



Carlisle | Wortman
ASSOCIATES, INC.

117 NORTH FIRST STREET SUITE 70 ANN ARBOR, MI 48104 734.662.2200 734.662.1935 FAX

Date: September 12, 2018

**Planned Unit Development (PUD)
Eligibility Review
For
City of Northville, Michigan**

Applicant:	Hunter Pasteur Northville LLC 32300 Northwestern Highway, Suite 230 Farmington Hills, MI 48334
Project Name:	The Downs Planned Unit Development (PUD)
Plan Date:	August 13, 2018
Latest Revision:	September 7, 2018
Location:	Vacant parcels on the south side of Cady St. (between S. Center and Griswold), the Northville Downs racetrack property south of Cady St. (between S. Center St. and River St.), and two areas on the west side of S. Center St.
Zoning:	CBD – Central Business District CSO – Cady Street Overlay District RTD – Racetrack District R-2 – Second Density Residential District
Action Requested:	PUD Eligibility
Required Information:	As noted within this review

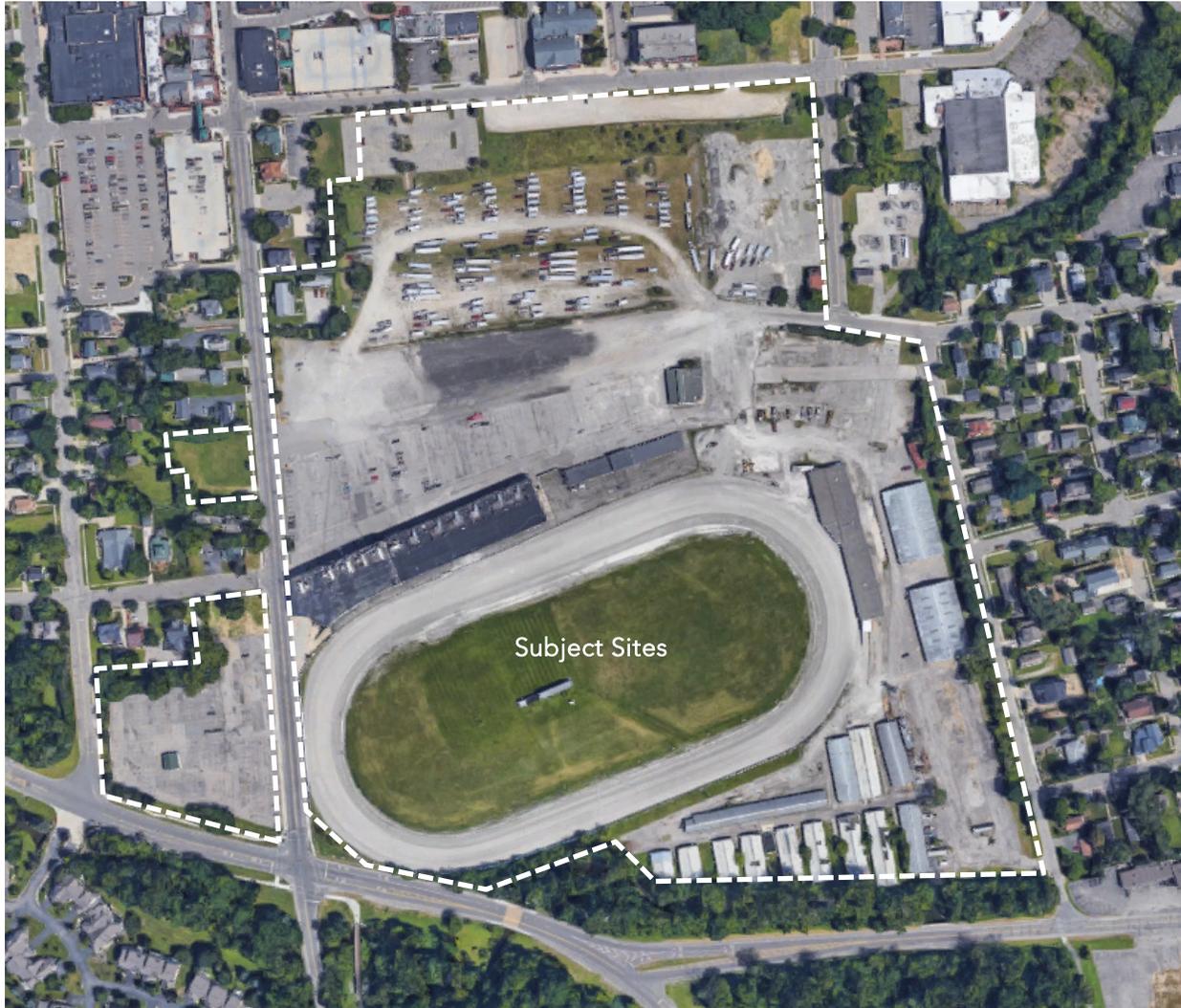
PROJECT AND SITE DESCRIPTION

The applicant is requesting review of Planned Unit Development (PUD) Eligibility for a residential and commercial project on 48.12 acres of land that is currently vacant or occupied by the Northville Downs Racetrack. The project is proposing 18,700 square feet of commercial space and an apartment building along Cady Street. South of these buildings are single-family homes, and townhomes. Townhomes are also proposed on two smaller parcels on the west side of S. Center St.

The three types of residential units that are proposed include:

- Apartments: 306 Units; average 947 s.f.; 4-5 stories
 - Townhomes: 222 Units; 1,580 – 2,335 s.f.; 3 stories
 - Single-Family Dwellings: 49 Units; 2,300 – 3,100 s.f.; 2 stories
-
- Total: 577 Residential Units

Figure 1 – Subject Sites



PUD PROCESS

Section 20.05 of the Zoning Ordinance outlines the procedure to review a Planned Unit Development (PUD). Per this process, the applicant met with City Staff twice (February and July, 2018) for Pre-Application Meetings, where the project team and Staff discussed the proposal.

The next step in the process is for the Planning Commission to evaluate the proposal against the PUD Eligibility Criteria in the ordinance, and convey written or verbal comments to the applicant. The eligibility criteria are broad-based criteria. They are to be used to determine if the benefits

of the project justify the requested deviations from the zoning requirements, and that the project couldn't be built without these deviations.

We provided a draft review (dated August 27, 2018) based on the proposal. The applicant has replied to our comments via a written memo (dated September 7, 2018) and updated plan sheets. The response memo answers questions we posed in our draft review, and provides additional information so that we can better evaluate the proposal. The plan sheets were modified to clearly indicate the location of the underground river; no other changes were made to the proposal.

We have reviewed the proposal in light of the PUD Eligibility Criteria. The next section of this review lists the criteria, the applicant's response, and our comments after each. We have also included the information provided by the applicant in their September 7 memo.

PUD ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Section 20.05(2)(a) of the City of Northville Zoning Ordinance establishes PUD criteria which determine the overall eligibility for a Planned Unit Development. The applicant for a PUD must demonstrate all of the following criteria as a condition to being entitled to PUD treatment. These criteria are provided below.

Criterion No. 1: Grant of the planned unit development will result in one of the following:

- a. A recognizable and material benefit to the ultimate users of the project and to the community, where such benefit would otherwise be unfeasible or unlikely to be achieved without application of the planned unit development regulations; or
- b. Long-term protection and preservation of natural resources and natural features of a significant quantity and/or quality, where such benefit would otherwise be unfeasible or unlikely to be achieved without application of the planned unit development regulations; or
- c. Long-term protection of historic structures or significant architecture worthy of historic preservation; or
- d. A non-conforming use shall, to a material extent, be rendered more conforming, or less offensive, to the zoning district in which it is situated.

The PUD narrative in the project submission lists the following features (i through vi) as public benefits of the project. We have provided comments (in italics) after each:

- i. PUD narrative: Project proposes a seven (7) acre park, deeded to the City, with paved walking/biking trail, pond with fountain, benches and extensive landscaping. Annual maintenance costs of the park will be borne by the Homeowner's Association. (Note that park lighting is also shown on the conceptual landscape plan.)

CWA Comment: The linear park (exclusive of the stormwater pond) is shown as 6.3 acres on the Preliminary Plan. In our opinion, the 6.3-acre park with walking/biking trail, benches, landscaping and lighting would be a public benefit. However, the following will also need to be considered:

1. City Council will need to decide if accepting this park is in the best interest of the community.
2. The park maintenance will need to be conducted and administered by the City, requiring personnel and coordination.
3. Regarding maintenance costs, the PUD Agreement would need to clearly describe how the costs (current and future) would be determined and transferred from the Homeowner's Association (HA) to the City each year. While it may seem beneficial that the HA pay for the park maintenance, implementation of this arrangement could become problematic in the future.
4. As described later in this review, the Master Plan calls for daylighting this branch of the Rouge River in this location. The applicant explains in their September 7, 2018 response that daylighting the river is not economically feasible without a public grant, and that the City or County would have the most likely chance of being awarded grant money. The response memo also states that enough open space has been retained if the City should elect to daylight the river in the future. Therefore, daylighting the river is not proposed as part of this project.

In our opinion, with the location of the townhomes and thirteen home sites on either side of the underground river, it will not be possible to daylight the river in the future once these homes are built. We expect that homeowners occupying the new single-family and town homes would object to such a project. As we discuss later in this review, daylighting the river in the future could be possible with the elimination of the thirteen single-family home sites along River Street.

5. It appears that some of the single-family home sites facing River Street contain a portion of the underground river. As requested, the underground river is now clearly labeled on all the amended sheets in the plan set. The applicant states that the underground river is within the boundaries of Lot #1, and on the edges of Lots #2, #3, and #4. They also state that the new homeowners would be informed of this in the Master Deed and Bylaws.

Are the pocket parks shown at the terminus of Hutton St. proposed as public parks?

The submission also lists the "pond with fountain" as a public amenity. A stormwater basin is a requirement of Wayne County's Stormwater Standards. This feature would be required for any development; therefore we don't consider it to be a benefit that is unfeasible without application of the PUD regulations.

In our previous review, we asked for clarification on the type of stormwater basin being proposed. The applicant has described the basin as a "detention" basin with a four-foot deep permanent pool that will not require fencing. We think this could create an attractive, natural setting.

- ii. PUD narrative: Project proposes a new location for farmer's market in the park.

CWA Comments: *The new farmer's market location as shown on the plans is approximately 17,000 s.f. in area. We agree that the current site for the Farmer's Market is not all used for vendors. Using the applicant's analysis, the proposed Farmer's Market is a 51% reduction in size to the current market.*

We have the following comments/questions:

1. *In our opinion, locating the farmers market in a park setting is positive. However, it does take away from the amount of green open space provided.*
2. *The applicant's response states that they have discussed this proposal with the Chamber of Commerce, and that this re-location would result in a smaller site. We would ask that the Chamber provide their thoughts on whether the proposal would meet their needs?*
3. *We asked how many vendors will the proposed farmer's market can accommodate? The applicant's response states that the Chamber would make this determination. We would ask that the Chamber also provide the current number of vendors.*
4. *The applicant confirmed that market visitors will park their cars in the parking lot north of the proposed site, and in the on-street parking in the vicinity of the new market. See our comments regarding parking on Pages 7-9*

- iii. PUD narrative: Project proposes construction of berms adjacent to the park and single-family lots/townhomes; relocation of exposed sanitary sewer pipe currently crossing the river (north of Beal St.), and other stormwater improvements.

CWA Comments: *As mentioned above, we don't consider stormwater improvements to be a benefit unique to this proposal. Any re-development of this area will be required to address stormwater per Wayne County's standards. The berms will be constructed from the soils excavated to build the stormwater basin. Again, we don't consider them a unique benefit as this is a general practice in land development to dispose of excess soil. Regarding the exposed sanitary sewer pipe, we would defer evaluation of this (as a benefit) to the City's Engineer, who could provide a professional opinion as to whether redeveloping this site requires that the sanitary pipe be relocated.*

- iv. PUD narrative: Project proposes elimination of outdated buildings, structures, outdoor storage uses, and other existing features on site.

CWA Comments: *In our opinion, any redevelopment of this site will eliminate the existing structures. In our opinion, this does not constitute a public benefit that is unfeasible without application of the PUD regulations. The applicant disagrees, and states in their response that all of the demolition, environmental remediation, and site earthwork of the southern 40 acres will be done at one time, and that the buildings and structures on site could remain for a long time if not part of a comprehensive project. While that may certainly be possible, our point is that we don't think it requires a PUD to redevelop the site.*

- v. PUD narrative: Project proposes traffic signalization improvements.

CWA Comments: A Traffic Impact Study (dated September 6, 2018) has been submitted. (Note that our first review looked at a DRAFT Traffic Impact Study. The final Traffic Impact Study has now been submitted.) The applicant has clarified, in their response, the traffic improvements they are proposing as part of this plan, including:

1. Traffic signal timing changes at the following intersections:
 - Main Street and Griswold Street
 - Sheldon/Center St. and 7 Mile Road
 - Main Street and Hutton Street
2. Re-stripe the northbound and southbound approaches at the Sheldon/Center and 7 Mile Road intersection. This would require widening Center Street north of the intersection to provide these lanes and maintain existing bike lanes.
3. Upgrade the signal at Sheldon/Center and 7 Mile intersection to provide protected/permissive left-turning phases for all approaches.
4. They will not widen the bridge south of the Sheldon/Center and 7 Mile Road intersection to increase storage of turn lane.

The Traffic Impact Study has been reviewed by the City Engineer, who has provided a review and summary cover memo (both dated September 10, 2018). The review requests additional information, and identifies two major areas of concern:

1. The exclusion of the intersections of 7 Mile Road and Northville Road, and 7 Mile Road and S. Main Street from the Traffic Impact Study. Additional study including these intersections is needed before a full impact of the development on the community roadway network can be assessed.
2. The Traffic Impact Study calls for approximately 250-feet of storage for left-turns on the south side of the 7 Mile Road and Sheldon/Center St. intersection. This storage would extend well beyond the bridge over Johnson Creek, and would require widening of the bridge. However, the City Engineer suggests that a round-about at this intersection could eliminate the need for a wider bridge and improve the level of service at this intersection. However, the Wayne County Road Commission will need to provide preliminary approval before proceeding with this concept.

In summary, additional information is needed to determine the impact of the proposed development on City streets.

- vi. PUD narrative: Project proposes stormwater retention ponds and bio-swales to filter stormwater runoff into the Rouge River.

CWA Comments: Any redevelopment of this site will be required to meet the stormwater management standards of Wayne County. We don't consider this a benefit that is unfeasible without application of the PUD regulations.

As requested, the applicant states that they have met with Wayne County to review the project and preliminary storm water management design.

We also encourage the applicant to integrate more infiltration areas throughout the project. The applicant's response states that they will do this during the engineering design phase. This is positive, but since infiltration areas are above ground and take up space, we recommend that they be identified (as are the bioswales) as part of the overall design and during this stage of design.

Criterion No. 2: The proposed type and density of use shall not result in an unreasonable increase in the need for or burden upon public services, facilities, roads, and utilities.

The PUD narrative in the submission lists this criterion as #3. The narrative states that the development has been designed to reduce City needs, and lists six features of the proposal. These features are listed below. We provide comments after each:

- a) PUD Narrative: Replacement of potentially hazardous sanitary sewer pipe currently located in the river.

CWA Comments: See our comments above.

- b) PUD Narrative: Creation of 98 parking spaces available to the public in close proximity to the downtown shopping area.

CWA Comments: At the July 16, 2018 City Council meeting, City Council approved an option agreement with Hunter Pasteur Homes (HPH) to purchase the City-owned parking lot on the south side of Cady Street. One condition of the agreement was that HPH would provide at least 92 public parking spaces located within 600 feet of the existing lot. The project submission includes a sheet titled: "Cady Lot Parking Replacement Plan," showing the required 92 spaces in the following locations:

- 23 on-street parking spaces on Hutton St., south of Cady
- 43 on-street parking spaces on Beal St., between S. Center and Griswold
- 32 spaces in the proposed surface lot at Cady/Griswold

The applicant's respond memo states the following mix of apartment units:

- 160 studios and one-bedroom units
- 123 two-bedroom units
- 23 three-bedroom units

We have revised our review with this information to calculate required parking under the current zoning requirements for the Cady Street development area only in the table on the following page:

	Cady Street Area Required Parking	Cady Street Area Proposed Parking	Difference
General Retail	1 space/200 s.f. or 18,700/200 = 94 spaces	94 spaces (surface pkg. lot)	- 0 -
Multi-Family:			
Studio & One Bedroom	2 spaces/dwelling unit or 160 x 2 = 320 spaces	517 (surface pkg. lot)	- 180 spaces
Two Bedroom	2.5 spaces/dwelling unit or 123 x 2.5 = 308 spaces		
Three+ Bedroom	3 spaces/dwelling unit or 23 x 3 = 69 spaces		
Replacement Spaces for City Parking Lot	92 spaces	66 spaces (on-street parking on Hutton & Beal Streets)	- 26 spaces
	883 spaces	677 spaces	- 206 spaces

Note that there are 12 on-street spaces on Cady Street that were not counted toward the "replacement spaces" (as shown on the Cady Lot Parking Replacement Plan).

In summary, the current Zoning requirements for apartments and commercial development are 791 spaces, plus the 92 spaces required to replace the City parking lot. This information can be used as a comparison for the proposal. The plans state that the project is allowing one parking space per bedroom (or 475) spaces. Therefore, studios and one-bedroom apartments will have one dedicated parking space, while two-bedroom apartments will have two spaces, and three-bedroom apartments will have three spaces. The applicant disagrees with the zoning requirement of 2.5 spaces for a two-bedroom apartment. This zoning standard accounts for visitors in multi-family developments.

In addition, Section 20.04 of the PUD Ordinance states that where warranted by overlapping or shared parking arrangements, the Planning Commission and City Council may reduce the required number of parking spaces. As stated in the Cady Street Overlay District, shared parking may allow a reduction of up to thirty percent (30%) from the parking requirements, subject to City Council approval.

We have the following comments/questions:

1. A 30% reduction in parking requirements between the commercial and multi-family uses would equal $(791 \times 0.7) = 553$ parking spaces. The proposal is offering 585 spaces (total spaces minus the City parking lot replacement spaces) or 26% less than required by the zoning ordinance for both uses.
2. Is one parking space for a studio/one-bedroom unit sufficient? Fifty-two percent of the units will be studios and one-bedroom units. While this would work for single renters, couples renting these units will most likely have two cars. Where will they park the second car? If half of the studios/one-bedroom units were occupied with two-car couples, this would equate to 80 cars without a space.
3. In our opinion, supplying two parking spaces for a two-bedroom unit, and three parking spaces for a three-bedroom unit is reasonable.
4. Thirty-two (32) surface spaces are proposed as "replacement" spaces in the Griswold and Cady St. lot. It appears that these spaces will be available for the Farmer's Market parking.
5. The applicant's response references the Cady Street project, and states that one space was required per bedroom. The Cady Project contains six units, each with two bedrooms. Each unit for this project was allotted two parking spaces.

c) PUD Narrative: Improvements to the traffic signalization and traffic control devices.

CWA Comments: See our comments above.

d) PUD Narrative: Elimination of current racetrack use which imposes a lot of needs of City services.

CWA Comments: See our comments above.

e) PUD Narrative: Creation and dedication of public park spaces which will be maintained by non-public funds.

CWA Comments: See our comments above.

f) PUD Narrative: Creation of over \$5,440,000 in annual taxes for taxing jurisdictions, as compared to only \$423,000 in tax generation of which only \$106,000 is generated to the City of Northville. Of the \$5,440,000 projected generation of taxes, the majority of these taxes go directly to the City of Northville, DDA and Northville School District:

City Operating - \$798,961
DDA Tax Levy - \$85,336
DDA Tax Capture - \$1,228,430
Northville Schools - \$1,334,424

CWA Comments: The proposal consists of two land use types: commercial space, and residential dwelling units. We don't consider these land use types to result in an unreasonable burden upon public services.

The proposed residential density, as presented, would add 577 dwelling units to the City. To estimate the increase in population, we used the following assumptions:

- The average household size in Northville is 2.34¹ persons. Since most of Northville's housing units are single-family homes, we consider this a reasonable estimate for the 49 new single-family homes.
- Regarding the townhomes, we would expect most to be occupied by empty nesters. Therefore, we would use an average townhome size of 2 persons.
- Regarding the apartments, we would expect the apartment units to be occupied by singles or couples; therefore, we would use an average apartment size of 1.5 persons.
- Therefore, we estimate that this proposal could add 1,018 new residents to the City. Northville's population in 2017 is estimated at 5,835¹. This new development would increase that population by approximately 17%.

¹Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles (SEMCOG.org).

The applicant has provided a tax revenue analysis based on this proposal. The City Assessor is evaluating this analysis to compare the tax revenue generated by the project to existing revenue and "breakage" currently generated by the racetrack. While the project will definitely generate tax revenue, the cost of City services will also rise. For example, the cost of police and fire services will increase due to the substantial increase over time in the number of residents and homes. Using the 2018 per capita annual cost estimate/target for police and fire services of \$557², the increase in population will cost an additional \$567,026 for these services. Additional analysis of how this increase in population will impact other City services should be conducted. (Note: Additional discussion of density is provided later in this review.)

²Source: City of Northville Michigan Fiscal Year 2018 Annual Budget and Five Year Plan (2017 – 2021)

We defer evaluation of how this proposal could affect existing utilities to the City Engineer. The City Engineer has developed a Utilities Master Plan for this part of the City. Regarding sewer and water, there are engineering solutions to accommodating this proposal. However, the applicant will need to review the Utilities Master Plan and determine if they want to commit to this, or a similar plan acceptable to the City, as part of their responsibility in developing this project.

Regarding traffic, the City Engineer has reviewed the Traffic Impact Study and provided comments, as discussed above. The applicant responded to the following questions we asked in our previous review:

- The existing traffic volume that is the basis for the current conditions were gathered on one day, and not multiple days. How can "typical" conditions can be determined with such limited data? The response states that this is standard protocol.
- The intersection of Cady Street and Church was not included in the Study. The response states that the low volume of traffic on Church street didn't warrant study.
- The Study states that the suggested improvements (except for widening of Sheldon) "degrade" delays and level of service for through movements at Center/Sheldon and 7 Mile Road. Is road widening on Sheldon (on the south side of 7 Mile) required to

improve through movements? Would widening require a new bridge? The response states that improvements can be made without widening the bridge.

Criterion No. 3: The proposed planned unit development shall be harmonious with public health, safety and welfare of the City.

The PUD narrative lists this criterion as #4. It states that the developer and its team have worked diligently to create a plan designed to meet the City's Master Plan, incorporating all of the elements important to City residents including public spaces, increased commercial development, and the continuation of the City's street grid pattern.

CWA Comments: *Regarding consistency with the Master Plan, please see our comments below.*

Constructing a residential project in this part of Northville does not in itself raise any concerns regarding health, safety and welfare. However, the proposed density could have significant impacts on traffic and traffic safety of surrounding residential neighborhoods. We defer evaluation of the Traffic Impact Study and proposed road network to the City Engineer.

In our previous review, we sited the condition of the pipe containing the underground river as a specific safety issue. Recently, a sink hole developed because the pipe failed after a large piece of equipment drove over it. The response states that the integrity of the pipe will be evaluated by a structure engineer, and load capacity assessed to ensure the integrity of the pipe. They will also prevent heavy construction equipment from driving over the pipe or use steel plating to prevent any safety issues. This situation will need to be assessed by the City Engineer.

Criterion No. 4: The proposed planned unit development shall not result in an unreasonable negative environmental impact or loss of a historic structure on the subject site or surrounding land.

The PUD narrative lists this as criterion #5. It states that the proposed project will not result in unreasonable negative environmental impact or loss of historical structures. It also states that the project will remove existing unsightly buildings, outdoor storage, overhead power lines and neglected parking lots associated with the current uses.

CWA Comments: *See our comments above regarding removal of existing site features.*

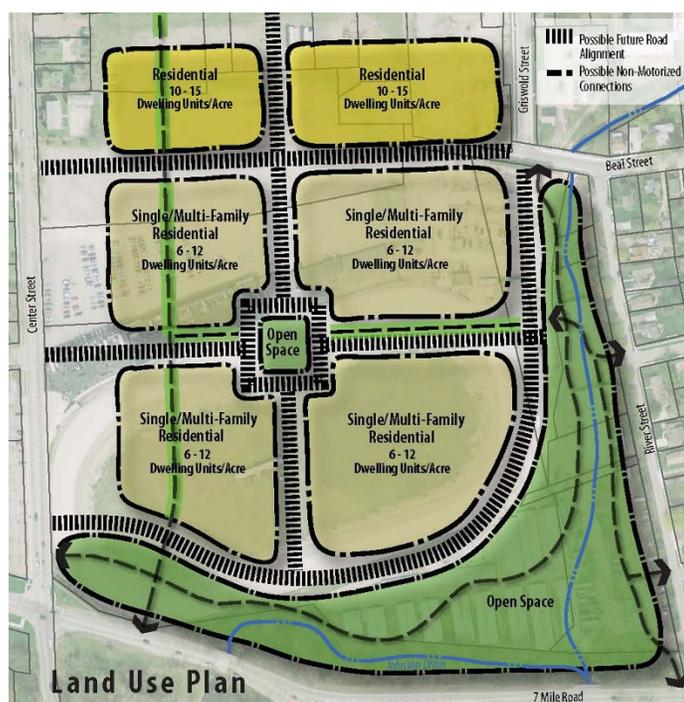
The applicant has replied to the possibility of daylighting the river earlier, and has determined that it is not a part of the proposed project. Their response also states that eliminating the 13 home sites along River Street also cannot happen, as they are a critical financial component to the success of the project.

We have retained our comments (starting on the next page) from our previous review to illustrate our analysis of this question.

The project sites have been cleared of most of their environmental features. However, the Middle Rouge River flows underneath the Downs property. The Master Plan describes daylighting the Rouge River as part of redeveloping the property as a goal, and is summarized as follows: "If feasible, the Middle Rouge River should be exposed and a greenway or riverfront pathway should be developed as a linear park. Floodplains/floodway areas should be retained as open space and available to the public with walking/biking pathways from downtown to Hines Drive."

The illustration of this goal is included in the City's Master Plan, and is provided below.

Figure 2 – City of Northville Sub Area Plan Update: Racetrack



The proposed park is a positive aspect of this plan. To create a park that is consistent with the Master Plan, we would recommend that the following modifications be considered:

1. Daylight the river. This is a significant goal in the City's Master Plan. In our opinion, it would be very unlikely that the river could ever be daylighted in the future if the proposed number of home sites and townhomes abutting the park are constructed. We understand that the park was designed to allow for 140-foot wide floodplain for future daylighting of the river. However, it is unlikely that new property owners abutting this area would agree to such a proposition.
2. Eliminate the 13 home sites along River Street. The location of the pipe containing the underground river is clearly illustrated on the plans. It shows that the river is in or directly abuts four of the lots proposed along River Street. The other lots border this feature. The safety of the pipe needs to be assured if the river isn't daylighted. Eliminating these homes sites would increase the likelihood of daylighting the river in the future if not done with this development. Thirdly, eliminating these home sites would increase the usable area of the park, and allow for more space for the farmer's

market. Fourthly, eliminating these home site would help to bring the project density more in line with the Master Plan (as discussed below).

Criterion No. 5: The proposed planned unit development shall not result in an unreasonable negative economic impact upon surrounding properties.

The PUD narrative lists this as criterion #6. It states that the proposed PUD will result in a significant positive economic impact in several areas:

- a) PUD Narrative: It will add high-quality housing units, increasing the value of the surrounding property values.

***CWA Comments:** The project will indeed add high-quality housing units to this part of the City. However, impacts to neighbors will need to be mitigated to ensure the functionality of the adjoining neighborhoods isn't negatively impacted.*

- b) PUD Narrative: It will add a stronger residential base in a short walking distance to the downtown commercial area, significantly increasing the use and support of the downtown merchants, restaurants and other commercial establishments.

***CWA Comments:** Agreed.*

- c) PUD Narrative: It will reduce the flood plain classification area benefiting other residential homeowners.

***CWA Comments:** We agree that redevelopment of the Northville Downs property will significantly reduce the current floodplain boundaries. As part of this project, the applicant has applied to FEMA for an amended floodplain boundary taking the existing topography into account.*

- d) PUD Narrative: It will significantly increase tax revenue to the City of Northville, public school district, Wayne County and DDA.

***CWA Comments:** The City Assessor will evaluate the Real Property Tax Revenue Analysis provided in the submission.*

- e) PUD Narrative: It will provide a wide mix of housing types to service the needs of existing and future Northville residents in an urban city environment.

***CWA Comments:** The mix of housing types (apartments, townhomes and single-family homes) is a positive aspect of this plan, and in line with the City's Master Plan.*

Overall, redevelopment in this part of Northville could have a positive economic impact on the surrounding properties as long as the development is in harmony with the surrounding area, and does not negatively impact the functioning of the area. The amount of new traffic

generated by the proposal, and its effect on surrounding neighborhood streets, will be assessed by the City Engineer once additional information has been provided. Our comments regarding density and conformance with the Master Plan are provided below.

Criterion No. 6: The proposed planned unit development shall be under single ownership and/or control such that there is a single person, corporation, or partnership having responsibility for completing the project in conformity with this Ordinance.

The PUD narrative lists this as criterion #7. It states that the PUD is being proposed by a single ownership entity and that the ultimate development will be governed by a development agreement between the City and the ownership.

***CWA Comments:** Given that there are a number of different companies involved in this project, the applicant should describe how this relationship will be formalized (corporation, partnership, etc.) to meet this criteria?*

Criterion No. 7. The proposed planned unit development shall be consistent with the Goals and Policies of the City of Northville Master Plan.

The PUD narrative lists this as criterion #8. It states that the PUD is consistent with the goals and policies of the Master Plan.

***CWA Comments:** For clarity, we have divided the project into three areas according to the Sub Areas found in the Master Plan: Cady Street (in blue), the Racetrack property (in yellow), and the S. Center Street area (in red). An illustration of the three areas is shown on the next page:*

Figure 3 – Subject Sites Showing Master Plan Sub Areas



A. Cady Street Area:

- The Master Plan shows “transitional/mixed-use commercial/residential” along Cady St. The project proposal indicates two small buildings with commercial on the first floor and one large apartment building with no commercial uses. While this configuration is mixed-use, only 18,700 square feet or 6% of the total floor space is dedicated to commercial uses. A balance needs to be created between extending commercial uses to this area without competing with the downtown. As mentioned below, we think the commercial uses along Cady St. could be expanded by adding a small commercial building (similar to the proposed buildings) at the corner of Cady and Griswold. (Note that the DDA’s Strategic Plan sheds light on the amount of commercial space the study area could absorb.) The applicant’s response to this comment is to site commercial feasibility evaluations conducted by retail experts, who state that 20,000 square feet of retail space is ideal to complement, and not compete, with the downtown.
- The Master Plan calls for reduction in density as you move from Cady Street south. The proposal shows the large apartment building spanning the area between Cady and Beal,

with a long and narrow apartment building on the Beal St. side of the parking structure. This configuration doesn't provide much of a transition between the highest density (apartment building), and the single-family homes on the south side of Beal. We understand that the topography isn't conducive to building townhomes in this area. However, the height of the apartment building could step down as it approaches Beal to provide a better transition. Note that the court yard provides some relief from the large apartment building mass along Beal St. Also note that the Racetrack Sub Area Plan in the Master Plan calls for three stories in this location.

- Along Cady St., the density is governed by the dimensional and form-based requirements. One dimensional requirement is parking. The need for a parking structure and 250+ space surface lot is, in our opinion, an indication that the density for the apartment use may be too high. However, the parking for 306 units, commercial use, and replacement parking for the City lot could be accommodated in a taller structure. If this could work, then the corner of Cady and Griswold could be opened up to accommodate a small commercial building, with a small parking lot behind. The applicant's response states that the surface lot is being kept open for additional development. The applicant should address what they had in mind, and why it's not part of this proposal. Also, if additional development is proposed, where will parking be located? The applicant's response also states that a taller parking structure is cost prohibitive, and that the corner of Griswold and Cady is needed to meet the parking requirement of the proposed multi-family/commercial uses.
- The Master Plan calls for locating parking behind buildings. The proposal shows a large surface lot at what we consider an important corner of this area (Cady & Griswold), which is contrary to this goal. As mentioned above, this corner could accommodate a small commercial building, with parking behind.
- We consider the parking structure a positive aspect of this plan, and would encourage consolidating most of the parking in the structure (vs. surface lots). Has underground parking been considered to take advantage of the topography?
- The renderings of the large apartment building show it at four stories tall. The accompanying write up describes this building between four and five stories. To qualify for a bonus fifth-floor, public amenities such as public plaza, public art, pedestrian connections, etc. need to be provided. While the linear park that is part of the overall plan could be determined to meet this standard, we would suggest that some type of public plaza be located along Cady Street.
- The Master Plan states that the height, scale and mass of the buildings along Cady St. are similar or compatible with surrounding existing buildings. Illustrations should be provided to show how the new buildings coordinate with the existing Cady Street streetscape.
- The architectural renderings of the apartment building, and the two mixed-use buildings provide elements stated in the Master Plan, such as generous window areas, recesses, projections and architectural details. However, it appears that the renderings illustrate commercial uses on the first floor of the apartment building. Is this being proposed? The applicant's response states that only the building west of Hutton Street will have first floor commercial.
- The Master Plan calls for extending City streets, and connecting pedestrians with the downtown. This proposal extends Hutton St. south, and Beal Street west to complete the existing street grid, which is positive. The proposal also provides a pedestrian connection to the downtown (although offset from the existing pedestrian connection).

B Racetrack Area:

- This review has thoroughly discussed the Master Plan goal for daylighting the Rouge River.
- Regarding the uses, the Master Plan calls for a mix of single-family and multi-family residential densities decreasing in intensity from the north and west portions of the property. The portion south of Beal Street is identified as 6-12 dwelling units per acre. Section 20.02 of the PUD Ordinance states that density is calculated exclusive of road rights-of-way. We have included a table that compares the proposed density and the density permitted in zoning districts for similar residential land uses. These comparisons will provide a basis against which to evaluate the proposed density.

Residential Type	Proposed Density (Per Plans)	Proposed Density - Using PUD Density Standard (Excludes ROW) ¹	Estimated Permitted Density: R-4 ²	Estimated Permitted Density: R-3 ³	Permitted Density: R-1B ⁴
Apartments (306 units)	32 units/ acre (9.5 ac.)	27 units/ acre (11.19 ac.)			
Townhomes (222 units)	11.9 units/ acre (18.6 ac.)	13.6 units/ acre (16.35 ac.)		5 units/ acre (27 "rooms"/ acre)	
Single-Family Dwellings (49 units)	4.3 units/ acre (11.2 ac.)	4.6 units/ acre (10.7 ac.)			6 units/ acre
Total (577 units)	577 / 48.12 ac. = 11.9 units/ acre	577 / 38.24 ac. = 15 units/ acre			

¹Acres for the park (6.3) and detention basin (2.3) has been evenly divided between the three residential types.

²Density in the R-4 District is determined through setback, height, and parking limitations. A comparison figure cannot be calculated using the information provided.

³The applicant's response states that 80% of the townhomes will be limited to 3 bedrooms and the remaining townhomes limited to 4 bedrooms.

⁴Density for single-family residential units is calculated by using a minimum lot size of 7,200 s.f.

The comparison in the table above against the ordinance requirements for R-3, R-4 and R-1B are informative, but the vision for this part of the City is better illustrated, in our opinion, in the Master Plan. The Master Plan calls for higher density along Cady St., and decreased density as you move south to 7 Mile Road, but higher densities overall.

The table above shows that the plans indicate an overall density of 11.9 units to the acre. However, the PUD Density Standards (and R-3 Density Standard) specifically exclude public road rights-of-way from the land area portion of the calculation. Therefore, excluding the road rights-of-way results in an overall density of 15 units to the acre across the entire site.

In our opinion, the density is slightly higher than intended. We would suggest the following be considered:

1. Eliminate the 13 single-family home sites along River Street to increase the park area, improve the ability to daylight the Rouge River, and provide more space for the farmer's market.
 2. Eliminate some of the townhomes on either side of the pocket park at the terminus of Hutton St. to increase the width of this public area.
 3. Eliminate some of the townhomes along S. Center St. (east side) to increase the distance between buildings facing north/south and those facing east/west (i.e. reduce buildings 41 and 42 by one unit each; reduce buildings 9 and 15 by one unit each).
 4. Change the townhomes on the west side of S. Center St. from five townhomes to two single-family homes to create a more consistent development pattern in this area. (Note: The South Center Street Sub Area Plan states that redevelopment must be sensitive to surrounding residential areas west of Center St.)
 5. Reduce the number of townhomes on the farmer's market property (at S. Center/ 7 Mile intersection) to provide usable greenspace.
- Heights are listed at up to three-stories on the north side of Beal Street, and 2.5 stories south of Beal St. South of Beal, the proposed single-family homes are shown at 2 – 2.5 stories, and the townhomes are shown at 3 stories. The townhome designs will be limited to three- and four-bedroom styles, which could add to parking needs. Limiting height could also help to reduce the number of vehicles using each townhome. The Planning Commission will need to determine if the three-story townhomes are a desired deviation.
 - The proposed grid road layout is consistent with the Master Plan.
 - We consider the pocket park terminus of Hutton Street a positive aspect of the plan, and addressing the "central square" idea in the Master Plan. Widening the pocket park would improve it.
 - Single-family home designs are more "suburban" in that they all have front-facing attached garages rather than a detached garage, which is more indicative of Northville's traditional pattern. The applicant's response states that attached garages are proposed due to popularity of design and marketability of this product.
 - The Racetrack Sub Area Plan also calls for a walking/biking connections from Hines Drive to the downtown. This is consistent with the City's 2014 Non- Motorized Plan, which

shows a pedestrian crossing at 7 Mile/River Street, as well as a sidewalk along the north side of 7 Mile Road. The proposal provides a walking path through the linear park that ends at River St./7 Mile Road, but doesn't provide a crossing or propose any pedestrian improvements along 7 Mile Road.

The applicant's response states that over half of the proposed apartment units are studios and one-bedroom units with average size less than 1,000 square feet. We consider this a positive aspect of the proposal, as it provides a different housing product for the City. We appreciate the other options that the applicant describes that could result in higher densities, the Master Plan calls for a mix of housing units, and an all-townhouse project would not be consistent with the Master Plan.

C. S. Center Street Area:

- *The Master Plan calls for 10-15 residential dwelling units on the west side of S. Center Street. We consider townhomes appropriate here. The proposal also locates the townhomes facing S. Center Street, and within the desired 10-20 foot setback.*
- *The Master Plan calls for heights of 2.5 stories; the townhomes are proposed at 3 stories. This deviation will need to be considered by the Planning Commission.*
- *The Master Plan calls for continuing the farmer's market at its current location until an alternative location is found. This proposal includes an alternative location. See our comments regarding the farmer's market above.*
- *As stated in the Master Plan, parking for the townhomes is located in the rear of the buildings, and screened from view of the street.*
- *An entryway plaza or feature is called for at the corner of S. Center Street and 7 Mile. The plans indicate a corner gateway. This gateway could welcome visitors into the City or Northville, as well as include some type of historic recognition of the role Northville Downs Racetrack has played in the City's development.*

Criterion No. 8. The proposed use or uses shall be of such location, size, density and character as to be in harmony with the zoning district in which it is situated, and shall not be detrimental to the adjoining zoning districts.

The PUD narrative lists this criterion as #9. It states that the proposed uses are consistent and complimentary to the adjoining zoning districts, and great care has gone into the design, which is of benefit to the adjacent uses and natural features of the surrounding properties.

CWA Comments: *A Planned Unit Development rezones property to "PUD" in an effort to accomplish a better development than either the underlying zoning would allow, or that straight zoning of another district would allow without deviations.*

In the Cady Street area, the underlying zoning is mixed (Central Business District (CBD), Cady Street Overlay District (CSO), and Racetrack District (RTD)). The Cady Street Overlay District does allow mixed-used (commercial/office/residential) buildings to create a more urban character that has a dynamic pedestrian environment. We consider the proposed use to generally be in harmony with the CSO; although modifications to the density, amount of commercial space, and other issues listed above should be considered.

In the Racetrack area, the underlying zoning is Racetrack District. This district does not permit residential development. However, the Master Plan calls for this type of development, and provides guidance as to the configuration and density of such development. As mentioned above, we have discussed a number of issues that should be addressed to ensure that the development is the right scale and intensity to be in harmony with adjoining land uses.

In the S. Center Street area, the underlying zoning is Racetrack District on the east side of Center St. and on the farmer’s market property. The underlying zoning of the mid-block parcels further north is R-2, Second Density Residential District. Comments regarding density in all of these areas have been provided above. We believe reducing the density as described will help to harmonize the new development with existing conditions.

Criterion No. 9. The planned unit development is not proposed in an attempt by the applicant to circumvent the strict application of zoning standards.

The PUD narrative lists this criterion as #10. It states that the PUD is not proposing to circumvent the zoning standards and has been designed with those standards in mind, consistent with the Master Plan.

***CWA Comment:** While we haven’t reviewed the plans as if this were a site plan review, the project is proposing deviations from the zoning ordinance in exchange for various public features. The PUD process is used to determine if the deviations are justified by the development and public benefits offered.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

The complexity and importance of this project demands careful consideration of this proposal. We have asked many questions in this review, and have also left evaluation of technical issues, such as utilities, to other professions. Once additional information is obtained, it will be possible to provide more complete comments.

Our overall impression of the proposal is that the development team has made a concerted effort to understand and implement the Master Plan vision. No doubt any redevelopment of the Racetrack property will have an influence on neighbors, and the City as a whole. Regarding this proposal, while there are a number of positive features, the density is slightly higher than envisioned by the Master Plan, and as calculated using the PUD standards in the zoning ordinance. While it appears that a solution to the traffic issues at Sheldon/Center St. can be addressed, the developer and Wayne County need to study and consider this solution. Additional information is also needed for traffic impacts at the 7 Mile Road and Northville Road intersection, and the 7 Mile Road and S. Main Street intersection. The applicant will also need to evaluate and respond to the Utility Master Plan. Lastly, the question of ownership of the project, and ultimate responsibility for completing it has not been answered.

At this time, we don’t consider the proposal to meet all of the PUD eligibility criteria.

The Downs PUD
September 12, 2018

The main issues, as we see them, include:

- A. Residential density.
- B. Traffic.
- C. Cady Street development pattern.
- D. Daylighting the Rouge River.


CARLISLE/WORTMAN ASSOC., INC.
Sally M. Elmiger, AICP, LEED AP
Principal

153-1801

cc: Pat Sullivan, City Manager
Shari Allen, Building Department
Brent Strong, Building Official
Lloyd Cureton, DPW Director