



Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

The Planning Commission met for a Regular Committee Meeting, March 20, 2025, at
6:30 p.m. at City Hall,
102 Butler St., Saugatuck, MI 49453.

1. Call to Order/Attendance:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Manns at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Commission members: Bagierek, Baldwin, Clark, Gaunt, LaChey, Manns, & Marineau.

Absent: None.

Others Present: Planning & Zoning Director Thompson, Deputy Clerk Williams, City Planning Consultant Jirousek (Horizon Planning) .

2. Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Lachey, second by Bagierek, to approve the agenda for March 20, 2024. Upon voice vote, motion carried unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes:

Motion Gaunt, second by Baldwin, to approve the minutes for the regular meeting held on February 20, 2025. Upon voice vote, motion carried unanimously.

4. Public Comment (Agenda Items Only):

- Paul Whitfield (450 Spear St): He was hoping to be in attendance at the meeting but is travelling for work. He wanted to thank the committee for all of their work and looks forward to the vote tonight.

5. Old Business:

1. 450 Spear St – Special Land Use request for rental of an Accessory Dwelling Unit.

Motion by LaChey, second by Gaunt, to approve the special land use request to allow the rental of the detached ADU at 450 Spear Street based on compliance with the ADU Rental Requirements of Section 154.092 J, satisfaction of site plan approval standards of Section 151.060, and positive findings related to the special land use standards of approval as stated in Section 154.080. Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously. The Public Hearing was closed at 6:35pm.

2. 515 St. Joseph St – Special Land Use request for rental of an Accessory Dwelling Unit.

Motion by Clark, second by Bagierek, to approve the application for 515 St. Joseph Street based on compliance with the ADU Rental Requirements of Section 154.092 J, satisfaction of site plan approval standards of Section 151.060, and positive findings related to the special land use standards of approval as stated in Section 154.080. Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously. The Public Hearing was closed at 6:36pm.

3. 306 Mary St – Special Land Use request for rental of an Accessory Dwelling Unit.

Motion by Marineau, second by LaChey, to approve the application for 306 Mary Street based on compliance with the ADU Rental Requirements of Section 154.092 J, satisfaction of site plan approval standards of Section 151.060, and positive findings related to the special land use standards of approval as stated in Section 154.080. Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously. The Public Hearing was closed at 6:38pm.

6. **New Business:**

A. **825 Bridge St – Public Hearing for a Special Land Use request for rental of an Accessory Dwelling Unit.**

Public Hearing

A. Hearing was called to order by Chair Manns on 3/20/25 at 6:38pm.

B. Summary by Zoning Director:

Planning & Zoning Director Thompson said that the applicant has applied for special land use approval to rent an existing attached accessory dwelling unit (ADU) in accordance with Section 154.026(C)(3) of the Zoning Ordinance.

C. Presentation by the Applicant.

D. Public comment regarding the application:

1. Supporting comments: None.
2. Opposing comments: None.
3. General comments: None.
4. Repeat comment opportunity (Supporting, Opposing, General): None.

E. Public comment portion closed by Chair Manns at 6:43pm.

F. Commission deliberation:

The commission deliberates and makes a motion to approve the application.

G. Commission action:

Motion by Gaunt, second by Baldwin, to approve the special land use request to allow the rental of the detached ADU at 825 Bridge Street based on compliance with

the ADU rental requirements of Section 154.092 J, satisfaction of the site plan approval standards of Section 151.060, and the positive findings related to the special land use standards of approval in Section 154.080 that are documented in the staff memo dated March 14, 2025. Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

B. Review of Zoning Districts:

The Commission discussed the need to review commercial and residential zoning districts, with Director of Planning & Zoning Thompson and City Planning Consultant Jirousek providing background information. The Commission agrees to create a chart comparing different zoning districts to assess compatibility and dimensional requirements. The chart will be prepared for review in the April meeting, with a preliminary look at all districts.

C. Review of Accessory Dwelling Units – Kitchens and Cooking:

The Commission reviewed the topic of kitchens and cooking in Accessory Dwelling Units and said there aren't any issues at this time. If problems arise in the future, the Commission could look at them again at that time. They recommended no changes at this time.

D. Updates to Sign Regulations:

City Attorney Cunningham (Fleis & VandenBrink) discussed the need to update sign regulations as the current regulations are not in compliance, which invites litigation and ordinances to be stricken down. He noted the Reed vs. Gilbert case, which prohibits content-based sign regulations. Cunningham explained the legal implications of the case and the need for time, place, and manner restrictions. The Commission agreed to draft a new sign regulation framework that standardizes temporary yard signs and aligns with zoning ordinances.

E. Chickens:

The Commission discussed the possibility of allowing chickens within the city, considering factors like licenses, lot coverage, and setbacks. Director of Planning & Zoning Thompson and Commissioner Marineau provided background information on other cities' approaches to chicken regulations. The Commission decided to defer further action on this topic until the city's other priorities are addressed.

F. Master Planning:

The Planning Commission discussed the steps for a Tri-Community Plan, emphasizing the need for public involvement and a detailed character analysis. A joint Planning Commission meeting with Douglas and Saugatuck Township was proposed to discuss the Tri-Community Master Plan. City Planner Jirousek (Horizon Planning) highlighted the importance of zoning district analysis and public engagement, suggesting a summer focus. The Commission debated the timeline, estimating it to be a 1 ½ - 2-year project. They considered a city-specific plan with a regional overlay, balancing city-specific needs with the neighboring communities' cooperation. The Council will decide on the approach, with a preference for a Tri-Community plan.

7. **Communications:** None.

8. **Reports of Officers and Committees:**

A. Planning & Zoning Report: Planning and Zoning Director Thompson reviewed his report, including open and closed cases.

9. **Public Comments:** None.

10. **Commissioner Comments:**

- Baldwin – None.
- LaChey - He commended Jirousek on his memos, particularly he liked the conclusion on the Chicken memo. He expressed interest in the Master Plan Memo and thought it was well laid out.
- Clark – He thought it was a good meeting and that they accomplished a lot.
- Marineau – He thanked Jirousek and the Commission for entertaining the two issues that he brought forward. He is happy to be a part of this commission.
- Gaunt – She thought it was a fantastic meeting and said it was a job well done.
- Bagierek – None.
- Manns – He thanked Jirousek for all the work that he put into the documents for the packet. He appreciates that he takes on the task of putting some of the charts together for their future meetings. He feels positive that they are moving forward in the right direction.

11. **Adjournment:**

Motion by Gaunt, second by Clark, to approve adjournment of the meeting. Upon voice vote, motion carried unanimously. Chair Manns adjourned the meeting at 8:16 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Williams, Deputy Clerk