

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
PLANNING-CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMISSION  
CITY OF LOWELL, MICHIGAN**

For the Regular Meeting of the Planning-Citizen Advisory Commission October 25, 2004 at 7 p.m.

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Jahnke and the Clerk called the Roll.

Present: Commissioners Berry, Grimm, Hall, Hinton, LaPonsie, Schmaltz, Teelander and Chairman Jahnke.

Absent: None.

Also Present: City Manager David Pasquale, City Clerk Betty Morlock, Director of Public Works Dan DesJarden, Building Inspector Doug Hopkins and Mayor Jeanne Shores.

IT WAS MOVED BY HALL and seconded by LAPONSIE to approve the minutes from the September 27, 2004 regular meeting as corrected.

YEA: 8. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

Item #1. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**. Chairman Jahnke proposed item 6B (Definition of Mining) be tabled until the November meeting.

Commissioner Schmaltz corrected a grammatical error from the agenda.

IT WAS MOVED BY HINTON and seconded by HALL to approve the agenda as modified.

YEA: 8. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

Item #2. **PUBLIC HEARING**.

- A. Zoning Amendment for wall and ground signs in residential districts – recommendation to the City Council. As discussed and reviewed at the last meeting, the proposed amendment provided for wall signs for all residential districts (one square foot sign identifying the occupant and two square feet for nameplates) as well as ground signs (no greater than three square feet, only in the front yard and no closer to the front lot line than one-half the required setback distance as well as no higher than three feet).

Josh Langdon of 410 Hunt St. requested the Commission consider and change the amendment to one ground sign per 150 feet of frontage. No other public comments were received.

Commissioner Hall clarified the overall height shall be no greater than three feet.

Commissioner Schmaltz only wanted one sign per parcel facing the front. Commissioners Berry, Teelander and Hall also agreed.

IT WAS MOVED BY HALL and seconded by SCHMALTZ to recommend approval of the zoning amendment for wall and ground signs in residential districts.

YEA: 8. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

- B. Body shops – definition and zoning district designation – recommendation to the City Council.  
As also reviewed at the last meeting, body shops are now proposed to be within the definition of vehicle repair facilities. Additionally, vehicle repair facilities, including body shops, would be allowed by right in the Industrial District and by special land use in the General Business District.

Commission Schmaltz questioned what the General Business District was considered. City Manager Pasquale responded C3.

Pasquale explained this would not be permitted by right. There would have to be an individual application for each. A public hearing would be held as well as a site plan submitted. Schmaltz questioned what would happen if it is already zoned C3. Pasquale responded a special land use permit would be necessary. He explained special land uses tend to be types of uses which may cause problems with surrounding properties. Such issues need to be reviewed on an individual basis.

Chairman Jahnke believed the Light Industrial District should have been considered for this as a special land use permit. By general consensus, the Commission agreed.

IT WAS MOVED BY HINTON and seconded by LAPONSIE to recommend to the City Council the approval of a zoning ordinance amendment, adding body shops to the definition of vehicle repair facilities as well as allowing vehicle repair facilities including body shops by right in the Industrial District and by special land use in the General Business and Light Industrial Districts.

YEA: 8. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

- C. Rezoning – from R-3 (Residential) and PF (Public Facilities) to C-2 (Central Business District) – 112 Lincoln Lake – Flat River Outreach Ministries – review and set public hearing date (11/22).  
Commissioner Schmaltz abstained from discussion due to serving as a board member for Flat River Outreach Ministries.

Roger LaWarre of 631 Birchwood Ct and Kraig Haybarker of 423 Suffolk were present to discuss the possibility of having the Masonic Temple as a possible expansion for the Flat River Outreach Ministries. They wished to use the entire corner property. After reviewing the site plans and trying to meet the setback and parking requirements, it was found the best possible scenario seems to be in C2 (Central Business District).

City Manager Pasquale stated the Planning Commission can review another zoning district

besides C2. The Central Business District ends approximately where Larkin's Restaurant is located.

Commissioner Hall asked if the existing businesses within the C3 district were in compliance or grandfathered into the district. Pasquale stated the former auto detailing business is non-conforming regarding setbacks. The gas station does not meet the current necessary lot square footage. Any building which has been present for some time will have a non-conforming issue.

Pasquale stated there are larger parcels further west. He noted the Downtown Development District (DDA) extends from Keiser's to Ionia County National Bank.

Haybarker explained all parking would be within the lot if the area is rezoned to C2.

Hall suggested an opinion be received from a professional planner. By general consensus the Commission agreed.

Hall wanted to have the vacant lot across the street from Blue Ribbon Feed, where the baseball batting cage was included in the study. Hall suggested a planner provide a suggestion and review the feasibility of expanding the C2 Business District.

Pasquale stated he would contact Steve Langworthy. An opinion should be received by the November 22, 2004 meeting.

Jahnke suggested this be placed on the November 22, 2004 to set a public hearing.

No further information was reviewed.

Item #3. **NEW BUSINESS.**

A. SITE PLAN REVIEW

1. 112 Lincoln Lake – Flat River Outreach Ministries – review of preliminary plans. Roger LaWarre explained Flat River Outreach Ministries is attempting to use the presented property. The first plan would require the present building be removed and reposition a new structure on the premises. This would allow all of the required parking to be within the property itself.

LaWarre went on to explain one of the variances involve the loading dock. It is just short of what is required.

Another plan showed the existing building being used with the addition of a third story. An elevator will be established with either plan.

Commissioner Berry questioned if there would be any truck traffic. LaWarre responded

there are box trucks which come twice a week.

Hall asked if any preliminary cost had been determined. LaWarre stated a plan is being established which will provide a re-assessment of costs and will allow them to position themselves in order to develop the necessary funds. Architectural drawings will then be provided as well as a price determined.

Jahnke stated the existing building is in fairly good condition. LaWarre stated they had a professional inspector review the building. It is in very good shape except for the kitchen area which is in need of a new roof.

No further action was taken.

2. 521 W. Main Street (northeast corner of Amity and W. Main) – Piersma Barber Shop – new construction. As provided in response from the Planning Commission, Dave Piersma of Winston Development requested feedback concerning the elevation of the proposed building.

Commissioner Hinton questioned the square footage of the building. Piersma was hopeful to have two 1500 square foot buildings.

Commissioner Schmaltz inquired regarding the purpose of the second structure. Piersma stated it would be a conforming use within the district. It would be in compliance with the ordinance.

Pasquale asked if the first building would be built toward Main Street while the second building built toward Chatham. Piersma responded yes.

Chairman Jahnke commented on the elevation drawings. The front of the building is shown as being the west elevation toward Amity Street.

Piersma stated he wishes to receive comments regarding a separate structure.

Commissioner Berry asked if the building would be brick. Piersma responded brick or block.

Commissioner Hall did not care for the design of the building. He wanted the building to appear more historic. Hall was also unsure regarding two buildings on the same lot.

Jahnke believed the proposed building appears as a modified house rather than a commercial building. Commissioner Teelander stated the building appeared institutional. Commissioner LaPonsie did not think the building was so bad.

Piersma questioned if the Commission would rather see siding, brick or block. Berry believed it could go either way, as long as some historical elements were added. Phil Johnson, owner of the building to the east, questioned the distance of the proposed

building to their building in reference to repairs which would be needed as well as a fire wall.

Building Inspector Doug Hopkins stated the building code requires fire separation and is dependent on how close the building is from the property line.

Pasquale stated there needs to be more of a setback on the Amity side. He may want to reposition the building or reduce the size.

No further information was discussed.

B. VARIANCES – RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS – none.

Item #4. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS/ON GOING BUSINESS.**

A. West Side Businesses – request to have balloons – further review. Commissioner Hinton spoke with Daryl Kuiper from Vennen. Input is being received from other west side businesses as well as ordinances from various cities. Hinton suggested the issue be deferred until November 22, 2004.

Item #5. **BUILDING INSPECTORS REPORT.** Building Inspector Doug Hopkins provided an update on the trailer located on N. Washington. Both individuals who received letters indicated the trailer was not theirs.

Item #6. **PUBLIC COMMENTS.** None.

Item #7. **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS.** Commissioner Schmaltz commented on the “Summary of Complaints and Action Taken” report. Many items have been on the list for some time as well as more than one letter being sent on issues. Building Inspector Doug Hopkins explained once a second letter is sent and no response is received, the issue is turned over to the Police Department.

Commissioner LaPonsie commented on the Crab Apple Tree Condominiums. They are very attractive.

Commissioner Hall stated there are several homes being built throughout the Highland Hill development. The driveways are paved and open. However, there appears to be some washouts. Hall wanted to confirm the dam is strong enough and will hold the water. City Manager Pasquale stated this is being watched carefully.

Chairman Jahnke stated he received an invitation from the West Michigan Home Builders Association inviting the Commission to a seminar on November 9<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. at Duba’s.

IT WAS MOVED BY HINTON to adjourn at 8:33 p.m.

DATE:

APPROVED:

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Clark K. Jahnke, Chairman

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Betty R. Morlock, City Clerk