

Present: Chairperson Drummond; Vice-Chairperson Stempien; Members: Copeland, Grinnan, Ostrowski, Ruprich, Westerlund, Wilensky, and Wright
All commissioners participated remotely via Zoom from Beverly Hills, Michigan.

Absent: None

Also Present: Planning and Zoning Administrator, LaPere
Village Clerk/Assistant Manager, Rutkowski
Planning Consultant, Borden
Council Liaison, Hrydziuszeko

Drummond called the regular Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. virtually via Zoom due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Westerlund, second by Ruprich, to approve the agenda as published.

Roll call vote:

Motion passed (9-0)

REVIEW AND CONSIDER APPROVAL OF REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF MEETING HELD OCTOBER 28, 2020

Motion by Westerlund, second by Grinnan, to approve the minutes of a regular Planning Commission meeting held October 28, 2020.

Roll call vote:

Motion passed (9-0)

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE PUBLISHED AGENDA

None

DISCUSSION ON MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF PLANNING ANNUAL CONFERENCE TOPICS

LaPere provided an overview of the Michigan Association of Planning annual conference, which was held virtually October 7th through 9th. A number of the topics covered pandemic-focused themes on planning and zoning issues. In addition, social justice and the role of planning was another main theme. The keynote speaker was Richard Rothstein, author of Color of Law, who discussed the history of discriminatory housing and education policies at the local, state, and federal levels that have led to the current state of communities and discussion on how to implement positive changes.

There were a number of sessions on economic development, especially in response to the pandemic situation and resulting uncertainty. The law update covered a number of important legal rulings that have been issued this past year; including cases on signs, marijuana regulation, and zoning board of appeals decisions. Additionally, there are a number of pending legislative updates that may have implications for the Village, including potential state-wide allowance for short term rentals and additional marijuana regulations. A copy of the session list with brief descriptions was provided to the Commission for review and further discussion.

Westerlund commented on complete streets, bike lanes, and street diets.

Grinnan commented on the conference session regarding retail during the pandemic.

The Commission discussed the design of and speed limit on Southfield Road between 13 and 14 Mile Roads.

DISCUSSION ON REDEVELOPMENT READY COMMUNITIES PROGRAM – PROGRESS UPDATE

LaPere provided an overview and background information on the Redevelopment Ready Communities Program. The Village Council passed a resolution to engage in the Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) program at the meeting held July 27, 2020. Since that time the Village has been working with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to conduct the self-evaluation portion of the process towards certification. Next, the MEDC will conduct a review of the current processes, policies, and procedures to create a base-line report that will outline areas where the Village meets best practices and where the Village needs to make improvements. Upon receipt, the Village can then begin work towards achieving certification. Some of the modifications will be administrative-focused, for example updating internal processes or clarifying information on the Village website. Other areas for improvement may include updates to ordinances or other policy changes that will involve Planning Commission and Village Council.

One item that will require Planning Commission involvement is adoption of a Capital Improvements Plan. This is a six-year planning document that evaluates expenditures across departments to ensure a coordinated effort is undertaken when expending public dollars for capital projects. The Plan should be updated annually to ensure prioritization matches current fiscal conditions and community needs. Other areas that involve Planning Commission include updates to the Zoning Ordinance, as well as improvements to public engagement processes, training and engagement for appointed officials, joint meeting and annual reporting, and any updates to the Master Plan or Village Center Plan.

LaPere outlined some of the benefits of participating in the program such as: streamlining processes and procedures internally; receiving an outside review of planning, zoning and development plans, processes and policies; certified RRC is required to be eligible for other community development incentives; technical assistance match funding available; and MEDC will promote up to 3 redevelopment sites upon certification, including assistance in the development of site marketing materials and bringing those materials to conferences and events both in Michigan and across the country. Certification is a three-step process that takes place over a period of time, typical range is 1 to 3 years from engagement to certification. A copy of the best practices document was provided to the Commission.

Westerlund stated that the Village should take advantage of these opportunities.

DISCUSSION ON MASTER PLAN ACTION ITEMS – UPDATE

LaPere provided an update regarding the Village Master Plan, which was adopted in March 2016. An Action Plan table was created to help guide implementation efforts towards realizing the goals outlined in the Plan. A copy of the chart was provided to the Commission. Since adoption, a number of the tasks have been completed including amendments to the ordinance to add standards

for rezoning and conditional rezoning requests, update use tables, and priority updates to other areas of the Zoning Ordinance.

Planning Commission and Council held the annual joint meeting in February 2020 and discussed further amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, including updates to the sign and parking regulations as well as completion of the PUD ordinance. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has upended some of the planned work for 2020 and delayed adoption of ordinance language that was drafted earlier in the year. Currently, we have amendments for PUD and parking regulations drafted and ready for public hearing and consideration by Council.

In addition to concerns raised regarding conformance with the Supreme Court ruling on content neutrality, this year has seen the courts rule on other aspects of sign ordinances that may impact the Village. Administration is working with the Planning Consultant and Village Attorney to review those rulings and make recommendations for changes to the sign ordinance accordingly. We have also drafted language to update the Zoning Board of Appeals section of the Zoning Ordinance to clarify standards in conformance with the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act requirements.

As part of our participation in the RRC program, the Village will be working on a number of Action Items, including Z3 – Site Plan Review, P2 – Village Center (marketing efforts), and P5 – CIP. As a recommending body, the Planning Commission works under the direction of the Village Council. Accordingly, a joint meeting with Council will be held in February to discuss the policy goals and project prioritization for the next year. Lastly, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Section 125.3845 requires the Planning Commission review the Master Plan at least every five years upon adoption. Therefore, the Commission must conduct that review next year and make a determination as to the status of the current Master Plan.

The Commission discussed their previous work on the Parking and PUD Ordinances earlier this year and having the public hearings on these items take place at the next meeting.

Ostrowski suggested aligning the Redevelopment Ready Communities Program priorities with the Master Plan priorities.

Drummond noted that the Commission will set priorities at the January meeting to prepare for the February joint meeting with the Village Council.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

LIAISON COMMENTS

Hrydziuszko provided an update on the election results, stating the millage renewal passed and two new people would be joining the Village Council. She is interested in a Safe Routes to School grant opportunity.

ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS

LaPere gave an update on the Electronic Meetings rules that Council recently passed, which also apply to the Commission.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

The Commissioners wished one another a Happy Thanksgiving.

Stempien congratulated Allie Ruprich on a win against Florida.

Westerlund stated the flood light on a sign on 14 Mile Road is very bright for drivers.

Drummond asked about the status of the proposed day care on Lahser. He asked the Commissioners to review the Master Plan. He thanked Hrydziuszko for her work as the Council liaison to the Planning Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Andrew Drummond
Chairperson

Kristin Rutkowski
Village Clerk