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CITY OF PONTIAC - PLANNING COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2020

5:00 P.M.

A Special meeting before the
Planning Commission, via Zoom technology.

BOARD COMMISSIONERS:

Ashley Fegley, Vice Chair

Christopher Northcross, Commissioner

Lucy Payne, Commissioner

Mayor Deirdre Waterman, Commissioner

EXCUSED:

Dayne Thomas, Chair

Mona Parlove, Commissioner

Hazel Cadd, Commissioner

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Vernon Gustafsson, Planning Manager

Donovan Smith, City Planner

MINUTES RECORDED BY:

Quentina R. Snowden, (CSR-5519)

Certified Shorthand Reporter & Notary Public

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MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ADDRESSING THE PLANNING
COMMISSION:
Blair McGowan
Kathalee James
Ernestine McCall

1 (CALL TO ORDER: Acting Chair Fegley
2 called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m.)

3 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Good evening I'd
4 like to start the meeting for January 20th, 2021,
5 first one of the year for the Pontiac Planning
6 Commission.

7 Donovan, are you or Vern are you
8 presenting?

9 MR. SMITH: I'll be presenting.

10 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Okay.

11 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Just have a couple of
12 obviously housekeeping items in regards to roll call
13 and approving the agenda.

14 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Okay. Roll
15 call, please.

16 MR. GUSTAFSSON: If I may ask of the
17 Commissioners that when you say that obviously
18 you're here, but also let us know that you're
19 attending virtually and give us the location of
20 where you're at, like "Pontiac, Michigan" or
21 wherever hometown is. Okay?

22 With that, Vice Chair Fegley?

23 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Present;
24 Pontiac, Michigan.

25 MR. GUSTAFSSON: And you're attending

1 virtually?

2 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Yes.

3 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Mayor Waterman?

4 MAYOR WATERMAN: Present; Pontiac,
5 Michigan.

6 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Commissioner Payne?

7 COMMISSIONER PAYNE: Lucy Payne;
8 Pontiac, Michigan, attending virtually.

9 MR. GUSTAFSSON: And Commissioner
10 Northcross?

11 COMMISSIONER NORTHCROSS: I'm present.
12 I'm attending virtually and I'm here in Pontiac,
13 Michigan, regardless of the backdrop. That's
14 wishful thinking on my part. I'm in Pontiac.

15 COMMISSIONER PAYNE: Let's all go.

16 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Okay. Thank you. We
17 have a quorum. Next item would be the approval of
18 the agenda. We do not have any -- at this time we
19 don't have any amendments to the agenda.

20 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Okay.

21 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Looking to approve
22 the agenda as presented.

23 COMMISSIONER NORTHCROSS: I make a
24 motion that we approve the agenda as presented.

25 COMMISSIONER PAYNE: Second.

1 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Roll call,
2 please.

3 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Commissioner
4 Northcross?

5 COMMISSIONER NORTHCROSS: Yes.

6 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Commissioner Payne?

7 COMMISSIONER PAYNE: Yes to approve
8 the agenda.

9 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Mayor Waterman?

10 MAYOR WATERMAN: Yes to approve.

11 MR. GUSTAFSSON: And Vice Chair
12 Fegley?

13 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Yes to approve.

14 AYES: Fegley, Payne, Northcross,
15 Waterman.

16 NAYS: (None.)

17 ABSTAIN: (None.)

18 MOTION CARRIES 4-0-0

19 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Okay. The next item
20 is relates to the public hearing on the 2021 through
21 2025 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Before we
22 get into the public hearing, I would like Donovan to
23 share your screen and give an overview in regards to
24 what has transpired compared to last year at this
25 time, compared to what we have done this year.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. SMITH: Thank you. Hi, everyone.
3 Happy New Year. Welcome back to all of our Planning
4 Commissioners and audience and guests today. So
5 we're going to start with -- let's start -- does
6 everyone see the PowerPoint? Every can see my
7 screen here okay?

8 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Yes.

9 COMMISSIONER PAYNE: Yes.

10 MR. SMITH: This is the public hearing
11 for the 2021 to 2025 Parks and Recreation Master
12 Plan. This is our second go-around here. We'll be
13 presenting and sharing some of the updates as we
14 move forward this year and align our projects and
15 our parks and recreation system with the greater
16 plan that is the City of Pontiac, and then how we
17 have consolidated that information and work
18 collaboratively with Oakland County and Oakland
19 University and some other smaller groups here in
20 Pontiac to a solid plan that we want to stand by and
21 stand behind.

22 So, next slide here. Just a quick
23 overview. The intention and purpose of the Parks
24 and Recreation Master Plan is to provide a vision
25 for the future allocation of resources and provide a

1 guidance on how we want to improve and in what
2 direction and what our overall goals are for our
3 park system, and then to further make sure that it
4 is well-maintained and operated, inclusive
5 programming facilities, and provides equitable
6 access to all of the residents.

7 So a brief recap on where we are
8 today. We did start a parks and recreation task
9 force early 2020. November 19th, we did meet with
10 that park and recreation task force, presented them
11 with the Master Plan updates that we had developed
12 thus far, and then that was the kick-off to what we
13 call a public comment period, which ran from
14 December 7th to January 5th.

15 So it is a window that the DNR asked
16 that we place, offer the draft park and recreation
17 plan. We offered it out to public. We allowed
18 residents, community members, advocates, park
19 enthusiasts, we allow as many people as we can get
20 the plan out to, to weigh in, review it, provide
21 comments, recommendations, changes, thumbs up,
22 thumbs down to what we have compiled thus far.

23 So that is completed. We received a
24 small amount of input, but those changes we did
25 revise and include things within the update. So,

1 where you see the highlighted section or the bolded
2 public hearing is where we are today. We are
3 holding a public hearing, which again is a second
4 opportunity for the public park enthusiasts and
5 residents to weigh in on the Park and Recreation
6 Master Plan in more of a public forum where they can
7 interact more with the Planning Commissioner and
8 Department staff.

9 Following this meeting, we are asking
10 City Council to adopt the Parks and Recreation
11 Master Plan. That will be next week on the 26th at
12 their City Council meeting.

13 Following an approved adoption we
14 would package the final set together and we will
15 send it to the Department of Natural Resources and
16 that will be our stamped Parks and Recreation Master
17 Plan for 2021 through 2025.

18 Okay. So just to kind of reiterate,
19 just what our next steps are here. Right now we're
20 having a public hearing requesting the Planning
21 Commission approve the Parks and Recreation Master
22 Plan. Following the approval we will go to City
23 Council. We will ask them to adopt the Parks and
24 Recreation 2021 Master Plan. Just so you can kind
25 of see the progression of where we're going here.

1 And just want to highlight some quick
2 notes regarding the Master Plan and what it entails
3 and what it is responsible for. It does provide
4 allocation resources and guidance for the 37 public
5 parks that we have, roughly 530 acres of parkland
6 that covers our linear parks, community centers,
7 community parks, neighborhood and mini parks, the
8 Clinton River Trail and our walking paths and then
9 the 17 plus park amenities and activities that are
10 located throughout our 37 parks.

11 The things that surround the guiding
12 principles of the Master Plan as they relate to
13 social determinants of health, public health and
14 transportation and mobility. So these relate to
15 conditions in the environment where people live,
16 learn, work and play. Public health, as it relate
17 to just the promoting wellness and healthy
18 lifestyles within the city's system and how that
19 interplays with the residents themselves; and
20 transportation mobility, primarily it speaks to
21 access, do the residents have adequate access and
22 the means to get to the parks and enjoy those
23 amenities and the lifestyle benefits that come with
24 having a vibrant park system.

25 And then following the -- or towards

1 the end of the Master Plan it does go into what we
2 call a Parks and Pontiac Action Plan which breaks
3 down various categories and smaller projects that
4 are geared more towards execution and finding
5 outside additional funding to execute some of these
6 projects. So I encourage everyone, so when you get
7 a chance to go through the plan, if you want to get
8 into a deeper dive, if you go into the back and you
9 go into the action plan, it does a great job of
10 breaking out proposed timelines of when certain
11 things can be started and completed, and then it
12 kind of shows the priority of where the City sees,
13 you know, those projects and where they fall.

14 And then last, just if you -- like I
15 said access the plan, if you go to the City's
16 website, you can view it,
17 pontiac.mi.us.pnrmasterplan. On that site you can
18 also submit comments, view the plan and then if you
19 have questions you can e-mail those and there's a
20 submission form.

21 So that concludes my presentation. So
22 thank you.

23 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Thank you.

24 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Through the Chair, I
25 would like -- just to follow up in regards to --

1 particularly in regards to the line that talked
2 about the action plan. What we saw was the comments
3 that were raised by the community and also from the
4 task force, it was very clear that we needed to
5 provide some further detail in that action plan that
6 really identifies specifically in regards to the
7 type of improvements, based upon those categories
8 which was a very good way if you're looking at it
9 from the standpoint of administering improvements to
10 the parks, if you're looking at which parks to be
11 prioritized, which park needs certain improvements
12 that maybe funders might be interested in, in the
13 future, we baked into that those comments and took a
14 very strong, hard -- I think all of us that were
15 working on the revisions with many partners that we
16 did have in regards to preparing this revision, we
17 saw this -- the plan is -- is a solid and very sound
18 plan, but equally as important was the action plan
19 in regards to how to take that vision and take those
20 projects and take them to reality. And that was the
21 overall impetuous in how we address the vision
22 that's here in front of you and to follow this for
23 further comments. Public comments that will be made
24 tonight or read into the minutes are -- are ones
25 that would be definitely be incorporated in regards

1 to that final plan that will be submitted to
2 Michigan Department of Natural Resources, which is
3 required to be received by February 1st.

4 So, looking forward to spending time
5 with the City Council next Tuesday, and getting
6 their approval on that adoption of the plan so we
7 can move forward and move forward in regards -- in
8 many ways in regards to enhancing and preserving our
9 park system and also our natural resources within
10 the City of Pontiac.

11 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Thank you.

12 MR. GUSTAFSSON: We'll be very happy
13 to get into the public hearing and comments and I'll
14 keep looking for public comments within you know 3
15 to 5 minutes each to provide those comments through
16 the Chair.

17 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Yeah, I'd like
18 to open public comments, and then at the end hear
19 from my fellow Commissioners if they have any
20 comments or questions towards the end.

21 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Okay.

22 MR. MCGOWAN: How do you comment?
23 What's the protocol for commenting?

24 MR. SMITH: Raise your hand in the
25 chat box for public comment. Or it sounds like,

1 Blair, you want to volunteer and go first?

2 MR. MCGOWAN: Yes, I would be pleased
3 to go first.

4 MR. SMITH: Blair, I will give you the
5 spotlight. Everyone is looking at you.

6 MR. MCGOWAN: Is my volume okay? Can
7 you hear me?

8 MR. SMITH: Yes.

9 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Yeah.

10 MR. MCGOWAN: What I wanted to say is
11 I read the Master Plan for 2017, and I've read the
12 new Master Plan. And I actually was involved in
13 rewriting the Master Plan for the City of Ecorse 10
14 years ago, so I'm familiar with recreational master
15 plans. And I think you've done a very fine job.
16 And I think there's a great collaborative group that
17 have put it together. And if we could accomplish
18 even part of the Master Plan, it would be wonderful
19 for the citizens of Pontiac.

20 Having said that, I'm frustrated, as
21 I'm sure you are also, by the fact that the Master
22 Plan has not been adopted, and consequently, the
23 State of Michigan won't assist us in various grants
24 and grant applications that we wouldn't otherwise
25 qualify for because we haven't passed this Master

1 Plan yet.

2 And one of the major stumbling blocks
3 is the issue of the piece of property downtown often
4 referred to as Hidden River or Hidden River Park or
5 Hidden River Recreation Place, or whatever you want
6 to call it. And my global thought is this: That
7 the Master Plan for recreation affects every citizen
8 in Pontiac in a very fundamental fashion. And the
9 issues involved downtown with Hidden River, whether
10 it's a park, or whether it's a park with recreation
11 equipment or playground equipment, that pales in
12 importance. It's not important. What's most
13 important is that we get moving forward with a
14 Master plan for recreation so we implement it, we
15 can get assistance from the various entities that
16 are associated with the State, and we can move
17 forward for the benefit of the children, and all of
18 the other citizens that utilize our parks. And I
19 say that with some reluctance because I wanted to
20 see this controversy downtown get dissolved so we
21 can move forward altogether. But that hasn't
22 happened. It's dragged on for, I believe, a year
23 and it's time to get moving. And if we have to
24 sacrifice downtown and its qualifications relative
25 to medical marijuana, then I think the children, the

1 parks and the good of a community has a priority.

2 That's what I have to say.

3 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Thank you.

4 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Thank you.

5 MR. SMITH: I see Lucy's hand.

6 COMMISSIONER PAYNE: Lucy Payne here.

7 I was just wondering if it would be appropriate for
8 me -- I received a call from Jean Matthews which is
9 the president of Heritage Hills Association District
10 5 who wanted to know how she can get actually
11 (inaudible) for this plan being approved. And I did
12 send her the information, and she said she was
13 really having problems with her (inaudible.) I
14 wanted to know if my bringing that to the attention
15 would be appropriate at this time, Vern.

16 MR. GUSTAFSSON: So you would like to
17 make a comment on her behalf.

18 COMMISSIONER PAYNE: On her behalf,
19 yes.

20 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Yes, that would not
21 be a problem.

22 COMMISSIONER PAYNE: Okay. Well, I
23 think the Association was very concerned in regards
24 to the delay in getting the plan approved. This has
25 been something that she actually asked the question

1 like to, on behalf of the Executive Board and all of
2 the members of Friends of Pontiac Parks, I would
3 like to say that we would very much want to see this
4 plan approved by the City Council.

5 We also are concerned about the issues
6 that have divided the City around that plan. It is
7 extremely unfortunate that the best plan we have
8 ever had as a City has been delayed and has been
9 marred by the special issues that have come up
10 around that plan.

11 Last year, because of those issues, we
12 chose not to be vocal in terms of, you know, really
13 pushing to get the plan approved.

14 However, this year there has been
15 major changes, in our estimation, that we feel bring
16 us a lot closer to reaching agreement on the Hidden
17 River Park issue so that we can move forward to
18 approve the plan. I do not believe there is any
19 substantial opposition on the part of the Council
20 not to approve the plan. This is pretty much the
21 Hidden River Park issue.

22 And so I think that the Mayor -- the
23 current plan that is on the City website clearly
24 shows that the park has been removed from the list
25 of parks, clearly shows that that park is now listed

1 as a public space. It's under a new category with
2 spaces, plazas, and with just the one exception that
3 the word playground is listed in the description of
4 the place -- of the space. It says playground
5 equipment, instrumental playground equipment. I
6 think that's kind of questionable whether that
7 description needs to be there because of the
8 contingent that we have had with Council around
9 language and wording. I would like to see that word
10 taken out. And I would like us to simply call that
11 what we have now designated it as a public space,
12 with you can say instrumental equipment, but there
13 is no reason for "playground" to be anywhere in the
14 language of a description of Hidden River.

15 With that the said, I think that there
16 has been enough of a change on the part of what the
17 Mayor has attempted to do. I believe that she wants
18 to see the plan approved. I believe the Council --
19 many people on the Council would like to see the
20 plan approved, and I for one think that this is --
21 it's doable. But we are going to have to listen to
22 each other and work together.

23 So again on behalf of Friends of
24 Pontiac Parks, we want to see the plan approved. We
25 believe we have enough ingredients now that we

1 should be able to come to some kind of reasonable
2 understanding. And let's work together and get this
3 plan approved. I agree with the gentleman that
4 spoke earlier. I think the kids deserve it. I
5 think the City is deserving. This plan -- the older
6 plan expired in 2016. We are now in 2021. Folks,
7 let's get the job done.

8 And so, we need everybody in the City
9 to pull together. You know I hear people say "We
10 just need -- we need to change and get new
11 representatives." But we don't have time to get new
12 representatives. We have to hold the
13 representatives we have today accountable.

14 And so -- and that means you guys, the
15 Planning Commission. That means the City Council.
16 That means the Mayor's office. And so we want the
17 plan approved. So that means that every obstacle to
18 the approving of that plan needs to be addressed and
19 it needs to be addressed seriously with the
20 understanding that if you fail to do it, you are
21 really penalizing the people of Pontiac, the
22 children, the young families of Pontiac who are
23 already burdened with a pandemic.

24 So those are my comments. I am in
25 full support of the plan being approved, but I also

1 want us to deal with the issues that have caused
2 that plan not to be approved. Thank you.

3 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Thank you.

4 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Thank you.

5 MR. SMITH: I see one more here --
6 hand here. This is Ernestine. So I'm going to give
7 you a spotlight if you're ready. She was here I
8 think she stepped away from her screen. So we'll
9 give her a second. Do we have any other public
10 comments or anyone else who wishes to speak on their
11 public comment? Hello Ernestine, are you back?

12 MS. McCALL: Yes, I am.

13 MR. SMITH: Hello. Hello.

14 MS. McCALL: I'm Ernestine McCall and
15 I live in the Crystal Lake Fairways Community that's
16 located on Golf Drive and is located behind your --
17 the project on 819 Golf Drive. And our concern is
18 that they are building an American House that is
19 almost directly behind our homes. Well, it is
20 directly behind our homes, a very few yards from our
21 homes and we are wondering -- we're concerned about
22 the kind of landscaping, and other -- and other
23 components that are going to be installed to not
24 intrude on our policy. We paid extra money for this
25 land. People live in this community and where we're

1 located had to pay for our homes plus we did to pay
2 thousands for the land that the home was placed on
3 and the location.

4 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: The Planning
5 Commission is for the Parks and it's not -- we're
6 not talking about the American House right now. Do
7 you have any comments or questions about the Parks
8 Master Plan?

9 MS. McCALL: Well, the park is over
10 there -- I mean, no, I don't.

11 MR. SMITH: Ms. Ernestine, we spoke
12 about a week ago. You are -- I appreciate you
13 calling today. You are one week early on the
14 Planning Commission meeting for those comments.

15 MS. McCALL: Right but they're already
16 building there and I'm looking at a construction and
17 a structure that is right out my window and it's
18 blocking my view. I can't wait until next week.
19 Somebody is going to have to tell us something. I
20 don't want -- you know, I don't know want to have --
21 we don't want to have to go out of our back door and
22 look at it.

23 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: That's not on
24 the agenda though we don't have any
25 representatives --

1 MS. McCALL: Well, when I called them,
2 they didn't tell me it was on the agenda. I asked
3 it to be placed on the agenda and they told me I
4 could call in today and so that's why I'm calling
5 in. As I said right now, time is of the essence
6 because they have already started building. So we
7 need to know what they're going to --

8 MR. GUSTAFSSON: What I can do, just
9 to answer your question, if -- in the chat room if
10 you can put your e-mail address, and I'll be more
11 than happy to send you a --

12 MS. McCALL: I have already -- I sent
13 you an e-mail. I've called several times. I've
14 talked with Mr. Smith. I have been talking since
15 November and have just now been able to get to him
16 December 29th.

17 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Okay.

18 MS. McCALL: And I haven't been able
19 to get anyone else in your office because all of the
20 offices are closed or everybody is in meeting or
21 they tell me it's because of the pandemic. Now, we
22 been trying to get to you since November. We didn't
23 get to you until the 29th of December. That's a
24 long time. And to tell me that we have to wait when
25 I call them and was told that I could call to this

1 meeting, then -- you know I sent them my questions
2 and everything and I -- I called several people and
3 they directed me to this meeting.

4 MR. GUSTAFSSON: We will -- ma'am, we
5 will give you a -- Donovan will give you a call and
6 get your e-mail if we don't already have it. I will
7 get a site plan drawing, you can take a look at it.

8 MS. McCALL: I beg your pardon? I got
9 somebody -- I got cut off.

10 MR. GUSTAFSSON: I'm not too sure what
11 that was.

12 MS. McCALL: Okay.

13 MR. GUSTAFSSON: We'll contact you
14 tomorrow.

15 MS. McCALL: All right. You should
16 have an e-mail with the history. It just taking too
17 long to get to your office. They have not been
18 accessible.

19 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Okay.

20 MAYOR WATERMAN: May I also give an
21 answer to that, even though this is not part of our
22 public hearing? Ms. McCall, this is Mayor Waterman
23 speaking.

24 MS. McCALL: Uh-huh.

25 MAYOR WATERMAN: And I did receive

1 your e-mail just today.

2 MS. McCALL: I called your office a
3 week or so ago and then I sent the e-mail.

4 MAYOR WATERMAN: I received your
5 e-mail today, and just being acquainted to what this
6 is, and so I will respond to that to see how we can
7 look at those concerns. But also as they said,
8 invite you back next week. But in the meantime,
9 just want to let you know I did receive it and I
10 will respond. All right.

11 MS. McCALL: Thank you.

12 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Thank you.

13 MR. SMITH: Do we have any more
14 participants willing to -- or that want to
15 participate in public comment? Okay.

16 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: All right. I
17 will close public comments then and go to my fellow
18 Commissioners for their comments or questions.

19 Christopher, would you like to start?

20 COMMISSIONER NORTHCROSS: Yes. I
21 think we have the business of a very good plan here.
22 I am taking Ms. James's comments into heart if we're
23 just a few words or something away from having
24 complete agreement, by all means, let's get those
25 words -- if it does not alter the spending if it

1 does not alter the future plans, am I still there?

2 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Yes.

3 COMMISSIONER NORTHCROSS: If it does
4 not alter the intent and the direction and all of
5 the good planning that's gone into this plan, still
6 allows us to execute a reasonable fidelity to what
7 folks have spent so much time in putting together,
8 then by all means, if that will take care -- if that
9 is even the problem, let's make sure we take care of
10 it.

11 I do see this plan as being an
12 important component to providing for the next few
13 years the development and health and the wellbeing
14 of our citizens. And I really feel that's what city
15 government should be about, is raising up and
16 developing as citizens. I really feel that city
17 government should have a plan by which it's trying
18 to follow with some goals and some objectives, some
19 ideas of the different issues that are in front of
20 them, the strengths, where people are what city
21 government sees as being their needs and how they're
22 trying to address it. And I see all of these
23 elements being spoken to in this plan. So I
24 wholeheartedly endorse this Pontiac Parks and
25 Recreation Plan and hope that we can get agreement

1 across the City so we can put it into effect and go
2 to work.

3 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Thank you.
4 Mayor Waterman, do you have any questions or
5 questions that you would like to add?

6 MAYOR WATERMAN: Just to say yes, I
7 echo those that have spoken, as well as my fellow
8 Commissioner and fellow Commissioners who have
9 spoken previously. This is a wonderful plan, and it
10 has been brought together not only by the work of
11 the skilled professionals that we have in the
12 Department, but also because I want this to be so
13 inclusive and because there was such potential for
14 all kinds of park plans as well as some of the
15 grants that we have already gotten, some of the
16 grants we could get if this were approved and put in
17 place. So I'm not going to second guess our
18 professionals or our trainers in terms of what they
19 put together. I also would like to recognize all of
20 people who want to be inclusive in this process,
21 which many of the study sessions and workgroups with
22 other issues have been very inclusive, and that has
23 been this time.

24 So I want to personally thank all of
25 those who worked at on the task force, all of those

1 who have put ideas for numerous changes there as
2 well as for improvements in our parks which I think
3 is a great idea, so this has been a grand journey
4 for the City. We know of all of the things we can
5 accomplish if we get a plan together. So I'm sure
6 the Planning Department will take all of that into
7 consideration. And once again, I am happy that we
8 have pulled this together. And certainly Vern can
9 address any of the other questions that came up.

10 But we thank you for your continued
11 support and we hope you will continue to do that
12 through, keeping my fingers crossed, passage of this
13 Master Plan.

14 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Lucy, do you
15 have any comments or questions you'd like to add?

16 MR. GUSTAFSSON: You're muted, Lucy.

17 COMMISSIONER PAYNE: I would just like
18 to agree with Minister James and Mr. McGowan, and
19 Mr. Northcross, and the Mayor, all of those things,
20 it's just time for our citizens. We are in a crisis
21 now really, this City, because of, first of all, the
22 COVID. Secondly is because of the economics. There
23 are a lot of people that have lost their jobs and
24 the children don't have anyplace to go and play.
25 So, I would like to see for us to set aside if we

1 have any personal grievances with anyone set aside
2 for the sake of the children and for the adults and
3 not only that, but for all of the residents and not
4 only that are surrounding communities, we should be
5 ashamed that we have to go through other cities in
6 order for our children to enjoy the outdoors. And I
7 think that it's time if the Federal -- Washington
8 can change, I think we can too. So, let's change
9 the City of Pontiac. Residents are -- all of the
10 residents that I've talked to, this is all that
11 they're asking why, why, why. And I can't give them
12 an answer why.

13 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Thank you. I'm
14 in support of the plan. And with that being said,
15 may I have a motion?

16 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Chris, you're muted
17 if you --

18 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Chris, if you're
19 talking, you have to unmute. There you go.

20 Christopher, we can't hear you. You
21 have to unmute. There you go. There you go.

22 COMMISSIONER NORTHCROSS: Okay. Okay.
23 I make a motion to approve the 2021 to 2025 Parks
24 and Recreation Master Plan. The City of Pontiac in
25 the process of developing a citywide recreational

1 plan in accordance with the most recent guidelines
2 developed by the Michigan Department of Resources to
3 improve recreation and enhance natural resource
4 conservation for the City of Pontiac. Residents of
5 the City of Pontiac were provided with a well
6 advertised opportunity during the development of the
7 draft plan to express opinions, ask questions and
8 discuss all aspects of the Parks and Recreation Plan
9 and review the final draft plan for a period of at
10 least 30 days.

11 Again, I make a motion to approve the
12 2021 to 2025 Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

13 COMMISSIONER PAYNE: Second.

14 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Thank you. May
15 I have a second?

16 COMMISSIONER PAYNE: Second, Lucy.

17 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Thank you. Roll
18 call, please.

19 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Sure. Commissioner
20 Northcross?

21 COMMISSIONER NORTHCROSS: Yes to
22 approve.

23 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Commissioner Payne?

24 COMMISSIONER PAYNE: Yes to approve
25 the Master Plan, Park Master Plan.

1 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Mayor Waterman?

2 MAYOR WATERMAN: Yes to approve.

3 MR. GUSTAFSSON: And Vice Chair

4 Fegley?

5 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Yes to approve.

6 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Motion passes.

7 AYES: Fegley, Payne, Northcross,

8 Waterman.

9 NAYS: (None.)

10 ABSTAIN: (None.)

11 MOTION CARRIES 4-0-0

12 MAYOR WATERMAN: Madam Chair we had

13 the resolution to approve, but we didn't have a

14 chance to have discussion of our Senior Planner

15 after the public hearing and to address some

16 questions after the public hearing.

17 So, what I would like to address,

18 particularly to our Planner, is that this plan was

19 on -- was published for 30 days, calling for public

20 comment. Can you tell us if any other public

21 comment came in, anything other than what we've

22 heard today, remarks about this plan from anybody?

23 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Yes. Through the

24 Chair, yes, Madam Mayor, within that 30-day window,

25 we did not receive any further comment during that

1 timeframe. I did -- I was reluctant to -- I did
2 receive a communication from Fred Phillips, who is
3 part of the Friends and Clinton River Trail, and I'd
4 be happy to read that into the minutes at this time.

5 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Yes, please.

6 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Okay. This is
7 addressed to the Pontiac Planning Commission. The
8 Friends of Clinton River strongly encourage the City
9 of Pontiac Planning Commission to approve the
10 proposed 2021 through 2025 Parks and Recreation
11 Master Plan. The Friends of the Clinton River Trail
12 is an all-volunteer, non-profit and apolitical
13 organization with over 450 members from communities
14 along the Clinton River Trail, including several
15 from the City of Pontiac.

16 Our organization actively working with
17 City staff to find funding sources and implement
18 improvements as described in the draft plan,
19 specifically pages 98 through 111. Without adopted
20 plan, the City is blocked from accessing grant
21 funding from specific sources. Once the plan is
22 adopted, it will allow the City to apply for grants
23 to exist in the implementation of actions proposed
24 in the plan for either parks or trails. The Friends
25 of the Clinton River Trail is presently using its

1 only privately collected funds as well as donations
2 from other private sources, i.e., a few willing to
3 accept an unadopted draft plan to implement the
4 majority of actions listed on pages 106 under (a) to
5 go beyond the short list of actions required access
6 to State and Federal grant fund sources, hence the
7 need for adopted Parks and Recreational Master Plan.

8 In final closing, the Friends of
9 Clinton River Trail (inaudible) City of Pontiac
10 deserves a well-maintained and inviting parks and
11 trail system to move forward and again become a
12 vibrant community it should be. Parks and trails
13 are a major contributors to the quality of life in
14 the community, while these parks and trails provide
15 documented and significant improvements to the
16 overall health of the City. Parks and specifically
17 trails lead to economic development, and of course
18 parks and trails form a legacy of community needs
19 for future generations. Parks and trails interact.
20 A good trail system provides the pathways to connect
21 neighborhoods to parks, schools and businesses.
22 Adopting the draft Parks and Recreation on the
23 Master Plan gives the City of Pontiac the
24 opportunity to move forward, slowly overcoming the
25 limitations of the past and providing quality

1 facilities for all residents and visitors.

2 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Thank you.

3 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Fred Phillips. Thank
4 you. Well stated. There was -- and during the --
5 we did obviously publish this public hearing in the
6 appropriate Oakland Press, Legal News, and during
7 that period of time, we did not hear any further
8 comments at this time.

9 COMMISSIONER PAYNE: And Mayor
10 Waterman, as District 5, the committee, I actually
11 sent this out to about 30 some residents of the City
12 also.

13 MR. GUSTAFSSON: We appreciate your
14 support.

15 MAYOR WATERMAN: Yes.

16 COMMISSIONER NORTHCROSS: I know I
17 shared this Master Plan, the link to the Master Plan
18 during our District 1 -- well, no, it was the
19 District 1 CDC meeting.

20 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Okay.

21 COMMISSIONER NORTHCROSS: And also
22 urged residents to take a look at it and give their
23 inputs, items that are -- they don't want or items
24 that are missing that they do want that are missing.

25 MR. GUSTAFSSON: Very nice.

1 Okay. Any further comments through the Chair and
2 Mayor Waterman?

3 COMMISSIONER NORTHCROSS: Just a
4 followup on Ms. McCall, this is off of the Master
5 Plan, but you know I really like our website being
6 able to search for different items that we have done
7 with the Planning Commission and have those items
8 actually come up as to what we did on the agenda.
9 So I just passed that along. I'm not sure that
10 might be, I don't know maybe an informational spot
11 or something that we run on our access TV to just
12 alert folks that this way of interrogating
13 information for themselves is available.

14 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Thank you.

15 MS. McCALL: Thank you. Can you hear
16 me?

17 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Yes.

18 MS. McCALL: I have been trying to use
19 the website, that's where I got most of my
20 information from. However, even looking at this
21 notice that I have about the special meeting it
22 doesn't --

23 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: We're not doing
24 public comments right now so you'll have to wait to
25 the next meeting.

1 MS. McCALL: I'm responding to the
2 gentleman's comments about the Internet.

3 Number two, you have a lot of material
4 on the internet. If you're not user-friendly, you
5 have a lot of people that are, that don't want to
6 access your information, and if it is not accurate
7 then we can't -- we can't -- you know that -- it
8 makes no difference to us. And I was not aware that
9 this was available. I was not aware until I started
10 trying to research it to find out when this meeting
11 was. So I had to --

12 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Thank you.

13 We're not --

14 MS. McCALL: I'm telling you how I got
15 my information.

16 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Okay. Thank
17 you.

18 MS. McCALL: I had to get it from the
19 Planner from the builder who directed me to your
20 office. Before then there was no knowledge. We did
21 not receive any information in our community about
22 the hearings. Thank you.

23 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Thank you. May
24 I have a motion to end the meeting? If there's no
25 further comments or questions from fellow

1 Commissioners or Mayor Waterman?

2 COMMISSIONER NORTHCROSS: I think what
3 Ms. McCall said is very important, but with that,
4 we'll follow up on that. I hope that we follow up
5 on that. I make a motion that we conclude our
6 meeting.

7 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: May I have a
8 second?

9 MAYOR WATERMAN: I will second it.

10 COMMISSIONER PAYNE: Second.

11 AYES: Fegley, Payne, Northcross,
12 Waterman.

13 NAYS: (None.)

14 ABSTAIN: (None.)

15 MOTION CARRIES 4-0-0

16 MAYOR WATER: I'd like to thank the
17 Commissioners. I know you had to make extra time to
18 make for this special meeting, so I thank you to
19 take care of this business, because this is timely.
20 We'll get this to Council and then we will see how
21 they take it from here. So --

22 ACTING CHAIR FEGLEY: Thank you.

23 MAYOR WATERMAN: -- be great.

24 COMMISSIONER NORTHCROSS: A belated
25 Happy New Year to everyone.

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MR. GUSTAFSSON: Thank you very much.
And for the public for providing comments tonight.
Thank you so much.

MS. McCALL: Thank you for your time.

MAYOR WATERMAN: All right.

(Meeting concluded at 5:56 p.m.)

Minutes certified by:



/s/ Quentina Rochelle Snowden, CSR-5519
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