

Ishpeming Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes for August 05, 2019
(Agenda items are in bold text)
6:30 P.M. @ Ishpeming City Hall

A. Call to Order for the Ishpeming Planning Commission was by Chairperson Gabe Seelen at 6:31 P.M.

B. Roll Call

Present: Planning Commissioners Gabe Seelen, Angelo Bosio, Diane Gauthier, Mike Tonkin, Brooke Routhier, Jim Bertucci, Larry Bussone and Harry Weikel.

Absent: Bruce Houghton.

Public present: Bob Marietti and Al Pierce, Zoning Administrator.

C. Public Comment: None, closed at 6:33 P.M.

D. Approval of Agenda –The Agenda was approved unanimously upon a motion by Larry Bussone supported by Jim Bertucci with the addition of Item 1a Proposed Project on Hematite Drive between First and Second Streets.

E. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes –The meeting minutes of June 06, 2019 were unanimously approved as presented upon a motion by Angelo Bosio supported by Brooke Routhier.

F. Presentations – none.

G. Public Hearings – none.

H. New Business

1. Master Plan Draft with Options by Ryan Soucy of CUPPAD

Ryan is presently working on a plan involving a consortium of Public and Private Planning Consultants to jointly address the Community Master Plan workload presented by MEDC's Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC) program. Hopefully, he'll be able to finalize the details to present our plan proposal at September's PC meeting.

Al presented information on an RRC workshop in Negaunee on October 9th from 9 AM to 3 PM and encouraged Commissioners to attend. There is no cost to register and attend with lunch being provided.

1a. Proposed Project on Hematite Drive between First and Second Streets

Bob Marietti presented the proposed project that is driven by a "Loss of City Personality". The proposal involves honoring Glenn Seaborg, Clarence "Kelly" Johnson, and John Voelker with bronze busts and descriptions of their accomplishments. Site improvements potentially would include light pole relocation, concrete replacement, new UPPCO boxes, coordination with the Iron Ore Heritage and Snowmobile Trails and the City of Ishpeming. The project is supported by the Downtown Development Authority, Historical Society, Bell Forest Products, Brick Layers, Mike Lempanien design, A. Lindberg Construction and others. Some concrete removal is proposed for this year with trail maintenance a requirement. The project is proposed to be done without expenditure of City funds although the Public Works Department would be involved at some point. The City Council has not been approached yet. Timing of construction work in the fall and spring was discussed. The all-season continuation of the trails is paramount.

The Planning Commission also functions as the Streets Committee and makes recommendations to the Council involving projects in City R.O.W.'s such as this proposal. The DDA should also continue to be involved in project planning. No written information, including conceptual plans, was presented. Commissioners were generally supportive of the proposal and encouraged Bob to pursue this project.

2. Recommendation to the City Council on Recreational Marijuana- opt in or out?

Al stated that the PC had previously recommended to the Council to “opt out” of the Michigan Marijuana legalization process. Now Michigan has added new statutes and there is a distinction between Medical and Recreational Marijuana. It is necessary for the prior recommendation to be reviewed and crafted to match the new legislation.

There was considerable discussion among Commissioners on this topic. The consensus feeling was that “We are not a political body.” Presently this a topic that the Planning Commission does not feel that they have sufficient information on to make an informed recommendation to present to the City Council.

A motion by Jim Bertucci supported by Harry Weikel that the Planning Commission delay a decision to recommend “opting in or opting out” of recreational marijuana without additional information passed by a vote of 6 ayes to 2 nays.

3. Existing residential homes in the Industrial, Mining and Deferred Development Zoning Districts

Al presented 5 areas that are platted lots with homes mixed between zoning districts that allow residential homes and districts that don’t permit homes. In the event of destruction of homes or the desire to update / renovate structures, he can’t treat them all the same. Brooke had several questions about these inequities and why they occurred. Al provided background information on the situations and indicated that he’d been aware of some areas 35 years ago. He was not able to answer why there had been no action in the past. Brooke expressed her concerns that due to the City’s financial status, the Zoning Department stay within the allotted 2019 budget, and Al acknowledged her concerns. Due to the spacing between the homes on Business M-28 towards Negaunee, Al proposed addressing that situation by providing a Class A Non-conforming Structure status as it would otherwise create spot zoning. Providing equity in treatment of homeowners was considered important.

A motion by Jim Bertucci supported by Larry Bussone to address these situations by rezoning or Class “A” Structures, as appropriate, passed unanimously.

4. Vehicle access to Malton Road behind Wabash Heights Subdivision

Correspondence from Dennie Korpi, Lot 10 of the plat, was received. Commissioners again discussed the Wabash Heights Subdivision, the termination of Wabash Street at the NE corner of the plat and the extension of Outlot “A” Easterly to Malton Road. The “real” road, as identified by Commissioners, is the extension, on City property, of Wabash Street Northerly and Easterly to Malton Road. The City requires an engineered solution to properly address this situation, does not have the funds to establish it, and plat property owners appear to want no road extensions Northeasterly or Easterly to Malton Road. This situation is well known to Commissioners based upon previous discussions. A motion by Larry Bussone, supported by Jim Bertucci, to (1) Open and extend Outlot “A” Easterly to Malton Road and (2) Block access from the 10’ wide Utility Easement in Lot 9 North of the 20’ wide East-West Alley on City property passed on a vote of 7 ayes to 1 nay.

I. Old Business


1. Status of Updated Ishpeming Zoning Ordinance – 2019 Version

Al indicated that Kathy has not had the time to do any of the typing revisions to date and consequently there has been no progress on finalizing the ordinance.

J. Correspondence - none

K. Meeting Adjournment was unanimous upon a motion by Angelo Bosio supported by Larry Bussone at 8:23 P.M.

By:


Alan K. Pierce, Zoning Administrator