

**CITY OF IONIA**  
**Planning Commission**  
**September 10, 2014**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**

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- CALL TO ORDER The Regular Meeting of the City of Ionia Planning Commission for September 10, 2014 was called to order by Chairperson Chris Young at 4:32 PM.
- ROLL CALL Roll Call revealed Commissioners Dave Cook, Boomer Hoppough, Gordon Kelley, Tim Lee, Evonne Ulmer and Chris Young present. Commissioner Mark Jennings was excused.
- City Manager Jason Eppler, Public Safety Officer Doug DeVries and Planning Consultant Tim Johnson were also present.
- APPROVAL OF AGENDA Chairperson Young reviewed the agenda with the Commission. After review, it was moved by Commissioner Cook, seconded by Commissioner Hoppough to approve the agenda for the September 10, 2014 meeting as presented. MOTION CARRIED.
- APPROVAL OF MINUTES The Commission reviewed the minutes of the August 13, 2014 Regular Meeting. After review it was moved by Commissioner Ulmer, seconded by Commissioner Cook to approve the minutes of the August 13, 2014 Commission meeting as presented. MOTION CARRIED.
- PUBLIC HEARING Chairperson Young opened the Public Hearing to receive comments on proposed Ordinance No. 517 which, if approved, revises Chapter 1264 of the City Code, the Flood Plan Overlay District, to incorporate the 2014 FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map. No comments were received.
- PUBLIC COMMENTS None.
- OLD BUSINESS Reuse of Current Sparrow Ionia Hospital Facility: Mr. Johnson provided the Commission an update on his efforts to develop the framework for a sub-area plan for the reuse of the current Sparrow Ionia Hospital facility. He stated that he has collected utility information regarding the property as well as an inventory of rental units on the streets around the hospital. He suggested that the next step is for the Commission to take a walking tour of the

streets/neighborhoods around the hospital as well as a tour of the hospital building. Chairperson Young suggested that the Commission complete this “walking tour” as part of the October 8<sup>th</sup> meeting and asked the City Manager to coordinate the visit with hospital staff.

Ordinance Amendment – Flood Plain Overlay District: The City Manager stated that based on FEMA developing the new Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the City and surrounding areas, it is necessary to amend Chapter 1264, the Flood Plain Overlay District of the City Code. He reviewed with the Commission proposed Ordinance No. 517 which amends Chapter 1264 and incorporates the new maps into the City Charter. He stated that now that the Commission has conducted the required Public Hearing on the proposed ordinance, it may recommend adoption to the City Council.

After discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Cook, seconded by Commissioner Ulmer to recommend to the City Council that Ordinance No. 517, which revises Chapter 1264 of the City Code, the Flood Plain Overlay District, to incorporate the 2014 FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps, be adopted. MOTION CARRIED.

2015 East Fargo/Jackson/Jefferson Project: The City Manager reported that design work is underway for the reconstruction of East Fargo (Division to Jefferson); North Jackson Street (Lincoln Avenue to East Fargo Street); and, North Jefferson Street (Lincoln Avenue to North City Limit). At the August meeting the Commission discussed whether the section of East Fargo Street between Ridgewood Drive and North Jackson Street, should be closed to traffic, the street removed and a sidewalk installed to link the areas east and west of this section of Street.

As requested by the Commission at the August meeting, the City Manager distributed a schematic prepared by the City Engineer illustrating a design for removing and replacing the street along this section of East Fargo and incorporating a sidewalk. Two 10’ driving lanes could be installed as long as the sidewalk along the eastern portion of the block is contiguous to the street and a retaining wall is installed below.

Chairperson Young expressed his concern regarding continuing with a street along this block. He stated that there are issues associated with limited or no line of vision/site distance when turning off of Jackson Street onto East Fargo Street, westbound. He also stated that the west bound stop

sign on East Fargo Street at Ridgewood Drive is frequently ignored with vehicles traveling well above the posted speed limit. Finally, he expressed concern over traffic using East Fargo Street/Union Street as a “cut thru” to avoid East Lincoln Avenue although these streets are intended to be neighborhood streets rather than collectors.

The Commission conducted a lengthy discussion regarding whether this block of East Fargo Street should be one-way (east bound) in order to address the concerns expressed by Chairperson Young. The consensus was that this would create difficulties in accessing the home located at 271 East Fargo Street.

The Commission asked that the City Manager to have the City Engineer develop a schematic showing two-way traffic along this block on East Fargo but with the grade lowered at the East Fargo Street/North Jackson Street intersection.

The Commission then discussed the sidewalk network in the East Fargo Street, North Jackson Street, North Jefferson Street areas. It was the consensus of the Commission to continue with sidewalks on both sides of North Jackson Street and North Jefferson Street and along the south side of East Fargo Street.

The Commission also discussed the speed of traffic along North Jefferson Street and options for “calming” traffic as part of the reconstruction project. Commissioner Kelly suggested that bump outs be strategically placed along the street to narrow the street at certain locations. Several other suggestions were offered. The Commission requested that the City Manager work with the City Engineer in developing some options for the Commission to review at the October meeting.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Ordinance Amendment – Off-Street Parking & Loading: Mr. Johnson advised that one of the items on the Commission’s “to do” list is updating the standards contained in the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to off-street parking and loading. He reviewed with the Commission a memo that he prepared outlining the proposed changes to several standards pertaining to off-street parking and loading. He asked that the Commission review the memo and be prepared to discuss it at the October meeting.

#### COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

The Commission discussed the rails to trails project.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner Hoppough, seconded by  
Commissioner Lee to adjourn the meeting at 5:50 PM.  
MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jason Eppler  
City Manager  
Recording Secretary for Dave Cook, Secretary