

CITY OF IONIA
Planning Commission
January 13, 2021
Regular Meeting Minutes

- CALL TO ORDER Vice Chairperson Paton called the Regular Meeting of the City of Ionia Planning Commission for January 13, 2021 to order at 4:38 PM.
- ROLL CALL Present: Commissioners Ted Paton, Judy Swartz, and Tim Lee.
- Absent: Commissioners David Cook, Michael Donaldson, Boomer Hoppough, and Ryan Videtich
- Also Present: Planning Consultant Jan Johnson, City Manager Gregg Guetschow and several members of the public.
- DISCUSSION Lacking a quorum, Vice Chairperson Paton asked Jan Johnson to provide an overview of two proposed ordinances addressing housing issues. The first ordinance presented would permit dwelling units on the first floor of properties in the B-2 district. The second ordinance would establish an Attached Urban Housing Planned Unit Development District. This PUD would address the “missing middle” identified in the Master Plan. This approach is providing popular for the transitional edge of downtown areas.
- It was the consensus of the Commissioners that further discussion regarding the ordinances should be deferred until more members of the Commission are present.
- City Manager Guetschow provided a preliminary update regarding Planning Commissioners priorities for Master Plan goals and actions.
- QUORUM Commissioner Videtich joined the meeting at 5:06 PM. Mr. Guetschow advised Vice Chairman Paton that a quorum was now present.
- APPROVAL OF AGENDA It was moved by Commissioner Lee and seconded by Commissioner Swartz that the agenda of the meeting of December 9, 2020 be approved as written. MOTION CARRIED.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Jan Johnson stated that the portion of the proposed minutes for the December 9, 2020 meeting addressing the variance requested for 439 West Washington street needed to more clearly reflect the action taken by the Planning Commission. She offered clarifying language for the second paragraph of that portion of the meeting:

It was moved by Commissioner Swartz and seconded by Commissioner Lee that the minutes of the meeting of December 9, 2020 be approved as amended by restating the second paragraph addressing the use variance at 439 West Washington Street to read as follows: "It was moved by Commissioner Cook, seconded by Commissioner Swartz to recommend the Zoning Board of Appeals not approve the use variance for 439 W. Washington Street in finding that the variance request does not meet the four standards required for Planning Commission review which including consideration of the Master Plan, ability of property use, effect on essential character and any other factors." MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Vice Chairperson Paton opened the public hearing to received comments on the request submitted by The Machine Inc. for site plan approval and special land use permit approval for an Adult Use Marihuana Establishment to be located at 29 Beardsley Road.

David Bye, President of ArCanna, noted that his company had previously gone through the procedures to obtain approvals for medical marihuana facilities and that these applications duplicate the process for an adult use establishment.

As there were no further public comments, Vice Chairman Paton closed the public hearing.

Vice Chairman Paton opened the public hearing to receive comments on the request submitted by Scott and Toni Feehan for site plan approval and special land use permit approval for a plant material nursery to be located at 260 S. Dexter Street.

Mr. Feehan described their plans for the site which include removing a double-wide manufactured home and the addition of chain link fence across the front of the property.

Pete Sanford, owner of 300 S. Steele Street, noted that his property had been denied a special land use permit in 2019 as

it did not conform to the Steele Street Corridor plan. He said the Commission should adhere to the Corridor plan standards for this property as well.

John Dinehart, owner of 128 W. Washington Street, referred to the prior precedents applied on Steele Street and said that he did not see how the proposal would harmonize with the Corridor plan.

Mr. Feehan said that the proposed use is permitted in the current zoning district for the site.

As there were no further public comments, Vice Chairperson Paton closed the public hearing.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Vice Chairperson Paton called for general public comments. No comments offered.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to come before the Commission.

NEW BUSINESS

Consider The Machine Inc. request for site plan approval and special land use permit approval for an Adult Use Marihuana Retailer Establishment to be located at 29 Beardsley Road.

Ms. Johnson informed the Commission that she had only recently become aware that this matter was placed on the agenda for this meeting and had not had an opportunity to review the application and site plan. She described the process for reviewing applications and site plans that had been used for medical marihuana facilities. Commissioner Videtich expressed reservations about moving this matter forward without a full review. Commissioner Swartz supported following the prior procedure to insure the review is done correctly.

It was moved by Commissioner Videtich and seconded by Commissioner Lee that the request from The Machine Inc. for site plan approval and special land use permit approval for an Adult Use Marihuana Retailer Establishment to be located at 29 Beardsley Road be postponed until the meeting of February 10. MOTION CARRIED.

Consider Scott and Toni Feehan request for site plan approval and special land use permit approval for a plant material nursery to be located at 260 S. Dexter Street.

Ms. Johnson said she had received the site plan too late to complete a comprehensive review but provided the Commission with an abbreviated report. She noted the lack of conformance with the Steele Street Corridor plan and that a number of items typically included on site plans were missing. Commissioners referenced the Steele Street Corridor plan and expressed an interest in providing additional site plan information before proceeding with their review.

Mr. Guetschow asked Commissioners to consider the threshold question of whether the use as proposed would meet the definition of a plant materials nursery. Commissioners noted the disproportionate amount of area devoted to landscaping materials as compared to plant materials.

No action was taken on the request.

Discussion regarding 5-2 amendments for 1st floor dwellings and Attached Urban Housing Planned Unit Development District.

Commissioner Lee proposed postponing discussion until the next meeting when more members would be present. Commissioners Swartz and Paton said they would be interested in learning more about what other cities have done regarding this.

COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner Lee and seconded by Commissioner Videtich to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 PM.
MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully Submitted,
Gregg Guetschow, Recording Secretary,
for David Cook, Secretary