

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES, IL
PLAN COMMISSION
TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2026**

Members Present: Peter Vargulich
Zachary Ewoldt
Jeffrey Funke
Gary Gruber
John Fitzgerald
Cory Jones
Rita Payleitner

Members Absent: Colleen Wiese

Also Present: Ellen Johnson, Planner II
Bruce Sylvester, Assistant Director CD-Planning & Engineering
Court Reporter

1. Call to order

Chair Vargulich called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Chair Vargulich called the roll. A quorum was present.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Presentation of minutes of the February 3, 2026 meeting of the Plan Commission

Motion was made by Mr. Funke, second by Mr. Fitzgerald and unanimously passed by voice vote to approve the minutes of the February 3, 2026 Plan Commission meeting.

5. Traditions of St. Charles / Springs at 38 West, Bricher Commons PUD (Leo Brown Group)
Application for Concept Plan

The attached transcript prepared by Planet Depos Court Reporting is by reference hereby made a part of these minutes.

6. 7 Brew Coffee, Part of Lot 7, Prairie Centre PUD (Who Brew IL III, LLC)
Application for PUD Preliminary Plan
Application for Minor Subdivision – Final Plat

The attached transcript prepared by Planet Depos Court Reporting is by reference hereby made a part of these minutes.

Motion was made by Mr. Funke, second by Mr. Fitzgerald, to recommend approval of an Application for PUD Preliminary Plan and an Application for Minor Subdivision-Final Plat for 7 Brew Coffee, Part of Lot 7, Prairie Centre PUD, subject to resolution of all staff comments.

Roll call vote:

Ayes: Ewoldt, Funke, Gruber, Fitzgerald, Jones, Payleitner, Vargulich

Nays: None

Absent: Wiese

Motion carried: 7-0

- 7. Public Comment - None**
- 8. Additional Business from Plan Commission Members or Staff**
- 9. Weekly Development Report**
- 10. Meeting Announcements**
 - a. Plan Commission
 - Tuesday, March 17, 2026 at 7:00pm Council Chambers
 - Tuesday, April 7, 2026 at 7:00pm Council Chambers
 - Tuesday, April 21, 2026 at 7:00pm Council Chambers
 - b. Committee of the Whole
 - Monday, March 16, 2026 at 7:00pm Council Chambers
 - Monday, April 6, 2026 at 7:00pm Council Chambers
- 11. Adjournment at 8:22 p.m.**



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Transcript of St. Charles Plan Commission

Date: March 3, 2026

Case: St. Charles Plan Commission

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CITY OF ST. CHARLES PLAN COMMISSION

PO #115733

TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING

St. Charles, Illinois

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

7:00 p.m. CST

Job: 611771

Pages: 1 - 73

Transcribed by: Sheila Martin

Transcript of St. Charles Plan Commission
Conducted on March 3, 2026

1 Report of proceedings of the St. Charles Plan
2 Commission, held at the location of:

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ST. CHARLES CITY HALL

6

2 East Main Street

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St. Charles, Illinois 60174

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(630) 377-4400

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Pursuant to agreement, before Lawrence Wallace,
13 AAERT CER, in and for the State of Illinois.

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A P P E A R A N C E S

PRESENT:

PETER VARGULICH, Chairman

JEFFREY FUNKE, Member

DAVID ROSENBERG, Member

ZACHARY EWOLDT, Member

GINA LAWSON, Member

GARY GRUBER, Member

RITA PAYLEITNER, Member

CORY JONES, Member

ELLEN JOHNSON, Planning

BRUCE SYLVESTER, Assistant Director-Community
Development P&E

Transcript of St. Charles Plan Commission
Conducted on March 3, 2026

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P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIR VARGULICH: Good evening. St. Charles Plan Commission, again, call to order. Colleen Wiese? Zack Ewoldt?

COMMISSIONER EWOLDT: Here.

CHAIR VARGULICH: Jeff Funke?

COMMISSIONER FUNKE: Here.

CHAIR VARGULICH: Gary Gruber?

COMMISSIONER GRUBER: Here.

CHAIR VARGULICH: John Fitzgerald?

COMMISSIONER FITZGERALD: Here.

CHAIR VARGULICH: Cory Jones?

COMMISSIONER JONES: Here.

CHAIR VARGULICH: Rita Payleitner?

COMMISSIONER PAYLEITNER: Here.

CHAIR VARGULICH: And I'd just like to acknowledge today is Mr. Jones' first meeting so thank you for joining us, and we'll appreciate all of your input as it relates to our community. I'd like to have Pledge of Allegiance, please.

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Transcript of St. Charles Plan Commission
Conducted on March 3, 2026

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1 CHAIR VARGULICH: Thank you. Presentation
2 of the meeting minutes from our February 3rd meeting.
3 Is there a motion to approve?

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'll make a motion.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

7 CHAIR VARGULICH: Motion second. All in
8 favor?

9 MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

10 CHAIR VARGULICH: Opposed? Motion passes.
11 Item five, Traditions of St. Charles/Springs at 38
12 West. This is a concept plan submitted by Leo Brown
13 Group and Bricher Commons PUD property.

14 The purpose of our plan -- concept plan, is
15 to review and allow the applicant to obtain informal
16 input on conceptual development prior to filing the
17 formal applications and preparing all the detailed
18 drawings.

19 The concept plan process also serves as a
20 forum for citizens and neighboring property owners to
21 ask questions and express their views on this potential
22 project. The procedure for tonight will be to start
23 with staff comments followed by applicant's
24 presentation, and then we'll have the Plan Commission

1 ask questions, if they have.

2 Then members of the public, if they wish to
3 speak, will be given a chance, and then finally, Plan
4 Commission members after all of that, will provide
5 final feedback. The Plan Commission does not take any
6 action to approve or deny the project at this stage.
7 After this meeting, the concept plan will be discussed
8 at the City Council Committee of the Whole on Monday
9 the 16th.

10 If the applicant decides to pursue the
11 project, zoning applications will need to be filed and
12 a public hearing will be held, and notice will be
13 provided to adjacent property owners. If anyone wishes
14 to speak, please be recognized by me, then stand at the
15 lectern, state your name, spell your last name, and
16 state your address for the record. Staff. Thank you.

17 MS. JOHNSON: This item is a concept plan
18 for the 29-acre property known as Bricher Commons
19 located on the south side, Route 38, west of the Meijer
20 store. The concept plan -- plan has been submitted by
21 Leo Brown Group, proposed as a two-part development
22 consisting of a senior living facility called
23 Traditions of St. Charles and a multifamily apartment
24 community called Springs at 38 West.

Transcript of St. Charles Plan Commission
Conducted on March 3, 2026

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1 The property is zoned BR, regional business,
2 and is within the Bricher Commons PUD. If the
3 developer decides to move forward after concept review,
4 applications for zoning map amendment, special use for
5 PUD, and PUD preliminary plan will need to be submitted
6 to entitle the project. I will now turn it over to the
7 applicant for their presentation.

8 CHAIR VARGULICH: Thank you.

9 MR. DEMPSEY: Good evening. My name is
10 Austin Dempsey, that's D-E-M-P-S-E-Y. Address 140 1st
11 Street in Batavia, Illinois. And I'm honored to be
12 here tonight, especially for your first meeting.
13 There's a very famous saying, and I think we've all
14 heard of it, if at first you don't succeed, try, try
15 again, correct?

16 Well, for over 30 years, our family has been
17 part of the representation group of the unlikely
18 ownership for this property. And in that period of
19 time, there have been probably nearly a dozen or so
20 attempts at developing the 29-acre parcel that we're
21 discussing here this evening.

22 Two that were mentioned in the staff
23 comments was the 2006 initiative by then partner
24 Lifetime Fitness where they tried to develop the 250

1 residential site -- 250 residential housing units on
2 the site. And actually, that's a good story because
3 part of what we're going to be seeking here is the
4 unwinding of a PUD for a project that never happened in
5 2006.

6 And then most recently, in front of this
7 commission, was the Lennar Canterra development, one of
8 the nation's largest homebuilders who took a shot at
9 this project with nearly 400 apartments on the site,
10 only to have to pull the proposal and walk away due to
11 high development costs and market conditions.

12 An unfortunate -- the unfortunate reality,
13 like everything else in life, development is getting
14 more difficult and more expensive. And our next
15 applicant, my good friend John here from Kensington,
16 will probably concur with that.

17 But for this project, you know, when we --
18 when we have had so many projects come to the table and
19 -- and not move forward, we decided we wanted to try
20 something different. We took a different tact. We met
21 with the mayor and Derek Conley right here, actually
22 downstairs in the mayor's office. And we asked, what
23 -- what do you want to see on this site? How do you
24 want to see this site developed?

1 And I'm paraphrasing, but generally
2 speaking, it was, we're looking for a mix of
3 residential uses that are complementary to the
4 surrounding development. But one thing that really
5 kind of stuck was, we want to try to have a development
6 that brings forward residential housing across the
7 board that -- that helps all of our St. Charles
8 residents.

9 And that's why I'm very excited because the
10 project that we're proposing tonight accomplishes this
11 goal by developing a 29-acre campus that supports
12 independent lifestyles while providing specialty care
13 and housing for all of our St. Charles residents.
14 Especially with the senior component, the residents who
15 are St. Charles residents that want to remain in their
16 community in -- and age in place.

17 Why is this going to be different than any
18 project that has come before this group before,
19 especially most recently one of the largest -- nation's
20 largest home builders? Well, it's because, like all
21 things, our industry, real estate development, is
22 evolving. It continues to evolve.

23 We recently participated in a development in
24 (indiscernible) where we brought three different

1 independent builders together, all bringing their
2 special niche to the property to be able to do
3 something and share the cost to -- to basically make a
4 development that would normally be impossible possible.

5 And tonight, the team that we've assembled
6 is using that same model. We have two developers with
7 us, both of whom are gold standards in their industry.
8 The first developer, Leo Brown Group, are exceptional
9 developers of senior housing and skilled care.

10 While this is their first project in St.
11 Charles, they completed an amazing skilled nursing
12 facility in Batavia last year and had an amazing grand
13 opening. They're represented here this evening by
14 Kevin See, a managing director and partner, as well as
15 Chris King, Leo Brown's chief financial officer. Also
16 tonight, we have Brett Duffy, an engineer from ShopCo
17 -- SPACECO.

18 And the second developer is Continental
19 Properties, whom you're very familiar with. They have
20 a successful award-winning project on the east side of
21 St. Charles. This national builder is represented here
22 with members of their team: Demi Kloch, John Gussie
23 (phonetic), and their director of development, Jen
24 Patton, who is here to dive into the design of this

Transcript of St. Charles Plan Commission
Conducted on March 3, 2026

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1 thoughtfully planned community. Jen.

2 MS. PATTON: Good evening, Commissioners.

3 CHAIR VARGULICH: Good evening.

4 MS. PATTON: Thank you for having us here
5 tonight, and thank you, Austin. My name is Jen Patton.
6 I'm development director with Continental Properties.
7 Last name P-A-T-T-O-N. Our address is W134N8675
8 Executive Parkway, Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin. And I'm
9 going move to the next slide here? Do I just click it?

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You should be able to
11 just click the corner or use the arrows.

12 MS. PATTON: All right. I'm going to start
13 off tonight. Most of you are familiar with Continental
14 Properties, as we do have our sister community here,
15 Springs and St. Charles off of Smith Road. A brief
16 Continental experience and who we are.

17 National multi-family developer, owner, and
18 operator. We have 139 developed communities
19 nationally, 38,000 homes built to date in 20 states.
20 3,900 of those homes are here in Illinois either under
21 construction, near lease up, or stabilized. Chicago is
22 our largest market in our portfolio. All of our
23 projects are conventionally financed with private
24 equity partners.

1 The map on the left shows 14 of our Illinois
2 communities that are stabilized, under construction, or
3 near lease up. Springs and St. Charles on the list on
4 the right. Three hundred and twenty units in that
5 community started in 2022 and we're happy to say is now
6 fully stabilized.

7 A few other communities in our Illinois
8 portfolio to note are some communities currently under
9 construction. We have our Springs at Lake Cook
10 Crossing in Deerfield. Springs at Mundelein. Springs
11 at Aurora, and Springs at Lockport.

12 A brief overview of the property details.
13 The community -- or the Continental Property parcel is
14 22.2 acres. We have a stormwater outlot that will be
15 retained by Continental with shared maintenance
16 agreement with the Traditions property and Leo Brown
17 Group.

18 The lot is currently vacant farmed land,
19 zoned BR, regional district. The primary access for
20 the Continental property in Springs community is off of
21 Illinois Route 38. We have accessed the easement
22 agreement just south of Metro Self Storage.

23 Getting into some of the details of the site
24 plan, this site consists of 14 residential buildings.

1 We have two three-story buildings, which are 33 units
2 each, and 12 two-story buildings 20 units each totaling
3 306 homes. We have been offering service parking,
4 attached garages, and detached garages totaling 569
5 total parking stalls and 1.86 stalls per -- per home
6 ratio.

7 Amenities on site include a 4,600 square
8 foot clubhouse with resort-style pool. One of our
9 newer amenities that we are providing here and
10 proposing here is a multipurpose sport court for
11 pickleball or other activities. We have two pet
12 playgrounds.

13 Our grounds building, which houses our car
14 care center, and also a pet wash there and a parcel
15 package room for residents who receive packages, our
16 trash enclosure with compactor, and then the detention
17 you can see off on the southwest end of the site.

18 Site circulation, as you can see highlighted
19 in yellow, we have a robust network of sidewalk and
20 pedestrian connectivity throughout the community. The
21 number one indicates our new full movement access point
22 proposed along Illinois Route 38 which will require
23 IDOT approval. The two is for the Springs community
24 access south of the Metro Self Storage and that is

1 within an existing access easement.

2 Three is our gated entry to the Springs.

3 Much like our Springs at St. Charles, we are proposing
4 for this community to be gated. But as we did in the
5 PUD for Springs at St. Charles, we're looking at
6 providing concessions to keep those gates open for
7 specific periods of time through the day.

8 And then our emergency only access on the
9 north end between the Continental property and the
10 Traditions property.

11 This is some photographs of some of our two
12 and three-story buildings to give an idea of the
13 different color palettes that we offer throughout our
14 Springs communities. You can see we have private
15 patios and balconies, a lot of large windows for
16 natural light.

17 Materials would be Hardie board,
18 cementitious siding, board and batten, and you can see
19 we have an undulating facade here in our elevations.
20 Interior design we have 28 studios here, 124 one and
21 two bedroom units, and then 33 bedrooms with the square
22 footages shown in the boxes in the middle.

23 Some photographs on the right to show some
24 photos of our interiors. Some of the key design

1 elements for our interiors, private and semi-private
2 entries. Private balconies and patios. All of our
3 units have in-unit washers and dryers with high
4 efficiency or high efficiency and energy efficiency
5 appliances, open concept plans and ample closet space.

6 Community amenities, I mentioned some of
7 these when I was talking through the site plan. But in
8 addition to the spacious clubhouse, we do have a 24-
9 hour fitness center. Our clubhouse houses a coffee
10 bar, an indoor cafe area. We have our pickleball and
11 multipurpose sport court here, a resort style pool with
12 sun deck. The sun deck also has outdoor grills for
13 residents to use.

14 Our clubhouse is available for residents to
15 reserve for their own personal and private events with
16 our operations and property management team, and then
17 our leash free pet parks.

18 Our car care center offers an amenity to
19 residents where they can go and wash and vacuum out
20 their car. There is also a pet wash station there so
21 residents can give their dogs a bath and not have to do
22 that in their residential units.

23 These are some photos of our community
24 amenities. The photo to the -- just to the right of

1 the Springs box, that's our grounds care -- grounds
2 building, car care center, fitness center, clubhouse,
3 and then our pool.

4 In conclusion, just a few of the community
5 benefits we feel that the Springs at 38 West will bring
6 to the City of St. Charles. Approximately \$85 million
7 in total investment into the city. Hundreds of
8 construction jobs and permanent jobs. Significant
9 ongoing property tax revenue to the city. Three
10 hundred and six new rental homes serving young
11 professionals.

12 Twenty -- I'm sorry, 40 to 50 percent of our
13 residents are young professionals ages 20 to 34. We
14 have an empty -- empty nester -- empty nesters, and
15 then those who are looking to downsize seeking
16 maintenance free living. We feel our communities
17 attract high income residents with disposable and
18 spending power.

19 We look forward to our residents continuing
20 to support the retail here in St. Charles and
21 continuing our partnership with you all. With that, I
22 will be here for questions, and then I will open it up
23 to our partners from Leo Brown to finalize the rest of
24 this presentation.

Transcript of St. Charles Plan Commission
Conducted on March 3, 2026

17

1 CHAIR VARGULICH: Thank you.

2 MR. KING: Hi, I'm Chris King with Leo Brown
3 Group. I'm our CFO, last name King, K-I-N-G. Our
4 address is 12411 North Pennsylvania Street, Carmel,
5 Indiana, Suite 300. Today we're here to talk about our
6 senior living community that we're working on in St.
7 Charles called Traditions of St. Charles.

8 Leo Brown Group is based in Carmel, Indiana,
9 a northern suburb of Indianapolis. We've been around
10 for 20 years focused primarily on senior living,
11 multifamily housing, and skilled nursing development.
12 We're a vertically integrated company, so we not only
13 develop but we also construct and manage our
14 communities. We have about 1,600 employees across our
15 25 communities that we operate today.

16 Although we have no experience operating in
17 Illinois to date, we have developed two other recent
18 projects in Illinois, including the Ignite Medical
19 Resort in Batavia, which just opened last year.

20 Here's a map of our current communities. We
21 obviously have a heavy regional presence in Indiana,
22 Ohio, and Michigan, and we're excited to expand into
23 Illinois as our next growth market. This is an
24 operationally intensive business, so having scale in a

1 -- in a state and a market is important to our team.

2 We came across the St. Charles market while
3 working on the Batavia project. Obviously, it's an
4 excellent city and we're excited to be a part of it.
5 We had an (indiscernible) study in July, and it noted
6 that there's been a 22 percent increase in those over
7 75 between now and 2030 which is a staggering growth
8 rate. The study indicated we need about 100 more
9 independent living units, 300 more assisted living
10 units, and 92 more memory care units to support the
11 growing demands that the community was going to expect.

12 Here is a site plan of what we are proposing
13 to be constructed. This is in line with our typical
14 community style with a full continuum of care, age, and
15 place communities. We're offering independent living,
16 assisted living, and memory care all in the same
17 community. So if someone moves in, they can expect to
18 stay there for the remainder of their life or until
19 they wish to leave.

20 As you can see, the independent living is
21 near the front of the site with a three-story
22 component, and that will be a mix of one and two
23 bedroom units. The common amenity space is connected
24 to all three wings of the building as well as there's a

1 kitchen.

2 In the middle area, assisted living is
3 predominantly in one-bedroom units but we will also
4 offer studio and two-bedroom units that have different
5 lifestyle spaces for individuals. And then the memory
6 care will be contained in a secure, safe unit that will
7 offer activities and meals. And overall, we're going
8 to have 69 independent living units, 64 assisted
9 living, and 34 memory care units on our 7.3-acre parcel
10 of the site.

11 We really like the proximity to the retail
12 here as seniors typically don't like to drive very far,
13 so it's a nice feature being that close to the Meijer.
14 It'll be safer for the community overall, and for
15 visitors as well. Usually when mom and dad are out or
16 the kids are out shopping, they want to pop by and see
17 mom and dad. It's convenient when it's near a larger
18 shopping center.

19 Here are some illustrations or images of
20 some of our communities that we've developed, just to
21 give you an idea of the quality of our buildings. A
22 lot of brick, a lot of hardy plank, and masonry
23 throughout focused on nice design, but it's built to
24 the community, so we usually tailor those finishes to

1 meet the local character of the community we're
2 building in.

3 This page, displaying the interiors of some
4 of our recently completed projects. We expect similar
5 finish here. Ample amenity space and common space, as
6 you'd expect, as we're trying to engage seniors and get
7 them out of their units. It's probably one of our
8 biggest features. Typically, it's about 25 percent of
9 our community will be common space.

10 The community will offer 24-hour nurse
11 staffing. It will be staffed 24/7. About 65 full-time
12 employees will be on-site throughout the day. We'll
13 have an emergency call system for all units, including
14 the independent living.

15 There will be transportation, multiple
16 dining options with a full-service kitchen,
17 housekeeping staff on-site, a full array of activities
18 and entertainment, a fitness center, a salon. The list
19 goes on. But overall, very high-end classy community
20 offering a wide variety of services to the residents.

21 And in conclusion, why does the community
22 benefit here? We're talking about a \$50 million
23 construction project creating a workplace that will
24 employ roughly 60 to 70 employees, full-time employees,

1 with a payroll of around three and a half million
2 dollars.

3 This will serve your existing community of
4 your aging seniors allowing them to stay in the
5 community versus having to leave and find senior
6 housing elsewhere. That population group is going to
7 grow by 55 percent in the next decade and over 100
8 percent by 2050.

9 It will benefit the working adult children
10 in your community so that they're able to continue to
11 work versus staying at home and taking care of loved
12 ones. And it'll also be paying property taxes into the
13 state, or into the municipality as well, and creating a
14 great community for the city of St. Charles. I will
15 open it up to any questions anyone has.

16 CHAIR VARGULICH: All right. Thank you very
17 much.

18 MR. KING: Okay.

19 CHAIR VARGULICH: So commissioners?

20 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: Yeah, I -- I -- I --
21 I've got some -- yeah, I've got some questions.
22 Regarding both -- are both developments separate? Are
23 you going to have a fence around the -- the senior
24 center, or are they going to be incorporated as far as

1 utilizing the -- the existing -- you know, the ~~◆~~ the
2 amenities?

3 MS. PATTON: I can start. The fence around
4 the Springs community would be independent of that --
5 of that community, so it wouldn't be included with the
6 Traditions site.


7 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: So -- so both
8 properties would be separated by a fence; is that
9 correct?

10 MR. SEE: I'd like to make the introduction.
11 I'm Kevin See. Spell the last name S-E-E
12 (indiscernible). I guess by -- by default, I wouldn't
13 say the Traditions will be fenced in. The Continental
14 project will probably have a fence.

15 We'll just have controlled access with the
16 -- with the noted gig that was -- that Jen noted on the
17 plan just to kind of have -- avoid through traffic from
18 east-west along 38 there. But there will be a combined
19 main entrance with an option for access to Traditions
20 or -- or onto Continental, onto the Springs projects.
21 Our -- our community is fully fenced in. We'll have --
22 our memory care unit will have an outdoor fenced area,
23 so.

24 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: Okay. Another question

1 I have is, you know, I see you have sidewalks. I mean,
2 they seem pretty rigid around the -- the community.
3 I'm just wondering, is there a way that we can, you
4 know, incorporate some sort of nature trails or
5 whatever if you have retention on the south side and,
6 you know, I don't see any -- any pathways in that area
7 or landscaping.

8 I know this is a conceptual plan but I
9 guess, you know, you have -- obviously, you're -
10 you're concentrating on -- you've got two -- two dog
11 parks, I think. And I guess the question is, how --
12 how would you access these parks? And is it possible
13 to have, you know, just public parks, you know? And if
14 you can, create, you know, a pathway that incorporates
15 all the green space around the property.

16 MS. PATTON: Sure. So the -- the parks that
17 are within the -- and the amenities within the property
18 are private for the residents, and that is an amenity
19 that they do come to appreciate.

20 As far as the nature paths, the detention
21 pond itself, there's some pretty significant grading
22 back there in order to put -- from what we understand
23 from our engineers, in order to put a pedestrian path
24 around that, it wouldn't be able to be ADA accessible.

1 We are looking at working with some partners
2 on how we may manage some off-site park dedication but
3 we will be speaking with the park district on some of
4 those details. But the -- the open space that is
5 currently shown on the Springs site is private for the
6 residents.

7 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: Yeah, and I guess my
8 question is, it's just connecting all these green
9 spaces that you have. If there's a way to -- you know,
10 you have a lot of sidewalks and things but it seems
11 like they're disconnected. And, you know, if you're
12 walking your pets, you know, you're going to have to
13 walk on the street or what have you to get to these dog
14 parks.

15 I'm just wondering if there's a better way
16 that you can create pathways around the community to --
17 to connect these -- these parks and, you know, to
18 create these accessible spaces. Just something to look
19 at.

20 MS. PATTON: Sure.

21 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: The other question I
22 have is, on the south side, on the southeast side,
23 you're -- you're calling for a future connection. Can
24 you tell me a little bit about what's going on there?

1 MS. PATTON: We can. So we are currently
2 showing potential future connection for emergency
3 access to the rear end of the Meijer (indiscernible)
4 parcel as well as to Prairie Winds. There's ongoing
5 communication going on with both of those parties to
6 see if that's something that they would be open to, but
7 we would need to have a cross-access easement agreement
8 with them in order to provide those access points.

9 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: Then my last question
10 is the -- the entrance to the community, I mean, it
11 seems like it's somewhat awkward, you know, behind the
12 self-storage. Is there another way that you can create
13 an entrance off of Route 38? Have you looked at that?

14 MS. PATTON: So that would require IDOT
15 approval. I don't know that they would allow two
16 access points that close in proximity to one another.

17 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: My question is -- I
18 mean, I don't know if your engineer has looked into
19 that drive just south of the self-storage. I mean, can
20 that accommodate all the traffic that you have going
21 into the -- into the development?

22 MR. DEMPSEY: We have an entry proposed off
23 of Route 38 right here that lines up with the access
24 point directly across the street.

1 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: Okay.

2 MR. DEMPSEY: It's hard to see on the print
3 because you see the Route 38 Lincoln Highway there. So
4 we have a proposed full access along 38 plus and
5 already the access point here. So we do have, you
6 know, double and redundant access into the site.

7 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: Okay. So that would be
8 -- that would be used by both developments then?

9 MR. DEMPSEY: Yes, both developments would
10 share both of those access points. And as was
11 mentioned early -- previously, you know, any of our,
12 you know, southeastern access points here would be for
13 emergency access only.

14 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: Okay. That's all I
15 have. Thanks.

16 COMMISSIONER EWOLDT: I have a few comments
17 or questions. First being, I think Mr. Dempsey is
18 correct that this site has had some difficulties. You
19 know, it's currently zoned commercial. We recently --
20 most of the commissioner here I think were present for
21 the Lennar product.

22 I personally feel that this is a better site
23 plan than that -- that project proposed. I'm -- I'm
24 supportive of this being considered for residential use

1 whether it be for market, for sale, or rental, it
2 doesn't matter to me.

3 I -- I -- I do find the -- the senior
4 housing aspect and the apartment complex aspect of it
5 to be complementary. I think it is appropriate for the
6 overall area with Meijer, Jewel-Osco, and a lot of our
7 other commercial NCs right there.

8 So putting housing stock close by for both
9 parties, it -- it will prevent future driving trips.
10 In theory, people could walk to those or it's just a
11 short drive. So overall, I am supportive of -- of the
12 concept. I do like the architecture of both of them.

13 My one constructive criticism would be for
14 the Continental Property Springs portion. I'd like to
15 see a little bit of anti-monotony, meaning two to three
16 color palettes for buildings. That's one thing between
17 some of the other recent projects that the city has
18 approved, kind of everything starts to blend in.

19 But I think your product complements the Leo
20 Brown architecture, but it's also contrasting in its --
21 its color. So if we can see a little bit more color
22 variety. And then just to echo what Jeff was saying,
23 it's -- you know, maybe we'll get some connectivity.
24 And, you know, if maybe they're not willing to give

1 emergency access to the -- on the southeast side, at
2 least a pedestrian connection so you can get that
3 because that would also help with walking routes to
4 Meijer.

5 Realistically, Meijer should be supportive
6 of that because then people like to go into their store
7 and shop. But, you know, that's my comments for now.
8 You know, if you do come back, I would anticipate a
9 good landscape plan, so. Thank you.

10 MR. DEMPSEY: Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER GRUBER: Can you comment on --
12 I was trying to track for emergency use. If someone
13 had to take an ambulance into the Traditions, where the
14 pickup point would be?

15 MR. SEE: I'm sorry, they would come -- the
16 main entrance would be located on this point.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You mean the south
18 side?

19 MR. SEE: Yep. I'm sorry. Okay. Yes.

20 MR. DEMPSEY: So you've got Route 38, the
21 connection point here. It comes down, and then here's
22 the connection point across the way to the Metro Self
23 Storage. So ambulances -- the main front door --

24 MR. SEE: Yes.

1 MR. DEMPSEY: -- is -- is right in this kind
2 of horseshoe right there.

3 MR. SEE: And there will be a
4 (indiscernible) in that area covered.

5 COMMISSIONER GRUBER: Covered?

6 MR. SEE: Yeah. Probably -- probably better
7 showed on a couple of these yellow. Yeah, something --
8 something to that effect or yeah. The photo here on
9 the -- would be something to that effect. Here -- here
10 are some similar examples of our entrances. You would
11 come in, and -- and there's where your primary access
12 would be for -- for emergency vehicles.

13 COMMISSIONER GRUBER: So a horseshoe or a
14 circular drive?

15 MR. SEE: Yeah, something to that effect.
16 Yeah. Yeah, something yeah.

17 COMMISSIONER GRUBER: In and out?

18 MR. SEE: I'm sorry?

19 CHAIR VARGULICH: Could you go back to the
20 site plan?

21 MR. SEE: Sure.

22 CHAIR VARGULICH: I -- I must be
23 misunderstanding something. You're saying that the
24 primary entrance to the -- into the building is on the

1 east side, not on the north side?

2 MR. SEE: Right. This is -- this is our
3 independent living wing. I'm trying to look here.

4 MR. DEMPSEY: Yeah. The primary entrance is
5 along the amenities area there. That is, you know, in
6 -- when people come in, that's the lobby, the reception
7 kind of like the picture that was --


8 MR. SEE: Yes.

9 MR. DEMPSEY: -- just shown there.

10 CHAIR VARGULICH: So it's on the east side,
11 not on the north side?

12 MR. SEE: Yeah, and this will be -- this
13 will be designed to where it's kind of a focal point
14 and such, and just the directional signs would take --
15 take this way.

16 CHAIR VARGULICH: So is -- is the way-by on
17 the north side a certain function on the site plan?
18 There's like a driveway that runs east to west in front
19 of the independent and the amenities portion. And then
20 right in front of the amenities, the roadway drops down
21 towards the building, like a little way-by pickup area.
22 That's not -- that's not the entry?

23 MR. SEE: That could be -- I'm sorry, you're
24 probably right there. I -- I got  I got mixed up.

1 So yes, this is -- I apologize, so this is kind of your
2 main run here that way, so this is obviously out of the
3 -- there's parking access there, but it's designed to
4 kind of come this way. Sorry. My apologies. I got --
5 got oriented the wrong way, so.

6 CHAIR VARGULICH: Okay.

7 MR. SEE: Yes, you're correct.

8 CHAIR VARGULICH: Because I was looking at
9 the architectural drawings.

10 MR. SEE: Yeah, you're right. You're right.
11 I apologize.

12 CHAIR VARGULICH: It seemed like on the east
13 side, it was more of a --

14 MR. SEE: Yes.

15 CHAIR VARGULICH: -- service access into the
16 kitchen --

17 MR. SEE: Yes.

18 CHAIR VARGULICH: -- the deliveries, and
19 that kind of thing.

20 MR. SEE: Yes. No, you're -- you're
21 correct. My apologies. I got mistakenly oriented.

22 COMMISSIONER GRUBER: The east side of the
23 gate is separate (indiscernible)?

24 MR. SEE: No. No.

Transcript of St. Charles Plan Commission
Conducted on March 3, 2026

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1 CHAIR VARGULICH: Yeah, I was just looking
2 for --

3 MR. SEE: That's not correct.

4 CHAIR VARGULICH: I was looking for the long
5 side of the amenities. We might need an overall site
6 plan.

7 MR. SEE: Yeah, let me -- I'll go -- go back
8 to that.

9 COMMISSIONER GRUBER: East side
10 (indiscernible).

11 CHAIR VARGULICH: Over by number three,
12 that's where the gate is (crosstalk) --

13 MR. SEE: That's --

14 CHAIR VARGULICH: -- to go into the
15 apartments.

16 MR. SEE: Yes.

17 CHAIR VARGULICH: So that the -- all of the
18 development to the south and west is the apartments,
19 and that's a gated area, a fenced gated area. And the
20 access into that area is only where number three is on
21 the site plan. The one on the north, way up there by
22 38, number four, is just a secondary ingress and
23 egress, but it's also gated.

24 COMMISSIONER EWOLDT: And Ms. Patton

1 referenced there was a Springs product on Smith Road
2 here in town.

3 CHAIR VARGULICH: Yeah.

4 COMMISSIONER EWOLDT: The city council did
5 require the gate to be open during certain timeframes.
6 I don't recall what those timeframes were, but I
7 believe it was during --

8 CHAIR VARGULICH: 8:00 to 6:00.

9 COMMISSIONER EWOLDT: Yeah. And it's mostly
10 because of deliveries, because of school-age children,
11 things like that. And I would assume that it would be
12 the same requirement if you move forward, but they were
13 committed to that. And the fencing would probably
14 consist of what's out there now, which I believe is a
15 black aluminum open-faced fence.

16 CHAIR VARGULICH: Okay. Thank you. Any
17 other questions for me? Questions?

18 COMMISSIONER EWOLDT: I did have one more
19 comment.

20 CHAIR VARGULICH: Please.

21 COMMISSIONER EWOLDT: Just regarding the
22 independent living, this is a new memory care facility.
23 So as we recall, we recently reviewed another --
24 another facility kind of on the edge of town. It was

1 more -- it required (indiscernible) more utilities and
2 kind of out away from other amenities.

3 I just personally feel that this -- for that
4 area of the market that this is a good location for a
5 community. It is (cough) as the demographics do shift,
6 there is a demand and need.

7 My only question on the independent living
8 aspect of it, is there a kitchen -- it has a kitchen in
9 those facilities, or are they required to eat at a
10 dining hall? I'm just curious kind of if it's truly a
11 full step-up or if it's kind of hybrid.

12 MR. KING: Yeah. So typically, our
13 independent living requires a meal plan, so it's a kind
14 of an all inclusive rate that includes one to three
15 meals a day based on the community. Typically, it's a
16 continental breakfast plus a dinner. But they also
17 will have full kitchens in the units. They don't have
18 to participate, but they're paying for it, so most of
19 them do.

20 COMMISSIONER EWOLDT: Got you. Thank you.

21 CHAIR VARGULICH: Are -- are pets allowed
22 with people in independent living?

23 MR. KING: Yes. Yes, pets are allowed.

24 CHAIR VARGULICH: Okay. And in one of --

1 couple of the images you showed earlier, it looked like
2 one of the courtyards in the image had a pool, but I
3 didn't see that represented here. Is that -- is that
4 more of a southern kind of amenity?

5 MR. KING: We have one with -- one with a
6 pool. It's in Florida, so --

7 CHAIR VARGULICH: Got it.

8 MR. KING: -- it will get a little more use
9 out of that year round but yeah.

10 CHAIR VARGULICH: Just curious. I realize
11 it's kind of --

12 MR. KING: We're two months in. We'll see
13 if we do it again elsewhere.

14 CHAIR VARGULICH: I understand. Questions?
15 Please.

16 COMMISSIONER PAYLEITNER: In reviewing the
17 packet that we had, I agreed with all the staff
18 comments. I'm sure those are boxes you're going to
19 check moving forward. And Mr. Dempsey, you had said
20 that the goal of this is -- is to help residents
21 capture a vision for St. Charles.

22 You know, it might be slightly out of Plan
23 Commission purview, but it's -- one of those visions is
24 the affordable housing. And so I implore you to

1 continue pursuit of that and the IHO compliance because
2 that will really check a box that we need here in St.
3 Charles.

4 MR. DEMPSEY: And that -- that message, and
5 I know you've worn plenty of hats in this community
6 before, so I appreciate all your service. That -- that
7 message was -- was clearly passed along.

8 The staff's been phenomenal working with us,
9 trying to come up with a way to see if we can have this
10 truly be one of those dynamic pro -- projects that
11 actually achieves --

12 COMMISSIONER PAYLEITNER: Wonderful.

13 MR. DEMPSEY: -- kind of what the intention
14 was all those years ago, so we are on it. Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER PAYLEITNER: Thank you.

16 CHAIR VARGULICH: I had some -- some general
17 comments and some questions related to the staff --
18 staff report and some of the approaches that you're
19 taking. Overall, I -- I think the -- the uses and --
20 and the densities don't really bother me as one measure
21 of a project. The Traditions is about a 23 PUs an acre
22 and the Springs at about 14 with an average of 16. So
23 I mean, the apartments on the east side that were
24 originally developed by (indiscernible), I think, are

1 close to 18 to 19 net.

2 So again, you know, I think there's a lot to
3 say about density but also about site planning. And I
4 guess I have some -- some questions and some concerns
5 related to the site planning. And I understand the --
6 given the information from Traditions as part of the
7 submittal, that you're identifying you need about 137
8 parking spaces and about 140 are proposed, so that
9 seems to track.

10 But I'm a little surprised, compared to our
11 requirements for the Traditions -- or for the Springs,
12 you're about 100 over. Is there -- do you guys have
13 data that supports that need?

14 MS. PATTON: We do. So we have a lot of
15 data on our parking. So based on our national
16 portfolio, the sweet spot for Springs is at a 1.75.
17 And that typically accommodates our guests, you know,
18 the residents, their guests, and snow. So we typically
19 try to achieve that 1.75 at a minimum.

20 So we're slightly over that here, but we
21 feel that it's going to be adequately parked, not over-
22 parked. We definitely don't want to see the concrete
23 as well. We like to, you know, maximize our green
24 space as much as we can. But at the same time, we know

1 what we need operationally.

2 CHAIR VARGULICH: Right. Right. It was
3 more than what we require as a community in the zoning
4 ordinance and so I was just trying to understand if
5 there's data. I mean, some people want less and, you
6 know, than our ordinance requires but then they have
7 supporting data. And so do you guys feel that you need
8 that from an analysis standpoint on how you guys
9 operate?

10 MS. PATTON: We do, yeah. For example, our
11 Springs at St. Charles, I believe, is at a 1.85 stalls
12 per home. So it's in line with what we know we're
13 already parking at our sister community.

14 CHAIR VARGULICH: Yeah. Okay. Okay. The
15 -- I think we've talked a little bit about the
16 inclusionary housing, and I think that that is
17 something that I would appreciate your continued effort
18 to work on that.

19 I think there's some discussion regarding
20 the school district and -- and -- and the -- and your
21 approach. And so Traditions, you've identified that
22 you want to not have to have the allowance for the
23 independent.

24 And I would say that for me, I think the

1 deed restriction, and I -- I think I'll let you work
2 that out with staff and our attorney, and the
3 appropriate people at the district. I think they would
4 want to understand that there is a deed restriction.
5 And in fairness to them, I think that that kind of
6 thing is appropriate.

7 And -- and so we welcome feedback from the
8 district when -- and if you guys move forward in a
9 preliminary fashion, I'm sure they'll want to submit
10 something or have discussions not only with staff but
11 with yourselves on that.

12 MR. KING: Yeah, we -- we intend to agree to
13 the deed restriction. We've done that elsewhere, so.

14 CHAIR VARGULICH: All right. And -- and
15 then I would say on the site plan for the Traditions, I
16 was a little concerned about how the front of the
17 building creates an entry or an arrival independent of
18 EMS or EMT services kind of thing, because you have to
19 drive through the parking lot to get there.

20 And it doesn't feel like quite an arrival
21 when you have to drive through the parking lot to be
22 able to pull up so that the driver is not on the side
23 of the building. And I was wondering if you guys
24 could, as you look at this further, kind of look at a

1 way to kind of create a little more of a significant
2 arrival rather than right now kind of driving through.

3 Because I think what will happen is people
4 won't immediately -- even with signage, your intuition
5 is to head towards the front of the building which
6 means you'll come south on that driveway, assuming you
7 come off of 38. You'll come south off that driveway.

8 And you'll look for, let's say, your canopy
9 or other -- other markers. And the next thing you
10 know, you realize you're kind of pulling up to the, you
11 know, to the wrong side where the driver's on the
12 inside versus the passenger. And so I was just
13 wondering if you guys could take another look at that.

14 I understand you're looking for a particular
15 parking count, but there's also some parking, it looks
16 like, along some of these driveways on the west side as
17 you continue further south to -- you know, maybe that's
18 employee parking or, you know, however you're -- you're
19 -- you're utilizing that. But I think that would be
20 just something to consider with respect to that.

21 MR. SEE: Yeah, we've discussed and we're
22 going to give a good look at some -- possibly some
23 long, linear islands and barriers to make it more
24 prominent and flow better, but yes, understood.

1 CHAIR VARGULICH: Yeah, I mean, you have --
2 you know, I'll let my architectural friend --

3 MR. SEE: Sure.

4 CHAIR VARGULICH: -- (crosstalk) more
5 critical of this, but I think overall you have, you
6 know, a handsome looking building.

7 MR. SEE: Yeah.

8 CHAIR VARGULICH: And it's nice to have a
9 large canopy to pull up underneath, you know, for
10 residents if they're going somewhere. If you have a
11 van or a bus that's going to take a group of people
12 somewhere, that's a great feature. But it just seems
13 the circulation doesn't seem to support it, you know,
14 very well correctly -- currently.

15 MR. SEE: Yeah, understood. It probably
16 wants to be along this triangle here a little bit more
17 perhaps. I was kind of outlining the broader thing but
18 this probably makes -- you know, looking back at some
19 of the photos, that's kind of, you know, kind of the
20 approach we've taken, so.

21 CHAIR VARGULICH: Sure. Okay. And probably
22 the last item I wanted to ask you about, and I think
23 Jeff kind of touched on it a little bit earlier, is the
24 idea of open space, circulation, and -- and the park.

1 And -- and open space from the standpoint of not only
2 the space that private residents use but also the idea
3 that there is a park that people can come and visit,
4 you know, as well as.

5 I think there's a pretty notable, you know,
6 tradition and request and expectation in St. Charles
7 related to parks for people and open space for people.
8 And through the way the develop -- the way property
9 develops, the location that you are, there are always
10 pros and cons.

11 I mean, you have the pro of your
12 relationship to retail and other non, you know, kind of
13 residential uses. It's convenient to a certain level
14 but also, it's isolated. I mean, there's literally no
15 way to connect to any open space or any path system
16 from this property. Zero.

17 If you don't get the easement from Prairie
18 Winds to cross into their property, you have no way to
19 get down to the trail that actually is owned and
20 managed by the Geneva Park District on Bricher Road,
21 which can take you east and west.

22 But if you take the path that runs along 38,
23 you end at 38 and Randall and have nowhere to go. So
24 there's no connection to anything, no other open space,

1 there's no other park that anyone connected.

2 Based on the land cache sheets, you're going
3 to end up with, assuming these are all correct, 36
4 school-age children and about 670 adults who are, I
5 would say, active adults, including the people in
6 independence, as well as all the residents in the
7 Springs.

8 And on the east side, while that is a very
9 -- that was a very challenging site from a civil
10 engineering standpoint to address all of the overflow,
11 water that comes from the north and east, that was --
12 that was no simple task. But you did end up with a
13 path system that connected to existing parks via other
14 trails to the north, and you ended up with a small park
15 on --

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: North side?

17 CHAIR VARGULICH: North side right along
18 (indiscernible). But I see virtually nothing on this
19 site that represents recreational opportunities or
20 places for people who want open space to go. They
21 literally will have to get in their car or take their
22 bikes somewhere because there's no way for them to take
23 a trail or another bike path and get anywhere. And I
24 think that your land cache on the park district is 1.4

1 mil or 5.8 acres.

2 Well, 5.8 out of 29 is a lot, so I don't --
3 I doubt that that's probably reality though I'm sure
4 the park district would love that. But I think that at
5 a minimum there ought to be about two acres of park
6 space as part of this project.

7 When you have 670 people plus school-age
8 children realizing that 36 school-age kids probably
9 don't need much of a playground system for that, but
10 there ought to be opportunities to do that without
11 having to get in your car and go somewhere.

12 And I think that there's a lot of
13 conversation. I think we've done -- in the last few
14 years, we've improved bike path systems and things like
15 that, so there is a lot of focus, not only at the
16 community level from the city, but certainly from the
17 park district.

18 If you look at their comp plan and you look
19 at the data that they collect, open space and
20 connections are one of the key things that people want.
21 And right now, new residents aren't going to get that
22 in this project. So I realize you said, and it was
23 noted in the staff report, that you're looking at some
24 off-site property options.

1 I'm not sure what that means, but I
2 understand that you need to work on that. I think
3 you'd be hard-pressed to get a thumbs-up from the park
4 district with this plan at all. I realize that we, the
5 City of St. Charles, approve the site -- final site
6 plan, but I think that if we, the city, approve this
7 site plan, it isn't in keeping with what the city has
8 done and expected of people and -- and developers in
9 the past.

10 So I'm not really sure how to solve that
11 other than to ask you to really work hard at that. I
12 think for a couple of examples of the kind of parks for
13 -- for scale, there's Lincoln Park, and these are all
14 in St. Charles, 1.6 acres.

15 Baker Field at 2.3, Kehoe at 1.5, and Moody
16 at 1.8. So you can see the kind of things that are
17 available in a variety of those parks. They're all on
18 the website. Go visit them if you have time. But I
19 think those are the kind of things that I think are
20 relevant and needed when you're going to add 670 adults
21 to our community. And so I hope that you can do that.

22 If you -- if you can, I think it'd be great
23 if you could get a little chunk from the property to
24 the west realizing that that's the Judicial Center and

1 stuff, and those guys are maybe a little prickly to
2 work with, but there's a really nice stand of oak trees
3 right at the northwest corner of your property, just
4 west of the property line. I think that'd be a great
5 way to add a park for you to pick up those oak trees.
6 I'm not sure what their plans are for the rest of their
7 property, but we'll see.

8 The other thing I would ask is, Jeff
9 mentioned it, I think that a path around understanding
10 grading is grading. Understand that. And I see you
11 have SPACECO and Brett back there, so I know he
12 understands this extremely well. But I think a path
13 system would go a long way also to this.

14 And I don't know if you're showing a -- a
15 bluish green area because it's going to be detention or
16 is it going to be retention? Not sure how that's going
17 to work out. I'm sure that's also a mass grading
18 problem that you need to -- you need to sort out. But
19 I would agree with Commissioner Funke that a path
20 around that would be great understanding you still have
21 to deal with bounds and all that stuff and those are
22 just realities.

23 I would also ask that you give some serious
24 consideration to a strong evaluation of your wetland.

1 And if it is not a very high-quality wetland on a
2 project of this scale, maybe think about getting rid of
3 it and moving some of your detention there to free up
4 some space to do other things. And either -- I don't
5 know what the rules are now but if it's not a high-
6 quality wetland, it might be worth getting rid of it.

7 I don't -- if you look at the aerials, I
8 mean, all the drainage heads to the west/southwest into
9 an open detention pond. I'm no expert, but it doesn't
10 look too great but, you know, I'll let somebody with
11 all the right background, you know, help you with that.
12 And I'm sure Brett knows people who can help with that
13 kind of topic.

14 I wish you luck with your full access on
15 Route 38 with the IDOT. That should be fun. And, you
16 know, I don't know what they're going to require of you
17 based on if you want full access and a relationship to
18 the other driveways and the signalized intersection.
19 I'm sure they have lots of rules regarding all that and
20 so.

21 But like I said, I think that overall
22 there's nothing wrong with the product and the density.
23 The zoning change to an R3 or RM3 to me doesn't seem
24 too out of, you know, whack, especially given a project

1 that's already developed to the south. And so I don't
2 think that's a big deal.

3 PUD, sure. There's a lot of reasons to do
4 it. I -- I would ask that given some of the comments
5 and stats that staff has provided related to the
6 setbacks and all that stuff that you come back with a
7 robust and aggressive landscape plan when you're ready
8 to prepare that because it seems like you're -- you're
9 short on some setbacks and relationships that I think
10 are -- are super important.


11 I mean, probably less between the two
12 buildings from my perspective, but as it relates to
13 buffering the Meijer and the loading dock and the
14 service area, not much of a view from my perspective.
15 And candidly, the five or six foot fence around their
16 detention pond is even less interesting.

17 I'm sure they have a good reason for that
18 from a liability standpoint, but I'm sure it would go a
19 long way if you could get rid of it. But I doubt that
20 that's really possible because those units and -- and
21 stuff that are in that area don't have really much of
22 an exciting view.

23 Those -- those are things that I would ask
24 for you to work on, and I think that the project, you

1 know, could be a very nice project and a very nice fit
2 and help them in a lot of the ways that you've outlined
3 related to assisting the existing businesses in retail
4 and contributing to those things. So I hope you'll
5 come back. Thank you. Anybody else? John? Cory?
6 All right.

7 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: Yeah, I just wanted to
8 make one last comment on the -- the entry port
9 (indiscernible) that you have. I think your
10 architecture needs some more work on that. It doesn't
11 look like it's, you know, a suitable entrance for, you
12 know, a building of this size.

13 So I would take a look at that -- that front
14 elevation again on the -- on the senior housing
15 project. And then work on, like Commissioner Vargulich
16 said, work on - you know, if you look at the site
17 circulation, you see the, you know, this like maze of
18 sidewalks.

19 I think it would be, you know, it would be
20 beneficial to the project if you can create that --
21 that pathway and, you know, more curvilinear pathways
22 connecting the buildings to the park lands to the -- I
23 know the detention is, what do you say, not accessible
24 but I think you can work that out.

1 And then making the -- the community center
2 integral to that pathway system. You know, you have
3 some great opportunities here, and I do like the -- the
4 -- the opportunity for this project and the density and
5 I -- I think, you know, there still needs to be more
6 work to be done, so. Thank you for coming in.

7 MR. DEMPSEY: Thank you. We appreciate your
8 time. And Commissioner, thank you for helping to point
9 out how challenging several of these sites are. This
10 one in particular we're -- we understand that is --
11 your role in -- your role in this community is to help
12 guide this process and we want to be a good corporate
13 neighbor to, and with the park district and the school
14 district and everybody else, so we appreciate your
15 time.

16 We will work diligently to see if we can --
17 I don't know if we can solve or get some land to the
18 west but we'll do what we can to attempt to address all
19 these concerns and bring them back.

20 CHAIR VARGULICH: All right. Thank you very
21 much. So before we conclude this item, I don't know if
22 there's anybody from the public who wishes to speak.
23 That is part of our concept plan review process.
24 Nobody? All right. We'll save that for the

1 preliminary plan. Okay. All right. Well, that will
2 conclude item five. Again, this plan and project will
3 be on the agenda for the Committee of the Whole on
4 March 16th at 7:00 p.m.

5 On item six, 7 Brew coffee. This is an
6 application for PUD preliminary plan and minor
7 subdivision final plat submitted by Who Brew Illinois,
8 LLC as part of lot seven of the Prairie Centre PUD.
9 There's not a public hearing required. We'll begin
10 with staff.

11 MS. JOHNSON: Thank you. This proposal is
12 on the westernmost portion of the Prairie Centre outlot
13 along Route 38. Proposed is development of a drive-
14 thru coffee shop called 7 Brew. Approval of a PUD
15 preliminary plan is required due to the property's
16 location in the Prairie Centre PUD. Re-subdivision is
17 also needed to create a lot for the project.

18 There are a few staff comments listed in the
19 staff report that need to be resolved mostly relating
20 to landscaping and signage, so a recommendation for
21 approval should be contingent on resolution of staff
22 comments and a follow-up item about sidewalks.

23 Back in January this group reviewed plans
24 for the Gardner School on the eastern end of the

1 Prairie Centre outlot, Plan Commission recommended
2 requiring sidewalk along Route 38. Council Committee
3 later agreed and sidewalk will be provided along 38 for
4 the Gardner School and will be required in connection
5 with each outlot as they're developed. The plans for 7
6 Brew do include a sidewalk along 38.

7 Staff has been working with the developer of
8 Prairie Centre, Shodeen, on plat locating the sidewalk
9 and decided that the sidewalk can be on private
10 property as opposed to within the IDOT right-of-way to
11 avoid IDOT permit and engineering modifications within
12 the parkway. So there will need to be public sidewalk
13 easement over -- over the sidewalk and that is shown on
14 the plat of re-subdivision for this project.

15 CHAIR VARGULICH: How wide will the sidewalk
16 be?

17 MS. JOHNSON: Seven feet.

18 CHAIR VARGULICH: Okay. Thank you.

19 MS. JOHNSON: And I can turn it over to the
20 applicant now.

21 CHAIR VARGULICH: Please. Thank you.

22 MR. GEORGE: Good evening. Thank you very
23 much for everyone's time this evening. My name is
24 Chris George. I'm the VP of Development for Who Brew,

1 LLC. We are a franchisee of 7 Brew drive-thru coffee.
2 Territories we have are the Chicagoland area; Northwest
3 Indiana; Nashville, Tennessee; and Pittsburgh,
4 Pennsylvania. Perfect.

5 As mentioned earlier, Who Brew IL 3, LLC is
6 the applicant and petitioner tonight. Location is
7 Prairie Centre, northeast corner of Lincoln Highway at
8 the Jewel entrance that run-in run-out. Lot size for
9 the re-subdivision is 0.85 acres.

10 It is currently vacant land today as part of
11 the Prairie Centre larger development. Proposed use is
12 7 Brew drive-thru coffee stand. Assisting zoning
13 section split zoning beyond regional business and BC
14 community business and part of the PUD and approvals
15 we're seeking is the application for PUD preliminary
16 plan and application for a minor subdivision final
17 plat.

18 A little bit about 7 Brew as a concept.
19 First stand was located in Rogers, Arkansas. It's in
20 Northwest Arkansas just outside of Bentonville.
21 There's currently over 600 stands nationwide and it's
22 one of the fastest-growing QSR concepts nationwide as
23 well.

24 It is a double drive-thru concept, drive-

1 thru only with walk-up service offered. There's no
2 indoor service or seating at the stand. Everything
3 inside the stand is for making beverages as it is a
4 primarily beverage menu.

5 There's no speaker box at our concept as
6 well. We have our team members outside the drive-thru
7 lanes on iPads walking up to the customer's driver's
8 side window, taking orders there similar to what you
9 might see at a Portillo's or some Chick-fil-A's in the
10 Chicagoland area. What we found is this helps with
11 drive -- with order accuracy as well as just creating
12 an overall friendly, better environment for our
13 customers to make them want to come back.

14 The type of concept is really an emphasis on
15 speed, thus the drive-thru focus and creating high-
16 energy, fun, friendly environment for our customers.
17 Operating hours Sunday through Thursday is 5:30 a.m. to
18 10:00 p.m. On Fridays and Saturdays, we are open until
19 11:00 p.m. A little bit about our menu.

20 We mentioned earlier it's a primarily
21 beverage-focused menu. We do have one pre-packaged
22 muffin that we serve. It comes individually packaged
23 from our food provider. It comes in three different
24 flavors: chocolate chip, blueberry, or plain.

1 Everything else is a beverage. Those are espresso-
2 based coffee drinks, chillers, teas, infused energy
3 drinks, smoothies, and shakes.

4 There's actually over 20,000 unique drink
5 options that you can create with all of our various
6 syrups and sugar-free syrups. Very popular with the
7 younger demographic on TikTok and Instagram. Customize
8 and make their own drinks. It's not uncommon to see
9 customers pull up, flash a picture of their phone,
10 snapshot it on a TikTok or Instagram saying, I would
11 like this drink because I saw it online.

12 Here's a copy of our planned subdivision
13 slowing -- showing the subdivision for the lot in
14 Prairie Centre as well as an aerial picture roughly
15 outlining the location. As you can see, the Jewel
16 Shopping Center just to the northwest of us at the
17 right-in right-out just on the page left side of that
18 red box, and then full access point at Wright Boulevard
19 to the page right.

20 Picture of existing conditions today. As I
21 mentioned earlier, it's just a vacant grass field as
22 part of the larger Prairie Centre development. Larger
23 zoomed-out site plan showing the subdivision plat
24 lines. We're taking the western portion of that. I

1 realize Route 38 runs at an angle so kind of on the
2 northwest there.

3 I want to point out the two access points to
4 the shopping center, the right-in right-out on page
5 left, that's also shared with the Jewel Shopping
6 Center, and then further on page right there is a full
7 access at Route 38 and Wright Boulevard and then cross
8 access drive on private drive to get to the Shopping
9 Center as well. Also want to point out the sidewalk
10 that was mentioned earlier in the staff report along
11 Route 38. That is on private property and is seven
12 feet in width.

13 Here's a more zoomed-in picture of our site
14 plan, our just over 1,100 square foot building, and a
15 counterclockwise orientation of our double drive-thru.
16 I want to point out at the upper page left a -- the
17 bailout lane in case someone gets stuck inside the
18 drive-thru lanes, we don't have a traditional bailout
19 lane here. If someone wanted to get out, that's an
20 opportunity for them to get out at that time.

21 This drive-thru view showing 27 cars in this
22 configuration right here as well as a total of 19
23 parking spaces, 18 regular spaces, and one ADA space.
24 All the parking is to the south, cross access drive

1 aisle from east to west to the south of our building,
2 and then that shared road between the two parcels from
3 the subdivision as well.

4 Here's our landscape plan for this location.
5 There are some comments from staff in the staff report.
6 We fully intend on complying with those. My design
7 team is currently working on updating that to be in
8 full compliance.

9 Renderings of our building for this location
10 here, and I want to point out the signage and
11 elevations as well. I know also signage was something
12 that was called out as staff comments. We're only
13 allowed one sign per elevation. We will be modifying
14 that. My team's currently working on that. We will be
15 removing the sign on the bottom part of the building.

16 This is the front of the building facing
17 Route 38. The Chevron arrows and drive-thru coffee
18 sign will be eliminated as part of that comment to be
19 in compliance.

20 Here's a picture of the rear of the
21 building. This is the drive-thru side of the building.
22 The west side is called out in the staff report. Same
23 comment here about having one too many signs. We will
24 remove the Chevron arrows and drive-thru coffee sign to

1 be in compliance. My team's currently working on
2 updating those as well.

3 As you can notice here, there's two sliding
4 glass doors. The further page left will service lane
5 one. The further to the right will service lane two to
6 allow for our team members to walk out across of lane
7 one in a safe manner in front of that stopped car for
8 safety for our team members.

9 And then a picture of the non drive-thru
10 service side. There's another sliding glass door there
11 as well, so if there is a pop-up service, this is where
12 our team members are located in the drive-thru lanes
13 that I mentioned earlier where they can come, place
14 order with a team member in a safe spot clear from all
15 the drive-thru circulation as well.

16 Material color board and some more specifics
17 on the signage that I mentioned earlier as well. And
18 then I want to jump back to the site plan because it
19 was also mentioned in the staff report. Fully want to
20 acknowledge Naperville was our first location opened in
21 the Chicagoland area. It was also one of the first
22 locations that we opened as a franchisee of 7 Brew
23 drive-thru coffee.

24 At that time the nation recommendation was

1 to provide drive-thru queuing of 12 to 15 cars. We
2 provided 23 cars at the Naperville location. I think
3 everyone's very well aware of the popularity that
4 Naperville had being the first location in the
5 Chicagoland area.

6 We've worked closely with KLA traffic
7 engineers as we've grown in the Chicagoland area.
8 They've done data and studies around our drive-thru
9 queue. There was a memo put together that was shared
10 not only with the master developer of -- for Prairie
11 Centre as well as staff showing a concerted peak queue
12 of 34 cars.

13 We also worked out a plan from an overflow
14 standpoint that there could reach up to an additional
15 15 cars on the site without impacting any of the
16 adjacent sites to reach a total of 42 cars that got us
17 all comfortable myself, the property owner, who has us
18 under contract to purchase, the master developer and
19 staff.

20 Some additional items that we've agreed to
21 with the master developer is identifying a few
22 locations in the parking stalls for large orders to
23 keep that drive-thru queue moving in the event there is
24 a large order slowing down the flow of the -- the

1 queue. Those would be the direct three locations to
2 the south of the building.

3 Also during opening times, we're committed
4 to hiring additional third-party traffic control and
5 bring out additional team members to help move the flow
6 of traffic as quick as possible during those early peak
7 times as well as forcing everyone to exit out the page
8 left side and forcing everyone to exit out the right-in
9 right-out exit point as well to not allow for
10 additional traffic circulating through the rest of the
11 development.

12 Additionally, since Naperville is open,
13 queues have regressed pretty significantly. That was
14 our first location open in the Chicagoland area. We
15 currently have ten locations open today. There are two
16 more that are currently in training with operations
17 which should be open before the end of the month. We
18 have an additional six locations that are actively
19 under construction today.

20 There are 13 additional locations that are
21 already fully entitled in various stages of the permit
22 and review process, and 17 additional locations in the
23 entitlement stage which includes St. Charles.
24 Forecasting to the St. Charles location to be

1 approximately our 25th location open in the Chicagoland
2 area.

3 We've seen major moves on the traffic data
4 that we've seen from location one to where we are at
5 ten locations open. Our traffic engineer put in that
6 memo that they continue to see that trend decreasing in
7 peak queue so we feel comfortable with the queue that
8 we're proposing today.

9 As far as proximate locations to St.
10 Charles, Naperville is the current closest open
11 location. I'm happy to share as of yesterday evening
12 we are now fully entitled in Warrenville and Wheaton as
13 well as our Bloomingdale location will be opening
14 before the end of the month. A second location in
15 Bloomingdale is currently under construction as well.

16 We feel that those locations being added --
17 we feel comfortable with the queue that we're proposing
18 today. I appreciate everyone's time this evening and
19 happy to answer any questions around the 7 Brew drive-
20 thru coffee petition.

21 CHAIR VARGULICH: How many employees would
22 be there at peak?

23 MR. GEORGE: At peak, there's usually about
24 ten to 12.

1 CHAIR VARGULICH: Ten to 12? Okay. So that
2 would take up a fair amount of your parking.

3 MR. GEORGE: Correct.

4 CHAIR VARGULICH: And you said you had a
5 walk-up?

6 MR. GEORGE: It's primarily a drive-thru
7 concept. We usually don't promote our walk-up service.
8 In working with staff at this site, it was important to
9 them that we offered that walk-up component, so I did
10 want to call that out. But it's primarily a drive-thru
11 concept, and typically, our parking is just for our
12 team members at that time so we feel comfortable with
13 the 19 provided stalls there.

14 CHAIR VARGULICH: Okay. In -- given this
15 location and the -- the goal of the Prairie Centre is
16 to have a fair amount of people that live there,
17 including buildings probably directly to the north of
18 you in theory, so you might get walk-up traffic where
19 you might have an apartments across the street that
20 would have walk-up traffic.

21 So I was just curious whether you would add
22 a patio for those walk-up people or, it might be a
23 little bit down the road, but if the sidewalk system
24 gets completed across your -- across your 38 frontage,

1 it will now then connect to residents that are further
2 to the east from you.

3 And as the city continues to want to promote
4 alternative uses that are not auto-centric
5 (indiscernible) that -- I think that maybe a patio
6 could be added. You certainly have some green space
7 that could be given.

8 MR. GEORGE: Absolutely. There is a lot of
9 green space. We actually have a stub of additional
10 pavement there, hardscape because we have been talking
11 to staff about adding an outdoor table or an
12 opportunity to engage that aspect as well.

13 CHAIR VARGULICH: Yeah, a little more,
14 whether it has a canopy over it, a few more trees, I
15 think those are things that would encourage people to
16 come over and -- and just have a few -- and maybe post
17 a little bit on whatever it is.

18 (Crosstalk).

19 MR. GEORGE: Whatever is popular at that
20 time, right?

21 CHAIR VARGULICH: Yeah.

22 MR. GEORGE: Yeah, (indiscernible) one of
23 the staffs (indiscernible) in the landscape comments
24 was to add a couple -- couple of trees in close

1 proximity to the building, whether the foundation plans
2 within a certain distance. We're working on complying
3 with that request as well.

4 CHAIR VARGULICH: Okay. Thank you.

5 MR. GEORGE: Thank you.

6 COMMISSIONER GRUBER: Does 7 Brew use a pre-
7 order process like -- like a Starbucks at all or --

8 MR. GEORGE: We do not. This has actually
9 been kind of a hot topic with 7 Brew corporate. What
10 they found in their studies in investigating it is that
11 it actually slows down the throughput of the drive-
12 thru. So I know they are actively trying to figure out
13 a way to make that work. But at this time, that is
14 what they have conveyed to us that one does not exist.

15 COMMISSIONER GRUBER: So everybody is going
16 through would just order and then process --

17 MR. GEORGE: Correct.

18 COMMISSIONER GRUBER: Okay. Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER PAYLEITNER: I appreciate the
20 -- Mr. Chair's comments about the patio. We have on
21 the east side, Andy's Ice Cream, or whatever it's
22 called, and it's a similar thing. There is no inside
23 seating, and you walk up, and the patio in the right
24 kind of weather is usually full. And so I think that

1 that -- I was glad to hear that that recommendation was
2 made. It's certainly been conveyed to us. Thank you.

3 MR. GEORGE: Yeah, thank you.

4 COMMISSIONER EWOLDT: Yeah, I -- I would
5 echo that. Whether it's a table, benches
6 (indiscernible) is a great example. Actually, I was
7 going to make a similar comparison. That demographic
8 is very popular with all ages but also teenagers and,
9 as you said, young people in the market area as well as
10 the residents there, you know, they might want to walk
11 over.

12 I also would like to see maybe a bike rack
13 included. I can see people biking over there from
14 Geneva to the east and other residential neighborhoods
15 in the general area. I do have one question about your
16 architectural design. Will you be proposing the LED
17 light banding that you have in Naperville?

18 MR. GEORGE: So it is proposed. I know
19 there are requirements. I believe staff made a
20 comment, I apologize if I butcher this, I believe it's
21 only allowed for a 60-day time frame from November 15th
22 to January 15th?

23 MS. JOHNSON: Yes, that's correct. So we
24 allow that sort of essentially for holiday lights. So

1 if that lighting is installed on this building, it can
2 only be on during those two months.

3 MR. GEORGE: So my intention would be to
4 only have it on at that time and comply.

5 COMMISSIONER EWOLDT: And then just from an
6 architectural standpoint, it looks like you're using
7 full-depth masonry of --

8 MR. GEORGE: Yeah.

9 COMMISSIONER EWOLDT: -- brick on this?
10 Nice.

11 MR. GEORGE: That's the intention, yes.

12 COMMISSIONER EWOLDT: Okay. I think
13 otherwise, you know, just member comments.

14 MR. GEORGE: Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: I do appreciate the use
16 of brick and masonry throughout the building. And the
17 fact that you have a parapet that's high enough to hide
18 the --

19 MR. GEORGE: The screen, yeah.

20 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: -- rooftop unit. A
21 couple questions for me is, I know that the Naperville
22 -- my -- my daughter actually drives out there a lot so
23 I'm glad that you're actually building one closer.
24 It's going to save on gas money.

1 MR. GEORGE: It is one of the 60 percent of
2 our business there when we open that's coming from a
3 distance of ten miles or greater away, yes.

4 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: My question is, they
5 talk about having -- you have a special -- Naperville
6 had -- they banned the special or something?

7 MR. GEORGE: Correct, yes.

8 (Crosstalk).

9 MR. GEORGE: The backstory there was because
10 of the -- the popularity, I was actually meeting with
11 Ted there as well as the city manager and the mayor in
12 trying to opt out of the promotions. Technically, we
13 did not participate in the promotions. We were in
14 default of our franchise agreement with corporate. And
15 they -- it took some convincing but we were finally
16 able to convince them to allow us to opt out of those
17 promotions.

18 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: And are you going to
19 have that here, any of those promotions?

20 MR. GEORGE: As of right now, we are not
21 actively promoting them. If someone shows up, we do
22 not want to alienate our customers who might be getting
23 served ads from 7 Brew Corporate. They ship us the
24 items anyway, we will honor it but we have not been

1 advertising them is how that's been handled.


2 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: And the reason was that
3 because it created so much traffic, right?

4 MR. GEORGE: Correct.

5 (Crosstalk).

6 MR. GEORGE: Yeah, and our expectation
7 obviously, I can't foresee the future as -- as we have
8 25 plus locations open. That demand can spread out a
9 lot more. Hopefully that there's an opportunity where
10 we can actually promote those promotions as well, like
11 a lot of the other franchisees across the nation are.

12 But as of right now, we would love to
13 continue to work with staff like we have in Naperville
14 and other areas to make sure that we're doing
15 everything we can to be a good steward to the
16 community.

17 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: Okay. And then I guess
18 the -- when  -- when do you see this getting built --
19 getting finished?

20 MR. GEORGE: Might be early fall, late
21 summer. We want to move as quickly as we can.
22 Definitely counting on this being a 2026 opening.

23 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: All right. Thank you.

24 MR. GEORGE: Thank you.

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1 CHAIR VARGULICH: All right. Any other
2 questions or comments? All right. Is there a motion?

3 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: Yeah, I'll make a
4 motion for item number six, 7 Brew Coffee, part of Lot
5 7, Prairie Centre PUD, Who Brew Illinois, LLC approval
6 pending all staff comments.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

8 CHAIR VARGULICH: We have a motion and a
9 second for approval of the PUD plan and minor
10 subdivision for Who Brew Illinois 3, LLC, part of lot
11 seven, the Prairie Centre PUD, resolu -- plus the
12 resolution of all staff comments.

13 Roll call. We have Zach Ewoldt?

14 COMMISSIONER EWOLDT: Yes.

15 CHAIR VARGULICH: Jeff Funke?

16 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: Yes.

17 CHAIR VARGULICH: Gary Gruber?

18 COMMISSIONER GRUBER: Yes.

19 CHAIR VARGULICH: John Fitzgerald?

20 COMMISSIONER FITZGERALD: Yes.

21 CHAIR VARGULICH: Cory Jones?

22 COMMISSIONER JONES: Yes.

23 CHAIR VARGULICH: Rita Payleitner?

24 COMMISSIONER PAYLEITNER: Yes.

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1 CHAIR VARGULICH: Myself, yes.

2 All right. That completes item seven.

3 Appreciate it. Good luck. Public comment? Nope.

4 All right. Item eight, additional business?

5 Next meeting will be on March 17th.

6 COMMISSIONER FUNKE: Seriously?

7 MS. JOHNSON: I think we'll be canceling
8 that meeting.

9 COMMISSIONER PAYLEITNER: (Indiscernible).

10 CHAIR VARGULICH: Yes.

11 COMMISSIONER PAYLEITNER: It became evident
12 when we were told of the plans how the sidewalk issue
13 got resolved. And -- and I hope that it wasn't
14 interpreted by my comments there and I felt like I was
15 being kind of crabby. I apologize. That I wasn't --
16 I'm not anti-site. That wasn't the point.

17 My point was that I want us to be a city of
18 keeping very orderly and that includes the agreements
19 of the PUD. And all that to say I want to, you know,
20 thank staff for their creativity and the developer for
21 cooperation in getting that done so that's awesome.
22 Thank you.

23 CHAIR VARGULICH: All right. Thank you.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well said.

Transcript of St. Charles Plan Commission
Conducted on March 3, 2026

1 CHAIR VARGULICH: Thank you. All right. Is
2 there a motion to adjourn?

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Motion.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

5 CHAIR VARGULICH: All those in favor?

6 MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aye.

7 CHAIR VARGULICH: St. Charles Plan
8 Commission adjourned 8:22. Thank you.

9 (Off the record at 8:22 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Lawrence Wallace, the officer before whom the foregoing proceedings were taken, do hereby certify that said proceedings were electronically recorded by me; that the foregoing transcript, to the best of my ability, knowledge, and belief, is a true and accurate record of the proceedings; and that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this case and have no interest, financial or otherwise, in its outcome.

Lawrence Wallace

LAWRENCE WALLACE, AAERT CER
FOR THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIBER

I, Sheila Martin, do hereby certify that this transcript was prepared from the digital audio recording of the foregoing proceeding; that said transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings to the best of my knowledge, skills and ability; and that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this case and have no interest, financial or otherwise, in its outcome.



SHEILA MARTIN

MARCH 6, 2026