

Ishpeming Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes for February 03, 2020
(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 6:32 P.M.
- B. Roll Call**
Present: Brooke Routhier, Gabe Seelen, Angelo Bosio, Jim Bertucci, Larry Bussone, Mike Tonkin, Harry Weikel, Bruce Houghton and John Carlson.
Absent: None
Public present: Bob Marietti, Craig Cugini, City Manager, Ryan Soucy, Brad Neumann and Al Pierce, Zoning Administrator.
- C. Public Comment:**
Introductions were made by everyone to welcome Ishpeming's new manager Craig Cugini and Commissioner John Carlson. Public Comment was closed at 6:36 P.M.
- D. Approval of Agenda** – The agenda was approved as presented unanimously on a motion by Bruce Houghton supported by Jim Bertucci.
- E. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes** – The meeting minutes of 01-06-2020 were unanimously approved as presented upon a motion by Larry Bussone supported by Angelo Bosio.
- F. Presentations**

1. Brad Neumann, AICP of MSU Extension on Master Plan Roles for Planning Commissioners

Brad introduced himself (MSU Extension) and provided four MSU Extension papers to Commissioners – “Planning Commission is much more than Zoning”, “Putting Planning back into the Planning Commission”, “Minimum Contents of a Master Plan”, and “Implementing Community Vision requires Detailed Strategies”.

The traditional role of a Planning Commission prior to the adoption of the “Zoning Enabling Act of 2006” and the “Planning Enabling Act of 2008” could be categorized in today’s terms as a Zoning Commission with focus on Rezoning’s and Conditional Uses. The legislation increased their focus to more broad vision issues and a more participatory role with City / Township governments. They still provide advice but on a yearly basis affecting operational costs / projects with a long-range viewpoint. A Master Plan may take a long-range time frame (20 years) while a Strategic Plan would have a much shorter term. They can help to educate the taxpaying public and offer a future vision for the community. The vision should offer goals, objectives and strategies to implement a flexible Plan. Economic situations can and do provide difficulties in moving forward. Recreational opportunities can be developed to provide funding. Craig mentioned that Capital Improvement Plans can provide flexibility coupled with a work plan and an investment strategy to move forward.

Brad stated that the Planning Commission, as dictated by statute, is required to annually recommend to the Council a six-year Capital Improvement Plan. Craig indicated that the life cycles of infrastructure and improvements should match and that declining revenues are a reality in today’s world. The Planning Commission can assist the Council with spending strategies. Ryan announced that CUPPAD, in conjunction with MAP (Michigan Association of Planning), will be conducting an asset management training program in Marquette in the third week of February. Bruce stated his observation that local governments are being squeezed in their revenue stream by the State. Craig reminded Commissioners that they should be ready to execute, have a realistic plan, help with a quality strategy and be positive in looking to the future. He placed emphasis on GIS layers and their long-term usefulness. Gabe questioned the distribution of monies with the DPW. Brad advocated for a Director of Planning and benefits for this position. Commissioners questioned the extensive statutory role for a group of volunteers in conjunction with State legislative funding reductions.

2. Three Sons of Ishpeming Memorial – Site Plan Review and Recommendation to Council

Bob Marietti presented an annotated satellite image of the site – North of Hematite Drive between First and Second Streets. The “Sons” sculpture would be a bronze casting located on a rock from the Republic Mine inside a 20’ diameter Plaza Circle. One existing flowering Crab tree is proposed to be removed, an existing streetlight is proposed to be relocated and an additional streetlight is a proposed addition. A new 9’ wide concrete trail was installed late last Fall. He also discussed the proposed involvement of the community in the project involving IHS students and Beautification Committee. Construction details and site design were addressed by written commentary. No parking was shown within public ROW and the impression was created that it may occur within Bell Forest Products ownership. Bob stated that he has discussed the plans with Iron Ore Heritage Trail personnel with apparently no objections. He has contacted family members of the “Sons” for their knowledge and received their support. Craig asked “Why this site?” Bob responded that this is a main thoroughfare with existing landscaping and ornamental trees, the monument is oriented to face the road and is positioned off the I.O.H.T. Craig asked about the zoning strategy and felt it should look 20-30 years into the future. Larry thought this was an opportunity for the future as the ROW is wide in this area. Craig asked about the tree removal and if it was thought out and required. Bob responded that the trees need to be maintained and trimmed and that placement of the Memorial away from the roadway required it. This monument is a gift to the City and is proposed to be done without Municipal cost. Brooke asked Al if this Site Plan complied with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance for Site Plan review. Al explained that he had printed the satellite image for Bob in the late afternoon on Jan. 31st and there probably was insufficient time to prepare a plan to comply with the ordinance. Al will provide Larry with a copy of the Clark-Menard R.R. survey for Larry, to assist in site plan development.

G. Public Hearings - none

H. New Business

1. Master Plan Meeting with Ryan Soucy, AICP of CUPPAD

a. Proposed revisions to P.C. Bylaws

Ryan presented the updated Planning Commission Bylaws for review by Commissioners. Some very minor corrections were made and accepted. The City Council is not required to approve the Bylaws as they essentially are organizational and procedural rules for Commission operations. A motion by Brooke Routhier supported by Bruce Houghton to adopt the Bylaws, as amended, passed unanimously.

2. Draft Public Participation Plan


Ryan explained the #mygreatish Master Plan initiative, the survey available on the Internet and passed out post cards to Commissioners encouraging them to get the Public involved and also to take the survey themselves. It appears to be a painless and anonymous way to increase public involvement and response – the more responders the better the information!

I. Old Business - none

J. Correspondence – Al discussed the Shopko Building Reuse for Commercial / Heavy Truck Sales.

K. Meeting Adjournment was unanimous upon a motion by Larry Bussone supported by Angelo Bosio at 8:22 P.M.

Reviewed By:


Jim Bertucci, Planning Commission Secretary

Prepared By:


Alan K. Pierce, Planning Commission Assistant Secretary