

**PLAN COMMISSION  
VILLAGE OF DEERFIELD  
May 14, 2026  
Minutes**

The Plan Commission of the Village of Deerfield called to order a meeting at 7:30 P.M. on May 14, 2026, at Deerfield Village Hall.

Present were:           Al Bromberg, Chair  
                              Lisa Crist  
                              Bill Keefe  
                              Sara Lubezny  
                              David Rauen  
                              Blake Schulman  
                              Ken Stolman

Also Present:           Jeff Ryckaert, Principal Planner  
                              Dan Nakahara, Planner II  
                              Justin Keenan, Assistant Village Manager  
                              Ben Schuster, Village Attorney

**Public Comment on a Non-Agenda Item**

There were no comments from the public on a non-agenda item.

**WORKSHOP MEETING**

- 1) Prefiling Conference on the Request for Approval of a Special Use to Permit a Financial Institution for a US Bank at 60 S. Waukegan Road in the Deerbrook Shopping Center

Those who wish to speak on this petition were sworn in by Chair Bromberg. He explained the purpose of a prefiling conference is to provide the applicant with feedback, input and reaction to their proposal before a public hearing. The Plan Commission will neither vote nor make any decisions this evening.

Commissioner Stolman noted he had a relationship with Deerbrook Shopping Center, but does not have a conflict of interest.

Nate Rowe, RSP Architect and Ray Roll with JLL, owner's representative for US Bank, were present. They are looking into moving into the former Sleep Number space and would mostly remodel the interior of the existing space. On the exterior, they propose removing an existing glass pane for a walk-up ATM and drop box. They propose adding accessible parking. The interior buildout will include offices and walk-up transaction space. They will also add a break room and use the existing restrooms. Mr. Rowe explained they requested to waive a parking study. The Sleep Number signage would be replaced with US bank signage. They will add cameras and canopy lighting for security above the ATM. The ATM will have acrylic panels added.

Mr. Rowe explained they want to add additional information, including the tagline Infinite Possibilities, Ideal Solutions to the exterior signage and will appear before the ARC on May 18<sup>th</sup>. They will add some customer only parking signs, which have been approved by the landlord.

Ch. Bromberg asked if this would impact the existing Deerfield Road US Bank branch location, which it would not. Ms. Crist asked the applicants to provide updated site plans as the site plan included in their submittal was outdated.

Mr. Ryckaert reported the Public Hearing would be on June 11<sup>th</sup>.

## 2. Discussion of Potential Sports Mall at South End of Deerbrook Shopping Center

Jessie Dodson, Attorney representing Hall Equities, explained they are proposing an exciting, family-oriented use for Deerbrook Shopping Center. Mark Hall with Hall Equities, Adam Firsell and Brad Joseph representing Core Acquisitions, Deerbrook Shopping Center ownership, were present. Core Acquisitions purchased the property after a 20+ year run from the previous owner. He explained the shopping center has much potential and they are thrilled about this proposal.

Mr. Joseph said he grew up in Deerfield and explained this center has been on their radar for a long time. The existing tenants struggle because there is not a regional draw to the center. They are targeting a user that will bring people into the center who will also patronize the other tenants. This is an exciting opportunity that will draw from 50+ miles away and will be a huge traffic generator for the Village. Mr. Firsell noted Hall Equities is under contract to purchase the former Hobby Lobby and The Dump properties.

Mr. Mark Hall provided a background on himself, his company and the project. He has been an entrepreneur since college and has owned, operated and developed a multitude of property types throughout his career. Hall Equities Group has a nationwide footprint including regional shopping center, apartment buildings, storage, industrial, office buildings and 50 hotels. Recently they formed a new business unit called National SportsMall Realty. Their first location is in Northern California and are working on other sites. They also have a business called Copa Innovation Laboratories specializing in sports technology and training devices. They are an owner operator in youth sports training and sports training business as well as a real estate owner.

Mr. Hall explained that with him this evening is: Chuck Davis, Sr. VP of Development, is focused on the engineering and entitlement, Dan Germaine, inhouse Director of Design, working with Brian Zerwinski, and Charlie Campbell, former professional athlete and coach.

SportsMall grew out of Mr. Hall's involvement in developing regional shopping centers. They were looking at how to repurpose large, retail spaces into an alternative use that is feasible and harmoniously integrated. SportsMall is a shopping center of sports training. Mr. Hall commented that sports training puts more bodies in a building learning skills rather than game play. He added that it is tougher to make economics work with game play rather than training. Training is an activity that families engage in a few times a week and allows parents to drop their children off for 40-60 minutes then pick them up after training. This will create an opportunity for the parents to shop the adjacent retail stores. Mr. Hall's company purchased a newspaper printing plant in Northern California to determine if the sports mall concept would

survive. Within five years, the SportsMall was completed and nine best-in-class training facilities moved into this space. It was convenient for families as everything was in one location and each business had their own customer lists. This synergy equation allowed each business to expand. Within 24 months, the tenants have more than doubled their revenues. This was in 2019. Then the pandemic hit. They are now ready to look into expanding to Deerfield, Colorado and the East Coast. The SportsMall is a multi-tenant best-in-class human performance hub centered primarily on youth sports training with complementary uses including music and arts, as well as accredited youth education.

Mr. Joseph explained the SportsMall operates similar to a regular shopping center with clusters of independently-owned businesses. The SportsMall concept is unique because they identify and prioritize best-in-class operators across 12+ sports. They design and demise the premises based on their tenants' needs. Tenants are signed to long-term leases with personal guarantees. The SportsMall is layered in amenities to further strengthen the ecosystem.

Mr. Joseph explained they currently have 15,000 – 16,000 families coming in multiple times a week with about 50,000 visits per week. Once they have a strong foundation of training, they will start adding game play and tournaments.

Commissioner Stolman asked about other training facilities within a 20-mile radius. Mr. Joseph explained there are training facilities usually run by professional athletes. SportsMall is building young people rather than professional athletes. They are not focused on the elite level of highest talent. Commissioner Stolman asked if some of the local businesses joined SportsMall. Mr. Joseph explained the furthest company that joined SportsMall was about 10 miles from the location. They identified the strongest operators and tried to encourage them to join. Over time, they will be able to continue to improve the standard. They have ongoing discussion with the local pro soccer team, and their head coach was formerly with COPA, which they work with. Their training is very unique and high-level. Other businesses see what is going on and want to up their game.

Ch. Bromberg asked about the size of the proposed SportsMall in Deerfield. Mr. Joseph explained it is very close to their California location at 230,000 square feet. They are trying to create a district that will grow and evolve over time. Once established, it will attract more business around the SportsMall. In California, they now have an accredited education facility and housing in conjunction with their sports training.

Ch. Bromberg noted Hobby Lobby and The Dump would be repurposed, not torn down. Mr. Joseph added they would grow and add other facets around it. They propose a phased approach with the second phase including hospitality, retail, an onsite academy model, and tournament growth which provides an increased demand for hotels. Initially, SportsMall proposes having soccer, gymnastics, baseball/softball, swimming, volleyball, taekwondo, basketball, yoga, sports performance and food and beverage.

Mr. Campbell discussed key factors including the importance of a drop-off/pickup zone, utilization of subterranean parking, adjacency of neighborhood grocery-anchored retail, room to expand, regional freeway accessibility and identity. He feels the SportsMall concept will be a shot in the arm for the other businesses in the area. They are a demand driver. In their current location, everyone has been in business more than 20 years. They are all proven businesses that decided to cluster into the SportsMall. They look for best-in-class businesses for long-term

leases creating a diversified rental and financial stability. They have met with multiple potential tenants in the Deerfield area already and have a lot of interest. The initial floorplan features 14 different sports uses. To accommodate basketball, they will need to expand in the rear of Hobby Lobby building. They will also need a pool, as swimming is a life skill and an important “feeder tenant”.

Commissioner Schulman questioned where parking would be accessed. Mr. Campbell explained they would have parking upfront near the main entrance to the Dump. There will be a second entrance near The Dump and another entrance at Hobby Lobby. They propose using the underground parking garage and adding another elevator in the rear of the garage to access the SportsMall. Safety is very important as they are dealing with little kids. They envision the access and drop-off area as of the SportsMall as the center of the hub which would be in the front of the Dump building. It is important that this area is safe. They also want to layer in amenities including a private school, food and beverage, sports medicine, co-working spaces, sports retail, etc. They want to boost the ecosystem and make it more powerful.

Commissioner Stolman asked if they would reach out to our local businesses such as Rootz. Mr. Campbell explained in California, all their tenants came within a 10-mile radius, which is their ideal tenant if they are best-in-class operators and are financially stable. Their ideal tenant will also be a sophisticated business with a focus on skill training.

Mr. Campbell explained this project is an investment in the community that will touch thousands of kids in the community. They are also getting into arts and music

Commissioner Keefe asked about the schooling. Mr. Hall explained the school concept is evolving. They are going into their second year of private education. He noted AI is going to have a huge impact in education and it is possible it can be disruptive to traditional education models. It will change the cost structure, flexibility and ability to personalize education to individual students. They are trying to integrate education with sports and socialization. Mr. Hall noted that young people are hiding behind technology and do not engage as much as they used to and teaching socialization and education is a big part of it. Financially, the mall is a large piece of infrastructure that is vacant when public schools are in session. They think if they incorporate education into their overall model, this will allow for more utilization of the infrastructure. Commissioner Keefe asked about the number of students. Mr. Hall explained in their Walnut Creek location, they have between 300 and 400 students. They believe their education needs to be so good that people will go there irrespective of the sports. They anticipate adding a housing component so some students can stay there. Commissioner Schulman suggested they could also have extra classes during school breaks, similar to a camp.

Commissioner Keefe asked about the proposed location of the school. Mr. Hall explained that portion will evolve organically. This center has gone through a lot of change and they expect a similar thing will happen in the sports district over time. They want a flexibility to evolve over time. Phase 1 is the SportsMall. Then in a future phase they anticipate adding education and a hospitality component. Mr. Hall believes those uses are complimentary to where this is going. They will generate demand for hotel rooms and other shelters.

Ch. Bromberg explained the Plan Commission is looking at phase 1 and can provide brief feedback on other phases, but there will not be anything concrete in front of Plan Commission to provide substantial feedback.

Commissioner Lubezny asked about scheduling at the current facility and whether the tenants work together. Mr. Hall explained scheduling is something they are focused on. Each tenant runs their own business and work their own schedules. The tenants work collaboratively but there isn't an integrated reservation system that can schedule all tenant training in one software program. They are looking at a mall-wide app that can schedule the training for all of their tenants.

Commissioner Schulman thinks this is a great idea and will be a great public amenity. He believes phase 1 sounds great but expressed concern about the parking ratio for phase 2. He noted there is a new place in Bannockburn that is being built by the Women's pro soccer team. Mr. Hall believes this will be positive noting professional teams like to be associated with SportsMall as a way to generate fan engagement. SportsMall does not see this as a competitive thing as the pro site is more interested in the elite players. SportsMall focuses on training and player development. Over time in California, all the youth clubs were working on a joint deal to use COPA's infrastructure and it is working very well.

Commissioner Rauen believes the presentation team did a great job explaining the business model. He would like to know more about the other phases and what it could look like. Mr. Hall emphasized any development is never forever. Good planning always anticipates the future will change and evolve. He would like the Commission to know this will be a magnet that attracts a lot of different uses. It is important that they are prepared for it. They want to focus on the existing improvements in phase I. In additional phases, they will come in when they have a better handle and know more about the business in Deerfield and their surge demand periods or periods when there will be a lot of people on site. He realizes the surge demand periods (and what is driving those demands) will be an important consideration of the Plan Commission. He is hesitant to plan for the entire sports district and try imagine what will happen in 5-8 years. They do plan to do some design charrettes to show possibilities as to what things may look like in the front (along Waukegan Road). He hopes to have those designs in the next few weeks. Mr. Hall commented that it is premature to jump on the next phase right away but they have made a deal with Core Acquisitions to acquire the extra outlot parcel that they don't technically need within the parking ratios they have for the first phase. He added that having that parcel will be a positive in the long term.

Commissioner Crist asked about their optimal time frame for opening. Mr. Hall explained it would depend on two factors. They first need to get their critical tenants under contract. COPA is coming in and will break the ice with other tenants. He has had a good response from other sports tenants throughout the region but needs face-to-face contact with everyone.

Ch. Bromberg asked about the hours of operation. Mr. Campbell explained they would be open between 7 and 8 am for pre-k activities. Their peak time is somewhere between 3 and 9 pm and they would have adult leagues until midnight. On weekends, they would be open from 8 to 1. They hope their basketball tenants will host tournaments 46 weeks per year. They will also host birthday parties during the afternoons. Chairman Bromberg expressed concern about traffic for the apartments behind the property. Mr. Campbell explained they host 50,000 people, but there are multiple kids in each car.

Ch. Bromberg noted the concern about safety. The Plan Commission will want to know how the drop off and pick up works. Mr. Hall explained they will have a new elevator installed near the gymnastics and swimming areas primarily for younger kids. Ch. Bromberg noted some kids may ride bicycles to the site, which would need to be accounted for.

Commissioner Keefe explained there is severe weather in this area and the applicant will need plans for these events.

Chairman Bromberg believes the commissioners are excited about this proposal. Chair Bromberg asked about a public hearing date. Mr. Ryckaert explained a pre-filing conference is needed prior to the public hearing. Mr. Ryckaert noted tonight's meeting is a very preliminary meeting to provide feedback before the pre-filing conference.

### **DOCUMENT APPROVAL**

Commissioner Crist moved, seconded by Commissioner Lubezny to approve the minutes from the April 23, 2026 Plan Commission meeting. Commissioner Schulman asked for a clarification to the minutes and staff will check the tape and make the correction. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

### **Items from the Staff**

Mr. Ryckaert reported the next meeting will be a Public Hearing on June 11. The Walden Public Hearing will be on July 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **Designation of Representative for the next Board of Trustees Meeting**

A representative is not needed for the May 4, 2026 Board of Trustees meeting.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further discussion, Commissioner Lubezny moved, seconded by Commissioner Crist, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 9:16 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeri Cotton  
Secretary