

CITY OF IONIA
Planning Commission
September 11, 2013
Regular Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER The Regular Meeting of the City of Ionia Planning Commission for September 11, 2013 was called to order by Vice-Chairperson Chris Young at 4:07 PM.

ROLL CALL Roll Call revealed Commissioners Dave Cook, Boomer Hoppough, Gordon Kelley, Tim Lee, and Chris Young present.

City Manager Jason Eppler, Public Safety Officer Doug DeVries and Planning Consultant Tim Johnson were also present.

Others present included:

Lee Deitrick, John Deitrick, Lynne Bowbeer, Julianne Burns, Christy Valentine, Jeff Parker, Steve Fountain, Lynn Lafler and John Prominski.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA Vice-Chairperson Young reviewed the agenda with the Commission. After review, it was moved by Commissioner Cook, seconded by Commissioner Kelley to approve the agenda for the September 11, 2013 meeting as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES The Commission reviewed the minutes of the August 14, 2013 Regular Meeting. After review it was moved by Commissioner Cook, seconded by Commissioner Kelley to approve the minutes of the August 14, 2013 Commission meeting as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

PUBLIC COMMENTS Lynne Bowbeer, 306 East Main Street, distributed a letter regarding the proposed Resurrection Life Church project and the preservation of buildings located along West Main Street in the central business district. She also questioned whether Commissioner Lee should be involved in the discussion regarding the proposed Church project considering that at the August meeting he referenced that he periodically attends services at the Church.

OLD BUSINESS Resurrection Life Church – Request for Rezoning and Site Plan Approval: Architect Jeffrey Parker presented an updated site plan for the Resurrection Life Church project. He stated that since the August meeting the Church has hired a structural engineer to complete an assessment of the

condition of the buildings located at 418 and 420 West Main Streets. He advised that after the engineer inspected both buildings it was determined that in addition to saving the Main Street facades of both buildings, the southern 35 feet of both buildings can be saved as well. He also stated that the northern portions of the buildings are not salvageable due to significant rot and masonry deterioration due to water damage caused by leaking roofs.

Mr. Parker further stated that further investigation has revealed that there is a buried telecommunication cable under Dallas Alley which prevents the expansion of the current Church east across the alley to 420 West Main Street unless the cable is relocated at an estimated cost of \$250,000.

Taking into consideration the findings of the structural engineer along with the recent information regarding the buried telecommunication cable, the Church has revised its site plan. The proposed new plan (dated September 11, 2013) calls for the construction of a second story skywalk between the current Church building and 420 West Main Street. Additionally, the updated site plan calls for the building at 418 West Main Street to be expanded by 6' 5" east into the City owned parcel located at 416 West Main Street (former Olexa property). Finally, the updated site plan proposes a reconfiguration of the proposed parking lot. This reconfiguration results in an additional 12 off-street parking spaces.

Mr. Parker solicited feedback from the Commission regarding the revised site plan with the goal of incorporating their thoughts into an updated complete set of plans that will be submitted in time for review at the Commission's October 9th meeting.

Planning Consultant Johnson offered suggestions for the next round of submittals which included showing pedestrian lighting in the walkways that link West Main Street with the proposed new parking lot. He also suggested that the building elevations that will be submitted include renderings of the proposed skywalk. Finally, he advised that since the City's property at 416 West Main Street was not originally proposed to be rezoned from B-2 to Resurrection Life Church PUD, a new Public Hearing should be noticed and held.

Commissioner Hoppough asked Mr. Parker if preserving the southern 35' of the buildings at 418 and 420 West Main Street

results in significant extra expense to the Church. Mr. Parker advised that he thought that the cost of preservation was about equal with removal and reconstruction.

Commissioner Kelley inquired about the exterior of the new construction that will be attached to the portions of 418 and 420 West Main Street that will be preserved. Mr. Parker advised that it will be brick/block masonry of a style that complements the exterior of the buildings along this block.

Commissioner Young complemented the Church in addressing the historic preservation concerns including the re-use and restoration of the building facades at 418 and 420 West Main Street.

Commissioner Kelley stated that the latest site plan reviewed by Mr. Parker achieves everything the community wants to be achieved; namely, building façade preservation and restoration and an improved parking lot design which addresses parking deficiencies in this area of the central business district.

Commissioner Hoppough stated that he is in full support of the revised plan, regardless of the historic preservation aspect, and believes the City Council should support the use of 6'5" of the City's property at 416 West Main Street to facilitate the project.

Commissioner Cook stated that he supports the preservation and restoration of the building facades.

After further discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Hoppough, seconded by Commissioner Cook to schedule a Public Hearing for 4:00 PM, Wednesday, October 9, 2013 to receive comments on the proposed rezoning of 416, 418 and 420 from B-2 Community Business District to Resurrection Life Church Planned Unit Development. MOTION CARRIED.

Steele Street Corridor PUD District – Continue Discussion:
The City Manager stated that Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber have completed its preliminary review and assessment of the floodplain/floodway/wetlands in the Steele Street area. He further stated that he will soon be meeting with FTC&H along with Tim Johnson and Jim Morgan (Steele Street Corridor Plan consultants) to discuss next steps in reviewing the Corridor Plan based on the floodplain/ floodway/ wetlands study findings.

Donation Drop Box Standards: Commissioner Kelley stated that he has been concerned regarding the donation drop boxes that are being located in the City. He questioned whether the City should amend the zoning ordinance in order to establish some minimum standards for the placement of the drop boxes. Mr. Johnson reviewed the current accessory structure standards contained in the zoning ordinance. Discussion ensued.

It was moved by Commissioner Hoppough, seconded by Commissioner Cook to request that the City Manager propose ordinance language for inclusion in the zoning ordinance that will prohibit the future placement of additional donation drop boxes in the City.

YES: Cook, Hoppough, Young

NO: Kelley

MOTION CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS

Sidewalk Installation Options – 2014 Division/Fargo/Rich Reconstruction Project: The City Manager stated that the City's Capital Improvement Plan calls for the complete reconstruction of the following streets next summer:

Division Street (M-21 to East Fargo Street)

East Fargo Street (Union Street to Division Street)

Rich Street (M-21 to East Fargo Street)

He further stated that the survey is complete and soil borings have been taken. The project engineer is in the process of laying the preliminary construction plans. Consistent with the Commission's sidewalk policy, he asked the Commission to consider sidewalk placement along these streets.

The City Manager then reviewed with the Commission an outline offering the project engineer's thoughts regarding sidewalk placement considering topography and street right-of-way width.

After discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Hoppough, seconded by Commissioner Lee to proceed as follows regarding the installation of sidewalks along Division Street, East Fargo Street and Rich Street:

Division Street – due to the narrow right-of-way and topography, to not install sidewalks on either side of the street but for the street frontage at Hale Park.

East Fargo Street – considering topographical issues along the north side of the street, to install a sidewalk along the south side of East Fargo Street from Union Street to Division Street.

Rich Street – based on the right-of-way width and no apparent topographical issues, to install sidewalks on both sides of Rich Street from M-21 to East Fargo Street.

MOTION CARRIED.

Commissioner Lee left the meeting.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

The City Manager stated that he has received comments from some Commissioners as well as citizens regarding the proliferation of off-premise real estate signs around the City. Additionally, he stated that some complaints have focused on real estate signs being placed in the street right-of-way. He stated that currently real estate signs are not permitted in the right-of-way nor are they permitted off-premise. After discussion, it was suggested by the Commission that a letter be sent to the local real estate professionals reminding them of the following:

- 1) Real estate signs are not permitted in the right-of-way.
- 2) Off-premise (directional) real estate signs are not permitted.
- 3) If an agent has an open house and therefore is placing off-premise signs to direct visitors to the property, the off-premise garage sale signs standards should be observed (placement no more than 2 hours prior to the open house and removed within 2 hours after the open house is over).


Commissioner Cook applauded the level of cooperation between the City and County in removing the building at 110 West Main Street. He stated that he toured this building not long ago to assess if he wanted to purchase it and found it to be in poor condition.

Commissioner Kelley updated the Commission on both public sector and private sector construction/development projects occurring around the City.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully Submitted,



Jason Eppler
City Manager

Recording Secretary for Boomer Hoppough, Secretary