

**CITY OF IONIA**  
**Planning Commission**  
**August 11, 2021**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Hoppough called the Regular Meeting of the City of Ionia Planning Commission for August 11, 2021 to order at 4:31 PM.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners David Cook, Mike Donaldson, Tim Lee, Ryan Videtich (4:33 PM), and Boomer Hoppough.

Absent: Commissioner Judy Swartz

Also Present: Planning Consultant Brad Kotrba, City Manager Precia Garland, DDA Director Linda Curtis, Assistant to the City Manager Jonathan Bowman, and several members of the public.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chairperson Hoppough introduced the agenda and asked if there were any requested changes. No changes were requested. It was moved by Commissioner Cook and seconded by Commissioner Lee to approve the agenda as presented. MOTION CARRIED.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the regular meeting of July 14 were reviewed. It was moved by Cook, seconded by Lee to approve the minutes from July 14. MOTION CARRIED.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Public Hearing to receive comments on the final development plan and rezoning application for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) District located at 533 East Washington Street (previously 520 East Washington Street). The aforementioned PUD would be enacted through proposed Ordinance No. 557 AC Development Planned Unit Development (PUD) District.

Chairperson Hoppough opened the floor to receive comments on the Public Hearing.

Planning Consultant Brad Kotrba introduced the development giving a brief overview of the project and the intentions of the developer.

David Velasquez of 518 Lafayette Street spoke his concerns of the development being subsidized housing. He did not agree with the idea of rezoning a property to meet different standards than what he is required to abide by because he is trying to rent part of his home.

Laura Vroman of 111 Forest Hill spoke on concerns related to the landscaping and density. She noted that the property is smaller than it appears on paper because of the unusable portion on the south side. She believes this should be taken into consideration when determining the allowed density. She also spoke on the need for a barrier between the proposed development and properties on Forest Hill. Her concerns included the need for tree replacement.

Another resident living on Lafayette Street asked questions about the timeline for the development and location of the different phases of the project.

The applicant Greg Cook addressed the concerns brought forth about the development. He informed everyone that the development is intended for a senior citizen demographic and will be priced well above market rate. He outlined that work for the project will begin as soon as approval is received with an estimated completion by spring or summer 2022. Once the project at 533 E. Washington is completed, he intends to move forward with developing at 520 E. Washington.

Chairperson Hoppough read the concerns submitted by Neil DuBois. The concerns were that the PUD proposal will reduce property home values and attract a bad clientele.

Chairperson Hoppough closed the Public Hearing at 4:56 PM.

It was moved by Donaldson and seconded by Lee to allow Chairperson Hoppough to abstain from the discussion and voting of this proposal as he may be involved in the financing of the development. MOTION CARRIED.

It was moved by Lee and seconded by Donaldson to all Commissioner Cook to abstain from the discussion and voting of this proposal as he is related to the applicant. MOTION CARRIED.

Assistant to the City Manager Bowman provided an update that since the last time the proposal was seen by the Commission a lot split has occurred creating new parcel numbers and addresses for the property involved. The new address for this development is 533 East Washington Street instead of the originally provided 520 East Washington Street.

Planning Consultant Kotrba reviewed his report conducted on the proposal by identifying the required PUD and site plan standards as well as the outstanding items needed for the final development plan.

City Manager Garland informed the Commission on the original reason for a drainage easement on the property and additional required distance between the buildings that resulted. The revised plans show the removal of the additional spacing between the buildings because the City is looking into alternative options. The City does not intend to use the drainage infrastructure existing on the property. A plan is being made in coordination with the City Engineer to resolve this stormwater issue without a drainage easement down the middle of this property.

**MOTION SHEET FOR PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM 6A**  
**AC Development – 533 (520) East Washington Street**

**1266.04 Development Requirements (PUD)**

- (a) Density. The density for residential uses shall not exceed the density recommended by the City of Ionia Master Plan for the area in which the PUD is to be located. In each case, the maximum density for residential uses shall be determined by the City Council after review by the Planning Commission based on the standards contained in Section 1266.05(i).
- (b) Dwelling Unit Computation. The density permitted by the City Council shall be multiplied by the net development area of the site in order to determine the maximum number of dwelling units permitted for the site. The net development area is determined by subtracting the following from the gross or total site area:
  - 1) The area within existing road rights-of-way.
  - 2) One-half of the land within the 100-year floodplain.
  - 3) One-half of areas permanently inundated by water.
- (c) Open Space. Each PUD shall contain open space areas equal to a minimum of ten percent of the gross acreage devoted to residential uses in a PUD. The applicant shall provide documentation which demonstrates to the satisfaction of the City Council that such open space areas are preserved and maintained.

For the benefit of the residents of the PUD, the Planning Commission may also require recreational amenities or facilities such as basketball and tennis courts, play structures, bike paths, ball fields and other similar recreational amenities.

- (d) Mixed Uses. Residential and non-residential uses may be permitted within the same PUD district upon demonstration to the City Council that such uses meet the intent of this chapter. It shall also be demonstrated that the non-residential uses will not negatively impact the residential uses and that the non-residential uses will be separated and buffered from residential uses in a manner consistent with good land planning principles.

The permitted density for residential uses in a mixed use development shall be determined by the City Council upon recommendation of the Planning Commission.

- (e) Applicable Regulations. The City Council, upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, may modify the lot size, lot width, setbacks, structure height, signs, parking, landscaping, general provisions and other applicable regulations of this Zoning Code. Such waiver or modification shall be based on the application of site planning criteria to achieve integration of the project with the characteristics of the project area. In making these determinations, the criteria considered shall include the following:
  - 1) Number and type of dwelling units.
  - 2) Proximity to adjacent existing and future land uses. The extent to which the PUD is buffered from adjacent and nearby existing land uses, by landscaping or other means.
  - 3) Preservation of existing vegetation or other natural features on site.

- 4) Topography on the site.
- 5) Provision of public or community water and sanitary sewer.
- 6) Appropriateness of the lots as building sites.
- 7) Overall design of the project relative to its compatibility with nearby existing or proposed land uses.

#### **1276.07 Standards for Approval (Site Plan)**

- (a) Prior to approving a site plan, the Planning Commission shall require that the following standards be satisfied. If these standards and the other requirements noted in this section or in other City ordinances are met, the site plan shall be approved.
- (b) The Planning Commission shall have the authority to limit the number of driveways for a site, to require that parking lots on contiguous parcels be connected, that driveways for contiguous parcels be shared, and that opposite driveways be directly aligned.
- (c) Landscaping shall be provided and designed in accordance with the City's landscape provisions.
- (d) All elements of the site plan shall be designed to take into account the site's topography, the size and type of lot, the character of adjoining property and the type and size of buildings. The site shall be developed so as not to impede the normal and orderly development or improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in this Zoning Code.
- (e) The landscape shall be preserved in its natural state, insofar as practical, by removing only those areas of vegetation or by making those alterations to the topography which are reasonably necessary to develop the site in accordance with the requirements of this Zoning Code. A development shall respect the natural resources of the City.
- (f) Areas of natural drainage, such as swales, wetlands, ponds, or swamps, shall be protected and preserved insofar as practical in their natural state to provide areas for natural habitat, preserve drainage patterns and maintain the natural characteristics of the land.
- (g) The site plan shall provide reasonable visual and sound privacy for all dwelling units located therein. Fences, walks, barriers, and landscaping shall be used, as appropriate, to accomplish these purposes.
- (h) All buildings or groups of buildings shall be arranged so as to permit necessary emergency vehicle access as requested by the City Fire Department.
- (i) In recognition that a sidewalk system along City streets would enhance pedestrian safety and conserve energy through non-motorized transportation opportunities, sidewalks shall be required as determined by the Planning Commission during the site plan review process. Sidewalks, if required, shall be constructed in accordance with the City of Ionia sidewalk standards. Additions to or renovations of buildings, existing as of the effective date of this chapter, which require site plan review, shall be subject to the requirements herein. In determining the need for a sidewalk, the following criteria shall be considered:
  1. The amount of current and future pedestrian traffic passing by the site.
  2. Whether a sidewalk would enhance the safety of pedestrians currently walking by the site as well as the safety of future pedestrians.
  3. The existing and future volume of traffic on the street abutting the site.

4. The existence or probability of sidewalks being constructed on adjacent properties in order to create or complete a usable sidewalk system.
  5. The location of the proposed use.
  6. The location of pedestrian attractors such as schools, churches, public buildings, and shopping opportunities.
- (j) The arrangement of public or common ways for vehicular and pedestrian circulation shall be connected to existing or planned streets and pedestrian or bicycle pathways in the area. Streets and drives which are part of an existing or planned street pattern serving adjacent development shall be of a condition appropriate to the traffic volume and type of traffic they will carry.
- (k) Appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure that removal of surface waters will not adversely affect neighboring properties or the public storm water drainage system. Provisions shall be made to accommodate storm water, prevent erosion, particularly during construction, and prevent the formation of dust. The use of detention/retention ponds may be required. Surface water on all paved areas shall be collected at intervals so that it will not obstruct the flow of vehicular or pedestrian traffic or create puddles in paved areas. The Planning Commission may, in its discretion, require catch basins to contain oil filters or traps to prevent contaminants from being discharged to the natural drainage system.
- (l) Exterior lighting shall be arranged so that illumination is deflected away from adjacent properties and so that it does not interfere with the vision of the motorist along adjacent streets. Flashing or intermittent lights shall not be permitted. Excessive lighting of buildings or structures shall be minimized to reduce light pollution.

Street lights which conform to the City of Ionia specifications for street lighting shall be installed within the right-of-way along all streets abutting the parcel. The Planning Commission may, in its discretion, require these same street lights to be installed on the parcel at locations which are close to the street in order to maintain a consistent lighting theme along City streets.

- (m) Outside storage areas, including areas for the storage of trash shall conform to the regulations contained in Chapter 1060 of these Codified Ordinances.
- (n) Maneuvering space for trucks using on-site loading areas shall be provided on-premises and shall not necessitate the use of the public right-of-way.
- (o) Site plans shall conform to all applicable requirements of County, State and Federal statutes, and approval may be conditioned on the applicant receiving necessary County, State and Federal permits before final site plan approval or any occupancy permit is granted.

### **Staff Listed Conditions**

1. Before issuing any City permits, the applicant shall have paid all applications, permits, and other fees related to the request.
2. The applicant shall comply with any requirements from the City's Department of Public Safety, City Engineer, County Road Commission, County Drain Commissioner, or other approving agency.
3. The proposed PUD shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local requirements, and copies of all relevant permits shall be submitted to the City.

4. The applicant shall submit all missing site plan and PUD plan items required in Sections 1266.05 (e)(2) and 1276.05 (c) of the Zoning Ordinance, unless expressly waived by the Planning Commission.
5. The applicant shall include dwelling unit calculations on the site plan according to Section 1266.04 (b) of the Zoning Ordinance.
6. Total acreage or square footage of open space and green space areas shall be indicated on the site plan according to Section 1266.04 (c) of the Zoning Ordinance. An open space dedication and maintenance agreement shall be provided and approved by the City Council.
7. The applicant shall list all requested deviations from R-1 zoning district standards on the site plan.
8. Parking spaces shall comply with the minimum dimensional requirements in Section 1282.02. In addition, two ADA-accessible parking spaces shall be provided.
9. All lighting details shall be submitted to the Zoning Administrator for review and shall meet the standards of Section 1282.02 (j) and 1286.04. Parking lot light poles shall not exceed 20 feet in height.
10. The applicant shall meet the front yard landscape standards of Section 1286.03 (n), including eighteen (18) shrubs in the front yard, five (5) additional evergreen trees in the front yard, and one (1) additional tree for parking lot landscaping. In addition, tree size requirements in Section 1286.03 (g) shall also be met.
11. The roof-mounted solar energy systems shall not extend more than two feet above the roofline and shall not exceed 42 inches in height as measured from the point of attachment to the roof, as required in Section 1288.05.
12. A solar energy system that is no longer used for its intended purpose shall be removed within 60 days of notification by the Community Development Director.
13. The applicant shall comply with all stipulations of the Department of Public Safety, including the following:
  - a. The length of the dead-end road that leads to the west should be indicated on the site plan and shall be no more than 150 feet.
  - b. All curbs in front of the structure (south side of the access road) shall be labeled a fire lane due to the 24-foot access road width.
14. Any new street lights shall conform to the City of Ionia specifications for street lighting and be installed within the right-of-way.

Moved by Commissioner Donaldson and seconded by Commissioner Videtich to recommend the City Council approves Ordinance No. 557 amending the Zoning Chapter of the City Code creating Chapter 1273 AC Development Planned Unit Development (PUD) District at 533 East Washington Street. This recommendation is based on the findings that the proposed use complies with the Planned Unit Development requirements of Section 1266.04 and the site plan standards of Section 1276.07 of the Code of Ordinances, as detailed and discussed above, subject to the approval by staff of the resolution of remaining site plan and binder issues as noted in the above staff conditions. MOTION CARRIED.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Consider one-year extension of the Special Land Use (SLU) permit originally approved August 12, 2020 for Michigan Provisioning Center for medical marijuana provisioning center at 420 South Steele Street. New effective date would be August 12, 2021.

City Manager Garland provided a staff report explaining the request.

Two letters from Shaun Mansour on behalf of Michigan Provisioning were sent to the City requesting the extension.

Moved by Commissioner Cook and seconded by Commissioner Donaldson to grant the one-year extension of the SLU for Michigan Provisioning Center at 420 South Steele Street, effective August 12, 2021 (expiration August 12, 2022). MOTION CARRIED.

## **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Donaldson had an inquiry into how approved landscaping requirements are enforced on projects years after approval.

City Manager Garland noted that the approvals granted by the Planning Commission are set in the City Ordinance and it is the City's responsibility to ensure the landscaping requirements are maintained.

Chairperson Boomer commented on the importance of code enforcement and holding property owners to our standards. He stated that he would like to turn the Commission's focus to their identified priorities such as the M-66 and M-21 corridors.

Commissioner Cook commented on the need for enforcement of the City Code through code enforcement officers.

Commissioner Lee mentioned that change is incremental as seen through the Steele Street improvements.

Commissioner Videtich sees the need to create space for opportunity and he likes the idea of a fund to support this goal.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Precia Garland, Recording Secretary,  
for David Cook, Secretary