

CITY OF WARREN
PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING

Regular Meeting held on February 9th, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.,

A Regular Meeting of the Warren Planning Commission was called for Monday, February 9th, 2026, at 7:00 p.m., in the Warren Community Center Auditorium, 5460 Arden Avenue, Warren, Michigan 48092.

Commissioner's Present:

Delwar Ansar
Michael Holowaty
Syed Hoque
Andrey Duzyj – Assistant Secretary
Mahmuda Mouri – Secretary
Merle Boniecki – Vice Chair
Warren Smith – Chair
Melody Magee – Ex-Officio

Also present:

Michelle Katopodes – Assistant Planning Director
David Crabtree – Assistant Planner
Amanda Mika – Assistant Planner
Melissa Maisano – Senior Administrative Secretary
Lisa Gibson – Office Assistant
Mary Michaels – Assistant City Attorney
Patrick Conlin – Communications Department

1. CALL TO ORDER:
Chair Smith – Calls the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:
3. ROLL CALL:
All members present.
4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

MOTION:

A motion was made by Commissioner Holowaty to approve, supported by Assistant Secretary Duzyj. A voice vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 26th, 2026:

MOTION:

A motion was made by Assistant Secretary Duzyj to approve, supported by Secretary Mouri. A voice vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

6. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS:

Members of the audience who wish to address the Planning Commission this evening for a public hearing item may do so by first checking in with the court reporter to the right of the stage and will have three (3) minutes to speak.

- A. SITE PLAN FOR A GAS STATION WITH CONVENIENCE STORE; located on the northeast corner of Mound and Thirteen Mile Roads; 31104 Mound Road; Section 4; Michael Weigand/Gazebo Real Estate (Josh Bratton/Agree Convenience No. 1, LLC); PSP250050. **Postponed from December 15, 2025, January 12, 2026, and January 26, 2026. The petitioner requests further postponement to February 23, 2026.**

MOTION:

A motion was made by Assistant Secretary Duzyj to postpone until February 23, 2026, supported by Commissioner Ansar.

ROLL CALL:

The motion carried as follows:

Assistant Secretary Duzyj.....	Yes
Commissioner Ansar.....	Yes
Commissioner Holowaty.....	Yes
Commissioner Hoque.....	Yes
Secretary Mouri.....	Yes
Vice Chair Boniecki.....	Yes
Chair Smith.....	Yes

- B. SITE PLAN FOR OPEN STORAGE OF VEHICLES AND STORAGE PODS; located on the southeast corner of Schoenherr Road and Ida Avenue; 21730 Schoenherr Road; Section 36; Rande Polis/Safaro Properties LLC (Jeffrey Graham/Kem-Tec & Associates); PSP250052. **Postponed from January 26, 2026.**

PETITIONERS PORTION:

Mr. Jeffrey Graham – I’m the Project Architect, I’m representing Mr. Rande Polis, who is here tonight. Basically, this is a long-established business. There are three businesses on this site, they

are all owned by one person, but the businesses are separate. The building on the site is owned by one person and the others are tenants. There's a warehouse where they sell small candy and things like that for vending machines, it's basically a vending machine operation. Right next to him is a minor automotive repair shop, basically for tires, it's owned by the current owner which is A-1 Tires. The building on the other side of the driveway is a collision shop, has changed owners, but the collision shop itself has been there for over 30 years.

This particular site has gone through several site plan approvals and has been given variances. One was for the front of the building to allow for those four parking spaces. Another variance, at a different time, Mr. Wuerth could tell you the actual dates of the variances that were given for parking where they limited the parking to 8 spaces. We actually have more than 8 spaces and they also allow for a use of storage within the 20-foot setback of the rear because that's right next to residential house.

I do want to point out that we are going to go for a variance to add additional open storage behind the warehouse, to put in about 6 or 7 containers because they are out of space in the warehouse. What's being stored in there are candies and snacks and things like that for their vending machines.

You may notice that adjacent to them is a house, they have a very good rapport with the lady there. In fact, she's had some problems with people breaking into her cars, so on some occasions they have let her park in their secured back lot. Currently there's a five-foot masonry wall fence and in order to hide the storage pods we are going to raise that wall up to 10 feet so the view will be blocked completely. That's pretty much it. They've been there forever and the only new construction we are adding is we are putting a fence and a gate along Ida Road and also across the front to basically secure the parking lot better because they've been having some issues with security.

Secretary Mouri reads the following correspondence:

TAXES: Current.

BUILDING: The Building Department has issue with the parking lot angle parking and handicap requirements. One van accessible space is required with an access aisle (see attached).

ENGINEERING: Preliminary review of this site indicates no difficulty in development.

AT&T: AT&T does not object to this proposal. We do have facilities in the vicinity, but they should not be affected.

COMCAST: We have facilities in the area, but they are not in conflict with the proposal.

MCDR: Macomb County Department of Roads (MCDR) has received and reviewed the enclosed preliminary plan for the above referenced site. MCDR has the following objection to proposed development at above mentioned site.

1. The MCDR will not allow removing existing grass area and replacing it with concrete in north entrance, until existing concrete parking area between south entrances is removed, seeded and mulched.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 586-463-8671.

Mr. Jeffrey Graham – Can I clarify two things? We did take out the concrete where the grass is, so we are going to keep the grass. And we did change the parking layout through the drive-thru to make it a full ADA parking spot, which was requested by the Building Department.

Ms. Michelle Katopodes – To add on to what he was saying, I was going to mention it as well, they received the first copy of the plan and those comments are based on the first copy of the plan not the revised one, so they added the grass back in between those top driveways, that was the original plan, they were going to remove it but we wanted them to keep that lawn area, so they didn't see this revised plan.

Ms. Michelle Katopodes reads the recommendation of the Staff:
**There's a change in the bond, based on the additional wall and reinforcements, so we've changed this to read a performance bond in the amount of \$1,000 shall be posted according to the estimated cost of \$33,500 by the petitioner.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Commissioner Holowaty to approve, supported by Vice Chair Boniecki.

COMMISSIONERS PORTION:

Commissioner Holowaty – Good evening, just a couple quick questions. You mentioned there were three separate businesses operating on this one property?

Mr. Jeffrey Graham – Right.

Commissioner Holowaty – What are the hours of operation of these different businesses?

Mr. Rande Polis – I open at 9 am until 7 pm.

Commissioner Holowaty – What about the warehouse?

Mr. Rande Polis – It opens from 5 am until 2 pm. I told him before to make sure you close early because I don't want any complaints from the neighbors, I want to be friends with the neighbors.

Commissioner Holowaty – And both of you have no problems with the recommendations that were given?

Mr. Jeffrey Graham – In fact we've actually been working back and forth with them.

Commissioner Holowaty – And you understand you'll have to go in front of the ZBA for those variances?

Mr. Jeffrey Graham – Yes, we understand that. We actually moved our fence line 25 feet back. The building has been there a long time, it's at 20 feet not 25, so that's the variance that we are going for.

Commissioner Holowaty – Thank you.

Vice Chair Boniecki – I heard Michelle say you had not received the revised copy; they are asking for a performance bond in the amount of \$1,000, is that okay with you?

Mr. Jeffrey Graham – Yes, \$1,000 is not a problem.

Assistant Secretary Duzyj – I'm very happy to see that you're raising the wall to 10 feet, but we cannot approve a 10-foot wall, the only people that can is the Zoning Board of Appeals. I think it's a terrific idea to hide the pods, I didn't know they were 9½ feet.

Mr. Jeffrey Graham – You can get them pretty much in any shape and size, I know that because sometimes we do container homes.

Assistant Secretary Duzyj – Do you have any cars that are being worked on anywhere around here that are overnight or that you have to keep on the property for any extended period of time?

Mr. Jeffrey Graham – Yes, if you look on the drawing, that section right there is for vehicles that are being worked on and they are behind a solid fence and a solid wall on the back line.

Assistant Secretary Duzyj – Let's say a car that needs repair will be there for a week or two weeks?

Mr. Jeffrey Graham – I don't know the operation.

Assistant Secretary Duzyj – I just don't want to see busted up cars sitting there for six months to year or whatever.

Mr. Jeffrey Graham – To be honest with you, that would be financially unwise for the client. He needs room for cars coming in and out, so it wouldn't be in his best interest to even have cars for that long.

Assistant Secretary Duzyj – As long as we have an understanding that you are not going to leave cars there that are busted up and not running for over a month or two months up to a year because we've had problems with that previously.

Mr. Jeffrey Graham – I've done this on several occasions with collision shops, I can't speak to that, but I can definitely have the owner pass the word on to his tenant and tell him don't leave cars there over 6 months, would that be sufficient?

Assistant Secretary Duzyj – That would be more than sufficient. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chair Smith – Good evening, sir. I'm glad you were able to work out the situation with the wall because that was a concern that I had.

Mr. Jeffrey Graham – Yeah, we're not quite sure how we are going to do it, but we will raise it to 10 feet.

Chair Smith – I know if you raise it up with concrete you're going to have to put extra reinforcement in it.

Mr. Jeffrey Graham – That’s how it’s normally done. The advantage to this wall is that it’s made out of block, so what you do is take the top cap off you run steel rods all the way to the bottom and to the top and then you fill that with concrete, and you make a line of columns.

Chair Smith – Okay, very good sir. That was a motion by Commissioner Holowaty supported by Vice Chair Boniecki.

ROLL CALL:

The motion carried as follows:

Commissioner Holowaty.....	Yes
Vice Chair Boniecki.....	Yes
Commissioner Ansar.....	Yes
Commissioner Hoque.....	Yes
Assistant Secretary Duzyj.....	Yes
Secretary Mouri.....	Yes
Chair Smith.....	Yes

- C. SITE PLAN FOR A NEW FITNESS TRAINING CENTER; located on the south side of Jarvis Avenue, approximately 177 feet west of Ryan Road; 3878 Jarvis Avenue; Section 31; Mojgan (Megan) Refaeishomali/MRE Home LLC; PSP260003.

PETITIONERS PORTION:

Blair Hollis – It’s just a small fitness center that we plan to put in the community, we want to be a pillar of the community. I’ve been training my whole life, and the Lord has blessed me with the opportunity, if this gets approved, I’ll be able to continue to be vigorous with this.

Our project is a smaller one-on-one, I train a lot of celebrities, I train a lot of athletes, I train people in the NFL. They don’t like the crowds at LA Fitness and Planet Fitness. I actually train out of LA Fitness right now; I go to their little gyms as well.

We are trying to build something for the community, for smaller, more intimate personal fitness goals. I’ve been doing this my whole life. We also have a variance that we may have to obtain pertaining to four parking spaces. If it was permitted, we were also going to add a couple bike racks, like I said this is for the community, some people might want to ride their bike there. Our hours of operation will be every day from 6 o’clock to 8 o’clock the latest will be 9 o’clock.

I take pride in everything I do. I'm more so the training part of it, she is more the reality part of it, so we are actually a one-two combo. We just want to be pillars of the community, we want to continue to put health into the community, continue to help people eat better, live better and live longer. We always will put God first, we don't plan on making any noise, this is more personal training. The personal training sessions that I do now will not exceed more than six people at a time, it won't exceed the parking spaces, and they are in and out. I also do one-on-one training and I take pride in everything I do.

Secretary Mouri reads the following correspondence:

TAXES: Current.

BUILDING: Building Department will conduct a Plan Review once a Building Permit Plan Review Application is submitted.

ENGINEERING: Preliminary review of this site indicates no difficulty in development.

AT&T: AT&T does not object to the proposed New Fitness Center.

COMCAST: We have aerial facilities in the area, but we have no conflicts with the proposal.

DTE: DTE Electric Company has received and reviewed the site plan for new fitness training center. DTE Electric Company has no objection to the site plan for new fitness training center; impacting 3878 Jarvis Avenue, Warren, MI: Section 31; per the site plan provided. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 586-783-1978.

MCPWO: The Macomb County Public Works Office (MCPWO) has reviewed the site plan for the project referenced above and has determined the proposed site disturbance is less than one acre and will not require a stormwater review from this office. Prior to construction, a soil erosion permit will be required from this office. Contact our Soil Erosion Department at 586-469-5327 for more information regarding same. If a no objection letter is required, please forward your request to Wesley.Jonik@macombgov.org.

Ms. Michelle Katopodes reads the recommendations of the Staff: The petitioner mentioned adding bike racks, that's not an issue. So, when they revise the plan, adding some bike racks in a location that

isn't going to impede the parking spaces will be fine, just have it on the updated plan.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Assistant Secretary Duzyj to approve, supported by Commissioner Ansar.

COMMISSIONERS PORTION:

Assistant Secretary Duzyj – I like to see this because it's a new building in an area that could use it. Are you hooked up with any hospital or any place else for therapy work?

Mr. Blair Hollis – As of right now, no I'm not.

Assistant Secretary Duzyj – Are you thinking about it, or is it possible that you're going to go down that road in the future?

Mr. Blair Hollis – I can't say that right now.

Assistant Secretary Duzyj – That's fair enough, not a problem. There's some of these big fitness centers, you in there and that's not therapy, everybody is working out.

Mr. Blair Hollis – I just take the personal side of it and then it gets too overwhelmed because we are still in the community and I hate to be a nuisance to the community because it gets overwhelmed. So, as I stated, it's more of personal training, smaller group sessions. The more you get into the therapy, we are taking from what we are and being someone else, we mostly train athletes and stuff like that.

Assistant Secretary Duzyj – Fair enough. Are you going to generate enough trash?

Mr. Blair Hollis – No, when we were talking to our engineers and the people that have been helping us put this together, it's going to be minimal trash like water bottles and stuff like that, so we won't accumulate too much trash. We will have whatever we have to have for code.

Assistant Secretary Duzyj – If you keep the trash that's generated there inside and take it out once a week then that would alleviate you having to build a trash enclosure and get a dumpster.

Mr. Blair Hollis – We both have pickup trucks and, like I said, as of right now it's water bottles. I can't see it being anything else

because we won't have a sauna, we won't have showers and stuff like that. Most of the time, what people come with they will leave with. People are not going to be eating there; we don't want any food in there or none of that. I think the trash and debris will be at a minimum.

Assistant Secretary Duzyj – Then you would have to put something on the print that says that the trash will be held internally and then you won't need a trash enclosure. Does the Planning Department agree with that?

Ms. Michelle Katopodes – That would be fine to put a note and to be disposed elsewhere. We can remove the condition if they want to have a note saying minimal trash to be contained in the building and then disposed of.

Assistant Secretary Duzyj – That would be perfect and I think that covers him and it covers us. From my way of thinking that's a lot of money being wasted on something that's not needed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Commissioner Ansar – First of all, I want to thank you for choosing this business, I like to go to the gym. It is very helpful for the community, especially health-wise, and also the younger generation. Sometimes they don't like to go to LA Fitness or Planet Fitness because it's too crowded and also, you'll be the personal trainer you'll take care of them.

Mr. Blair Hollis – I'm a certified nutritionist, I'm a certified personal trainer, I do strength and conditioning. I played football my whole life at Grand Valley State. I have a degree in criminal justice; I don't know what I'm doing. There were a lot of avenues I could of took but the Lord laid me here to be with you guys today, so I appreciate you guys for hearing us.

Commissioner Ansar – I can see that you are very passionate about it. As you mentioned the hours will be from 6 am to 8 pm?

Mr. Blair Hollis – Yes.

Commissioner Ansar – So will it be a monthly subscriber or walk ins.

Mr. Blair Hollis – Montly subscriptions and once we reach a cap that's it until someone leaves then we can get another one in. As I said, we want to do this for the community, we do not want to be a

nuisance to the community. We do not want it to be overcrowded, that's why I don't know about the variance, but I don't think we'll ever over-exceed the parking spaces, I don't want to shrink it because everything is perfect right now for everything that I put in my mind and dreamed of, but with that being said I still think we should put the bike racks. I breathe fitness, I love fitness, I think more people need to get active, to get up and move, and I think that's the problem with us in today's society. We don't have enough pillars in the community that care about the community, they say they do, but then we put liquor stores, we put this and that, I don't mean to down anyone. The Lord led me to be here and meet Megan.

Commissioner Ansar – Is there going to be group training or just individual personal training?

Mr. Blair Hollis – It's mostly going to be personal training, but three times a day I will host a group session which will not exceed more than 6 people.

Commissioner Ansar – Thank you so much.

Vice Chair Boniecki – You mentioned you had mostly bottled water are you going to recycle those, I hope?

Mr. Blair Hollis – Yes, for sure.

Vice Chair Boniecki – I think the bike rack is great especially because we are putting in bike lanes.

Mr. Blair Hollis – Yes, I think more people need to move, even if you're just riding a bike or walking, I'm a firm believer in moving. We don't want to get too old to the point where we can't move.

Vice Chair Boniecki – I agree with that, I'm an LA and Planet Fitness member. Michelle, I have a question for you please. Because they mentioned they are not going to use the trash bin will that change the performance bond?

Ms. Michelle Katopodes – I guess, because that has a cost to it, I suppose if we want to reduce it from \$12,000 that we asked to be posted, if we reduced it from somewhere from \$8,000 to \$10,000, I'd say it's up to the Planning Commission, I would say reducing it would be fine.

Vice Chair Boniecki – Alright, thank you. I think this is a really good business coming to Warren.

Commissioner Hoque – I'd like to say thanks, I don't see any neighbors from here, so they are very happy and not complaining. Are you playing loud music outside?

Mr. Blair Hollis – That's one of the things that we are going to be mindful of. I'm not going to sit up here and lie to you guys, we will have music, but we will be mindful at all times. We are not going to hook up systems where it can get too loud, we have speakers and it will be enclosed. We want to put the community first, even with the bike racks, it's about the community. Everything that we are doing is literally for the community, so we don't want to be a nuisance in any way. The music will not be a problem, we will have music, but it will not be loud. As you see we already have a lot of money into this, a sound system is not even in the picture. We don't want any tickets or complaints; we want to make the community happy.

We also want to do something for the community. I don't know if it's permitted to go door to door to let the people know that if they come to our gym this is what we will offer, maybe a discount just for being in that radius of the community. I don't think music will be a problem.

Commissioner Hoque – How long will it take to finish your project?

Mr. Blair Hollis – Once we get approved and we can start, anywhere from 6 to 9 months, that's with no hiccups in the road. We can't get started today even if we wanted to because we might still have to go for a variance. We are ready to go, we've been eager to get this going for a while now, so once we get the go ahead, it's a time game on the variance, if we get approved for the variance or not.

Ms. Megan Refaeishomali – We are also paying everything in cash, so we are ready to go, people said our building is going up in 6 weeks so as soon as we finish the paperwork, we are hoping it's going to be soon, by summertime.

Commissioner Hoque – I drive by there almost every day, three or four times a day, it's a very nice area. There is no other gym in that area so the community will benefit.

Assistant Secretary Duzyj – I'd like to amend my motion to lower the bond to \$8,000.

Commissioner Ansar – I will second that.

Chair Smith – Good evening. Sounds like you’ve got a good plan and on top of everything. Thank you and good luck with your project.

Mr. Blair Hollis – Thank you and God bless you.

Chair Smith – God bless you also.

ROLL CALL:

The motion carried as follows:

Assistant Secretary Duzyj.....	Yes
Commissioner Ansar.....	Yes
Commissioner Holowaty.....	Yes
Commissioner Hoque.....	Yes
Secretary Mouri.....	Yes
Vice Chair Boniecki.....	Yes
Chair Smith.....	Yes

- D. SITE PLAN FOR THE ADDITION OF OPEN STORAGE OF SEMI-TRAILERS AND CRATED MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT; located on the southeast corner of Nine Mile Road and Becker Avenue; 12350 Nine Mile Road; Section 35; Anthony Vallan/IX Mile Road LLC (Ron Vander Meulen/Young Supply); PSP260005.

PETITIONERS PORTION:

Mr. Jeffrey Graham – I’m the Project Architect, the gentleman represents Young Supply Company, they’ve been around for a while, they have a very large warehouse where they sell mechanical equipment. They’ve had the business for many years, but this is the second year they have owned this building. When they moved in, they were unaware that the need to get an open storage license, the reason why is because they didn’t think they would ever need it. The factory was huge, it was a huge investment, it was a lot bigger than their old building was, but they are doing so well that they filled it up and now they need to store some things outside, some mechanical equipment, things that you would find outside anyway.

What we wanted to do, basically, is to make sure that we are in compliance with what you’ve asked. We’ve been talking and meeting with the Planning Department, they’ve given us the

recommendations, we've looked at them and we have no issue with anyone of them. We'd like to move forward. Thank you.

Secretary Mouri reads the following correspondence:

TAXES: Current.

BUILDING: No effect on building operations.

ENGINEERING: Preliminary review of this site indicates no difficulty in development.

POLICE: The Warren Police Department does not foresee any issues for the addition of open storage.

AT&T: AT&T does not object to the proposed plans for open storage. We do have facilities serving the building and the property, but they should not be affected.

COMCAST: We have no conflicts with this proposal.

DTE: DTE Electric Company has received and reviewed the site plan for additional open storage of semi-trailers and crated mechanical equipment. DTE Electric Company has no objection to the site plan for the addition of open storage of semi-trailer and crated mechanical equipment; impacting 12350 E. 9 Mile Road, Warren, Michigan 48089; Section 35; per the site plan provided. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 586-783-1978.

MCPWO: The Macomb County Public Works Office (MCPWO) has reviewed the site plan for the project referenced above and has determined the proposed site disturbance is less than one acre and will not require a stormwater review from this office. Prior to construction, a soil erosion permit will be required from this office. Contact our Soil Erosion Department at 586-469-5327 for more information regarding same. If a no objection letter is required, please forward your request to Wesley.Jonik@macombgov.org.

Ms. Michelle Katopodes reads the recommendation of the Staff:

PUBLIC HEARING:

Mr. Greg Lemer – I live off of Nagel Street, 22884. I have only one question. Hours of operation? Because the last place that was in there was running 24 hours.

Chair Smith – You bring the question to us and then we'll talk to the petitioner about it.

Mr. Greg Lemer – I was just wondering what the hours of operation are.

Chair Smith – The hours of operation, the owner can tell you, being it's a heating and cooling facility, it's not going to be long hours of operation; we'll find out what the hours are.

Mr. Greg Lemer – I wasn't sure if they were going to have semi's coming all night long.

Chair Smith – I don't think so, sir.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Commissioner Holowaty to approve, supported by Secretary Mouri.

COMMISSIONERS PORTION:

Commissioner Holowaty – Good evening gentlemen, I live around that area too and I was concerned about the hours too. When are the trucks going to be going in and out?

Mr. Ron Vander Meulen – From 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, Monday thru Friday.

Commissioner Holowaty – No weekends or late nights?

Mr. Ron Vander Meulen – No weekends or late nights.

Commissioner Holowaty – Stellantis at Nine and Hoover, they put that warehouse, and they were pretty much operating 24 hours and that could really be a nuisance late at night.

Mr. Ron Vander Meulen – When we looked at the building, they were still in there.

Commissioner Holowaty – Due to what's happening in the automotive industry, they are not in operation now.

Mr. Ron Vander Meulen – They are gone, they moved out.

Commissioner Holowaty – Thank you.

Chair Smith – Good evening, I’ve gone to Young Supply quite a few times. I stopped in there when they first moved in there and they hadn’t really set it up yet. It’s good to see it’s in our area because normally I would have to go downtown to Detroit, and there’s one off of Eight Mile too, so it’s nice to have one close by. Do you have any questions about the bond or anything else?

Mr. Ron Vander Meulen – No, we are fine with the bond.

Commissioner Holowaty – Should I amend it to increase the bond to a \$1,000?

Chair Smith – You can if you want.

Commissioner Holowaty – I amend the bond as recommended by the Planning Department.

Secretary Mouri – I support that.

ROLL CALL:

The motion carried as follows:

Commissioner Holowaty.....	Yes
Secretary Mouri.....	Yes
Commissioner Ansar.....	Yes
Commissioner Hoque.....	Yes
Assistant Secretary Duzyj.....	Yes
Vice Chair Boniecki.....	Yes
Chair Smith.....	Yes

7. CORRESPONDENCE:

None at this time.

8. OLD BUSINESS:

MINOR AMENDMENT TO THE SITE PLAN FOR THE ADDITION OF THREE (3) DONATION BINS AT THE MOSQUE; located on the east side of Ryan Road, approximately 333.98 ft. north of Parent Avenue; 28630 Ryan Road; Section 17; Steve Mustapha Elturk/IONA; PMA260001. **The Minor Amendment is for the addition of three donation bins.**

PETITIONERS PORTION:

Mr. Steve Mustapha Elturk – Good evening, Commissioners. I'm the President of the Islamic Organization of North America, IONA Mosque and Learning Center on Twelve and Ryan.

Apparently, this is an amendment to a site plan that we have applied for the construction, but those donation bins have nothing to do with the construction site, but, at any rate, the Planning Department wanted to add it to that site and that's fine.

Let me just explain the purpose of these donation bins. First of all, I understand and appreciate the City, after those individuals who are installing bins for profit. I understand it had become an issue for the City, the bins we have, we've had for many years. The Planning Department, the City of Warren, or the Zoning Board did not mind having ours about 15 years ago. The only objection was it shouldn't be by the road, so we moved them to the back, and now all of a sudden, we get warnings and letters that you need to remove them. Mr. Frank from the Building Department even took us to court and we still have a pending court date. These are donation bins that are to benefit the less fortunate ones. Again, I understand why Warren City is doing that, they want to maintain the City looking good and not having others exploit these incoming donations.

The purpose of these donation bins is to serve our community by facilitating the collection of gently used clothing and shoes for individuals and families in need. All donated items will be distributed through Zaman International, a well-established charitable organization based in Inkster, Michigan, which provides humanitarian assistance, social services, and emergency aide to underserved populations throughout southeast Michigan.

By the way, I know the sister that started organization years ago, they have a big warehouse there, I have been there, it's similar to Salvation Army. The difference is anyone who needs anything can go into the warehouse, pick up what they need for free. It's a great opportunity for the underserved population in southeast Michigan to be looked after by ourselves, Iona, which we don't get any money for rent for those donation boxes.

Each proposed donation bin will occupy approximately 3 square feet and the bins will be placed in a location that does not obstruct pedestrian walkways, parking areas, visibility or traffic flow. You can see it in the pictures, they are way in the back of the building, away from the traffic on the main road, on Ryan.

We are committed to insuring that the bins are maintained in a clean orderly and secure manner and that collections occur regularly to prevent overflow or nuisance conditions. This initiative aligns with our organization's mission of community service, social responsibility and support for those experiencing hardship. We believe that the addition of these donation bins will provide a meaningful benefit to the broader Warren community while remaining fully compliant with applicable Zoning, Planning, and Property Maintenance requirements. If you have any questions, I'll be more than happy to answer.

Secretary Mouri reads the following correspondence:

TAXES: Current.

BUILDING: Does not affect Building Operations.

ENGINEERING: Preliminary review of this site indicates no difficulty in development.

POLICE: The Warren Police Dept. does not foresee any issues with the amended site plan. Although it might be wise of the business to have security camera monitoring the donation bins in case of vandalism.

AT&T: AT&T does not object to this proposal. We have facilities in the area, but they should not be affected.

COMCAST: Comcast does have facilities in the area, but they are not in conflict with the proposal.

MCPWO: The Macomb County Public Works Office (MCPWO) has reviewed the site plan for the project referenced above and has determined the proposed site disturbance is less than one acre and will not require a stormwater review from this office. Prior to construction, a soil erosion permit will be required from this office. Contact our Soil Erosion Department at 586-469-5327 for more information regarding same. If a no objection letter is required, please forward your request to Wesley.Jonik@macombgov.org.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Secretary Mouri to recognize as a minor amendment, supported by Commissioner Ansar.

ROLL CALL:

The motion carried as follows:

Secretary Mouri.....	Yes
Commissioner Ansar.....	Yes
Commissioner Holowaty.....	Yes
Commissioner Hoque.....	Yes
Assistant Secretary Duzyj.....	Yes
Vice Chair Boniecki.....	Yes
Chair Smith.....	Yes

Ms. Michelle Katopodes reads the recommendations of the Staff:

MOTION:

A motion was made by Vice Chair Boniecki to approve, supported by Commissioner Ansar.

COMMISSIONERS PORTION:

Vice Chair Boniecki – Good evening, I live right by you, so I'm very familiar with your place and I think this is a great idea, I think everybody needs help. I know the City has been frowning a little bit on them because they've been putting stuff all over and leaving trash. Being how your building is, and how you have a gate, and how you keep your place up, I don't think that's an issue. I never noticed if the gates are locked or shut, do you have an hour when your gates are closed?

Mr. Steve Mustapha Elturk – Mainly the bins are for our community, so no one knows outside of our community about those bins. So only those who attend our congregation typically bring in clothes into those bins, it's strictly for our community.

Vice Chair Boniecki – Thank you.

Commissioner Hoque – Thank you for bringing very important things here today and we really appreciate it. How many bins in total?

Mr. Steve Mustapha Elturk – We have three bins total. You can see in the pictures it's very professional, they are very durable to code, they are made for that purpose.

Commissioner Hoque – Are all three bins for the same material?

Mr. Steve Mustapha Elturk – Yes, all three. Actually, the response was so overwhelming from our community, we started with one and then we added another one to accommodate the community.

Commissioner Hoque – I know the area very well. Where the bins are located, it's not visible from the road. They maintain them very well, so hopefully they will continue to do that and the community will be benefited. It's not blocking the traffic, right?

Mr. Steve Mustapha Elturk – No, not at all.

Commissioner Ansar – Thank you, did you have a chance to review all the recommendations?

Mr. Steve Mustapha Elturk – Yes, I do have one objection, I'll take it up with the Planning Department, regarding the variance from the Zoning. I don't need a variance for this, come on, what do I need a variance for three bins. We already have a variance for the Mosque that we obtained back in 2007, if you read it correctly it says may need, so I'll take that up with the Zoning Board. Everything else is just cosmetics, just to update the site plan to include the recommendations, which is fine we have no issues with that.

Commissioner Ansar – I've been to the Mosque and I think it's very needed for the community; they want to donate their old clothes so it will be easier for the community if the bins are there. When they are coming out or going into the Mosque, they can donate their unneeded clothes and they can help the needy people.

Mr. Steve Mustapha Elturk – Had it not been for a good cause, believe me I would not go through the trouble. As an Imam I had to skip our night prayers tonight, but that's okay.

Commissioner Ansar – Thank you.

Secretary Mouri – When was the first bin installed?

Mr. Steve Mustapha Elturk – Maybe 12-15 years ago, on the site of the construction today, it used to be a parking lot by Ryan Road and then we got a notice from the City of Warren before it became an official thing that you have to apply, so we got a notice saying please remove it from the road. We put it behind the building, and it stayed there for a while, then we decided, because of the demand, when we added two other bins, we decided to put it behind the Soup Kitchen, behind the dumpster, which is easier for everyone to drive by and donate their items. We've had it for a long time.

Secretary Mouri – When was the last two, so when the demand increased, when was the last two added?

Mr. Steve Mustapha Elturk – The last couple years, three years.

Secretary Mouri – And you’ve been having trouble with the City since when?

Mr. Steve Mustapha Elturk – Six months ago or so, when the donation bins started popping up everywhere, they even put some on our property which we did not authorize. We had to call them and tell them to please remove them and later we learned those were for not not for profit. They were playing on the emotions of the people getting donations and then collecting them from different areas and different cities, shipping them in containers to third world countries, and making money off of them. So, I understand why Warren is doing this, and that’s why we are trying to comply as much as we can and making sure that we are doing everything to the satisfaction of the City.

Secretary Mouri – Thank you. Since there’s a lot of demand how often are the bins being picked up?

Mr. Steve Mustapha Elturk – Every week, every Monday they come and empty them. Believe me, from what I hear from Ray who is the manager; unfortunately he could not be with me today, they buried his brother today so they had a funeral so could not be present; he says of all the donation boxes, they get the most out of our community, so our community is very generous and charitable.

Secretary Mouri – Thank you.

Chair Smith – Good evening, sir. I know you’ve come before us for many things, good to see you again. I like the donation boxes that you’ve got back there, and I appreciate what you’re doing with the clothing that you’re collecting and things like that. With everything going on in the world, it’s a very important thing you do for people. I just wanted to let you know how much we appreciate that. That was a motion by Vice Chair Boniecki, supported by Commissioner Ansar, roll call.

ROLL CALL:

The motion carried as follows:

Vice Chair Boniecki..... Yes

Commissioner Ansar.....	Yes
Commissioner Holowaty.....	Yes
Commissioner Hoque.....	Yes
Assistant Secretary Duzyj.....	Yes
Secretary Mouri.....	Yes
Chair Smith.....	Yes

Mr. Steve Mustapha Elturk – May I make a recommendation to the Planning Department, please make this fee free for non-profit organizations. The \$500 fee we paid, it’s okay, but as you know our house of worship survives on the nickel and dimes we receive from the community, so maybe for church, Mosque, and non-profit organization you can levy or waive the fee, we would appreciate it. It’s a recommendation, take it or leave it. Thank you.

9. BOND RELEASE:
None at this time.

10. NEW BUSINESS:
None at this time.

11. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:
None at this time.

12. PLANNING COMMISSION BUSINESS:

A) Discussion regarding the Open Government Ordinances:

Ms. Michelle Katopodes – In your packet you’ll find the ordinance that was adopted back to 2023, I believe. We are just giving this to you for informational purposes and also to let the Commission know we’ve updated our website. The City of Warren Planning Commission Officers term expiration dates has been updated on our website to comply with this ordinance. It was brought up recently, so we just wanted to make sure everyone had a copy of it, but it’s also online for everyone to get to.

Ms. Mary Michaels – Council is very concerned that Commission’s comply steadfastly to the specifics of the ordinance. The way it’s written right now it’s a one size fits all, but we have to have common sense because the packet would be provided on the website and that’s good for transparency, but when certain Commission’s proprietary information, like site plans, obviously we are going to be judicious about what is posted online before the Commission meetings. It also provides proposed minutes have to be posted and

approved minutes, so it's very good going forward for transparency. In fact, I have a meeting tomorrow with the City Clerk discussing logistics on how she's going to centralize all this information and transport it to the Communication Department. It's a big undertaking and I just want you to know that agenda backup is also required to be posted and with this Commission you deal with proprietary information. We will make sure whatever can't be public or whatever can expose the City to liability will be protected.

Secretary Mouri – When a sensitive topic comes up, we get a big crowd and they come up and say they didn't get any of this information to review before coming to the meeting. What is the information that we will be giving to the public, or when will that information be available to the public. We usually get our packet two or three days before the meeting, so when would the information be available for the public to review and come to the meeting and ask some questions?

Ms. Mary Michaels – I'll be talking to Mr. Wuerth and Ms. Katopodes about logistics, because obviously the findings are distributed Friday before the meetings, we will work with the Planning Department so things aren't disruptive, but the public will receive most of what this Commission receives.

Secretary Mouri – So we will have more details about this as it moves forward?

Ms. Mary Michaels – Yes, I'd like to talk to Mr. Wuerth first. I'm very concerned about Planning because of the nature of what this Commission deals with. It cannot be a one size that fits all, we want to be transparent but still honor the parameters of the law.

Secretary Mouri – Alright, thank you.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Commissioner Holowaty to receive and file, supported by Secretary Mouri. A voice vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

B) Planning Director's Report:

Ms. Michelle Katopodes – Good evening again, so since the last Planning Commission Meeting on January 26th, we've continued to stay busy in the department.

On the 28th of last month, we met with potential applicants for a lot split near Eleven Mile and Burg. We also met with the representative and owner who was here tonight for the project at 21730 Schoenherr, so we met with him before they came back to make sure we could move forward with that site plan regarding the wall.

On January 30th, I attended a Green Macomb Meeting, and at that meeting the representative from Macomb County Department of Roads explained their landscaping policy in the county right-of-ways. There was also a representative from The Michigan Department of Natural Resources and they provided an update that they recently released a Michigan Community Tree Species Selection Guide and both of those guides are available online. So, there is a lot of new information regarding trees.

They also announced there's an Arbor Day tree and plant sale, so if anyone's interested in purchasing trees or more information you can visit greenmacomb.com.

We also continue to meet internally to work on the overlay districts that were presented at the joint meeting. Hunter Manikas, the Economic Development Technician, is the designated staff person that will bring this ordinance forward on behalf of the City. The draft document has been provided to the Attorney's Office where it will be put in the form before it's brought to the Planning Commission for a recommendation to City Council. I anticipate that it will probably be here in a few meetings from now, potentially.

We've also had an internal meeting regarding the Zoning Ordinance, and we are continuing to review the draft document that we were provided from Beckett and Raider, so we are continuing to work through that and meet monthly.

This ends the report, if you have any questions, please let me know.

Chair Smith – I have one thought I wanted to bring up, on the overlay project that we went through in our meeting, I got to thinking how is that going to affect our greenspace in those areas?

Ms. Michelle Katopodes – When you say greenspace, if there's vacant land, the idea was that that's buildable for a home, there would still be a lot coverage requirement. In the way the draft is written for the lot, you can cover 40% of the property with a home or

structure. There would still be the right-of-way, like the lawn, is there a specific question?

Chair Smith – I was just wondering if we still have the required greenspace for each project because you're taking away greenspace to build houses.

Ms. Michelle Katopodes – The missing middle one is specifically for an infill development, so you're not going to see a lot of vacant parcels right next to each other. It's probably going to be a vacant lot here, a vacant lot there, within that southern part of the City and then also extending east; so south of Stephens and then going east; but it's primarily infill development, so I don't think it's going to be a big area all together. It's going to be trying to fill in those vacant lots with homes.

Chair Smith – Thank you.

Secretary Mouri – I wanted to ask maybe two questions, we don't consider the fees for the non-profit organizations or are they required to pay the same amount of fees?

Ms. Michelle Katopodes – We don't have any special provisions in our department; I don't know if that's something that any other department does. Maybe the Attorney can speak to, I don't know if that would be something from the Council level, I don't know how that works.

Ms. Mary Michaels – We can look into that; it would have to be equally applied probably set by ordinance or rule or bylaw.

Secretary Mouri – I would definitely be interested for us to find out because if we are considering going to all the different churches, mosque, and all these other religious facilities that exist in Warren and the bins that have been there before, like for decades, and now we are going to charge them hundreds of dollars that's benefiting the society, I think we should consider this.

Ms. Mary Michaels – I'd like to look into the origin of these fees, I'm not sure if it's by Council resolution, but I'll look into that.

Secretary Mouri – The other thing I'd like the Commission know is I'll be out of the country on April 20th, which is more than two months out, so I will not be able to attend that meeting.

C) Planning Commission Discussion and Concerns:

None at this time.

13. CALENDAR OF PENDING MATTERS:

None at this time.

14. ADJOURNMENT:MOTION:

A motion was made by Assistant Secretary Duzyj to adjourn, supported by Commissioner Holowaty. A voice vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Warren Smith, Chair

Mahmuda Mouri, Secretary

Meeting Recorded by: Megan Novak
Meeting transcribed by: Mary Clark – CER-6819

E-mail: maryclark130@gmail.com