following vote was taken: Ayes: (7) (Commissioners Easterly, Fadlallah, Kadouh, King, Mohamed, Phillips, & Saymuah). Nays: (0). Absent: (2) (Commissioners Abdallah, & Abdulla). The motion was adopted.

Chairperson Easterly announced that Item IV.1 on the agenda is consideration of the city-initiated request to amend the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Dearborn by amending Article 14.00.

Ms. Bianchini introduced Staff Report D-1 and the accompanying exhibits dated August 11th, 2025. Ms. Bianchini reminded the commissioners that the Planning Commission and City Council reviewed and approved ordinance changes that would establish regulations for Short-Term Rentals to allow them in the West and East downtowns. She explained that there was concern about the limited locations available for Short-Term Rental uses, and felt expanding the use into commercial zoning districts would be appropriate. Ms. Bianchini explained that the ordinance changes before the commission would permit Short Term Rentals in commercially-zoned properties: BA, BB, BC, and both downtowns, but would still prohibit short-term rentals in all residential zoning districts, including the West Downtown - Mixed-Residential district.

Chairperson Easterly asked for clarification if short-term rentals would be permitted on Morely Street, within the West Downtown Form Based Code.

Commissioner Saymuah additionally asked for clarification regarding the West Downtown area, and if any changes were made between what was approved and what is under consideration by the commissioners.

Ms. Bianchini replied that while Morely Street does fall under the West Downtown Form Based Code, it is in the Mixed-Residential district, where short-term rentals are not permitted. Ms. Bianchini explained that the previously approved amendment allowed short-term rentals in the West Downtown, but prohibited the use in the Mixed-Residential district of the West Downtown. Ms. Bianchini added that this language is the same under the new amendment under consideration, and no modifications were made to this section.

Commissioner Kadouh asked what changes were made, and what new areas could short-term rentals be allowed under the new proposed amendment. Commissioner Kadouh additionally asked if the intention of the new ordinance changes is to expand where people are permitted to do short-term rentals, so that developers can purchase property and pursue short-term rentals.

Ms. Bianchini explained that, for example, many properties along Warren Ave are zoned commercial that would be allowed to pursue short-term rentals. She explained that, since it does not fall in the downtowns, this would not have been allowed in the previous amendment. Ms. Bianchini added that the new amendment allows for short-term rentals to be considered in any of the commercially zoned districts. Ms. Bianchini explained that there was consistent feedback from City Council and members of the public that where the previous amendment permitted short-term rentals was too narrow, particularly in comparison to other cities. Ms. Bianchini added that, while Commissioner Kadouh's scenario could happen, mixed-use with residential uses are still a Special Land Use, meaning the commission would have to give their approval on the site plan.

Commissioner Saymuah asked if this was prompted by feedback from the public.

Ms. Bianchini replied that it was prompted by the public in part, as well as feedback from City Council.

Commissioners Phillips and Kadouh expressed some concern over the proximity of some of the commercial areas with residential areas, such as along Monroe Street and Chase Road.

Commissioner Saymuah added that only one short-term rental would be allowed per parcel or condominium without Special Land Use approval. Commissioner Saymuah stated that, in his opinion, the developments would be relatively controlled, and would have to come before the commission on a case-by-case basis.

Ms. Bianchini stated that Commissioner Saymuah is correct. She added that, for example, if someone developed a commercial mixed-use building with offices on the upper floors, if the owner eventually wants to convert the offices to residential it would still need to be approved by the Planning Commission as a Special Land Use. Ms. Bianchini explained that developers cannot convert mixed-use buildings into a residential use, then implement a short-term rental, without first coming before the Planning Commission for approval.

Commissioner King expressed concern that the previous amendment could be challenged in court for being arbitrarily restrictive, and shared his support for the proposed amendment under consideration.

Chairperson Easterly added that the goal with the previous amendment was to respect zoning, keeping residential for residents, and commercial uses in commercially zoned areas. Chairperson Easterly stated that he believes the new amendment to be an attempt to clarify that short-term rental uses belong in all of the commercially zoned areas, as a commercial use. He also expressed his support for this amendment.

Chairperson Easterly opened the public comment period.

Therese Terns, resident of 8 Abbot Ln. in Springwells Park, noted that if more people do short-term rentals, it would cause more work for the Planning Commission as they would have to approve the Special Land Uses. Ms. Terns added that many condominium agreements do not allow Short-Term Rentals.

Nancy Harmon, resident of 22278 Morely and President of Morely Area Resident's Association, stated concern that this could quickly impact residential neighborhoods. Ms. Harmon noted that, since the last time the commission discussed short-term rentals, there were 4 new short-term rentals in her neighborhood. She expressed concern that, if there are new commissioners and her neighborhood is adopted into the Form-Based Code, that they would have to fight against short-term rentals again.

Ms. Bianchini replied that this new amendment would not change where it was previously allowed, specifically in the West Downtown, excluding the Mixed-Residential area, and the BD district in the East Downtown. The Morely area falls in the Mixed-Residential area, so short-term rentals would still be prohibited there.

Seeing no further comment, Chairperson Easterly closed the public comment period.

Commissioner Phillips asked if this was sent back from City Council.

Ms. Bianchini replied that City Council adopted the previous amendment, and asked the Planning Commission to consider a new amendment that would open up the zoning districts to all commercial zoning districts.

Commissioner Kadouh and Commissioner Phillips expressed concern that this new amendment was significantly expanding where short-term rentals would be permitted. The commissioners noted a few areas of the city where commercially zoned properties were located adjacent to residential properties, such as Chase, Ford, and Warren.

Chairperson Easterly added that he felt the new amendment did not fit with the spirit of the original amendment, which was to keep short-term rentals out of residential zoned areas. Chairperson Easterly explained that commercially zoned areas adjacent to residential areas, with short-term rentals, would still impact the residential areas.

Commissioner Saymuah stated that he understood the concerns that it was too restrictive. However, he added that he didn't want to be too reactionary and open it up the use too much. Commissioner Saymuah added that he wanted to control the nuisances of short-term rentals next to residents while understanding that some people's livelihoods depend on operating short-term rentals.

Commissioner Fadlallah expressed agreement with Commissioner Saymuah.

Commissioner King asked what the timeline for consideration is.

Ms. Bianchini replied that, under the ordinance, the commission can also table the request alongside approving, approving with conditions, or denying the request. She added that the original short-term rental ordinance goes into effect on January 1st, 2026 so staff would be looking for updates and guidance before that date.

Commissioner Phillips asked how the City of Dearborn's short-term rental ordinance compares with other cities.

Ms. Bianchini explained that the original ordinance amendment was limiting in comparison to other cities. She added that it is more common for short-term rentals to be permitted in mixed-use and commercial districts.

Commissioner Phillips stated that he would like the proposed amendment more if the BA zoning district was removed from the list of zoning districts short-term rentals are approved in.

Commissioner Saymuah added that, just because the properties are zoned commercial, doesn't mean they will all become short-term rentals, the Planning Commission still has a say through the Special Land Use process. He expressed support for Commissioner Phillips's proposal to remove short-term rentals from the permitted uses in the BA zoning district.

A motion was made by Commissioner Phillips, supported by Commissioner Kadouh to approve the city-initiated request to amend the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Dearborn by amending Article 14.00, with the condition of removing short-term rentals from the list of permitted uses in the BA – Local Business District.

Upon roll call the following vote was taken: Ayes: (7) (Commissioners Easterly, Fadlallah, Kadouh, King, Mohamed, Phillips, & Saymuah). Nays: (0). Absent: (2) (Commissioners Abdallah, & Abdulla). The motion was adopted.

Chairperson Easterly announced that Item IV.2 on the agenda is consideration of the city-initiated request to amend the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Dearborn by amending Article 14.00.

Ms. Bianchini introduced Staff Report E-1 and the accompanying exhibits dated August 11th, 2025. Ms. Bianchini explained that the ordinance amendment would eliminate the required additional 20% guest parking and reduce the required parking for 1-bedroom from 1.5 to 1, and 2-bedrooms from 2 to 1.5, reducing the average parking required for multiple-family developments by ~37%. She added that these are minimums, and developers can add more parking as needed. Ms. Bianchini added that this roughly aligns with the recommendations from the parking study, and is comparable to similar cities in Michigan.

Chairperson Easterly opened the public comment period.

Nancy Harmon, resident of 22278 Morely and President of Morely Area Resident's Association, stated that when her son lived in a 2-bedroom apartment, with 2 cars, eliminating the guest parking would mean she could not visit him.

Commissioner Kadouh stated that it sounds like a developer problem, not an "us" problem. She added that even in 2 bedrooms, sometimes there's 3 cars. Commissioner Kadouh added that this is Dearborn, and everyone has larger cars or large trucks. She felt that reducing the parking for multiple-family developments would cause more problems.

Commissioner King expressed support for Commissioner Kadouh's statement.

Chairperson Easterly stated that, in the master plan discussions, he felt there was no solution other than education to solve this problem. He felt they still have not solved the problem, and he felt this solution was premature and oversimplified.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kadouh, supported by Commissioner King to approve the city-initiated request to amend the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Dearborn by amending Article 4.00.

Upon roll call the following vote was taken: Ayes: (0). Nays: (7) (Commissioners Easterly, Fadlallah, Kadouh, King, Mohamed, Phillips, & Saymuah). Absent: (2) (Commissioners Abdallah, & Abdulla). The motion failed.

Chairperson Easterly announced that Item V.1 on the agenda is consideration of the proposed Planning Commission meeting dates for the 2026 calendar year.

Ms. Bianchini introduced the proposed Planning Commission meeting dates.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kadouh, supported by Commissioner Fadlallah to approve the Planning Commission meeting dates for the 2026 calendar year.

Upon roll call the following vote was taken: Ayes: (7) (Commissioners Easterly, Fadlallah, Kadouh, King, Mohamed, Phillips, & Saymuah). Nays: (0). Absent: (2) (Commissioners Abdallah, & Abdulla). The motion was adopted.

A motion was made by Commissioner King, supported by Commissioner Fadlallah to adjourn the meeting.

Upon roll call the following vote was taken: Ayes: (7) (Commissioners Easterly, Fadlallah, Kadouh, King, Mohamed, Phillips, & Saymuah). Nays: (0). Absent: (2) (Commissioners Abdallah, & Abdulla). The motion was adopted.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm.
