

**CITY OF ISHPEMING PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 8, 2024**

A. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Ishpeming Planning Commission was called to order in the Council Chambers at City Hall by Chairperson Brooke Routhier at 6:30 p.m. January 8, 2024.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Brooke Routhier, Lindsay Bean, Philip Carter, Torrey Dupras, Dave Lawler, Mike Kinnunen, Kari Getschow, and Mike Elliott (8). Absent: Cory Richards (1). Also present was Al Pierce, Zoning Administrator (ZA).

A motion was made by Member Dupras, seconded by Member Bean and carried unanimously to elect Torrey Dupras to Secretary of the Planning Commission.

A motion was made by Member Routhier, seconded by Member Bean and carried unanimously to retain Mike Kinnunen as the Vice Chairperson.

A motion was made by Member Kinnunen, seconded by Member Elliott and carried unanimously to retain Brook Routhier as Chairperson.

It was the consensus of the Planning Commission to keep the time of the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Discussion took place on training for new members. Staff would look into available training for commissioners.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT

Elli Williams, 1670 Ellsworth Street, was a student at NMU, and advised she had been working on a report for school that researched various options for the downtown, which included design options, only bikes and walking in the downtown, and green space. She would be happy to share her report with the Planning Commission if members were interested.

Danny Hill, RAMBA Executive Director, discussed some of the benefit of the RAMBA trails. RAMBA has been attempting to create a beginner trail in Ishpeming for a few years, however, they needed to obtain a bridge permit going over the Partridge Creek but had been running into road blocks during this process. There was some discussion related to the land lease agreement for the Howard Oil Area.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Member Bean seconded by Member Carter and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

E. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Minutes not typed yet: 8/1/22, 9/12/22, 10/4/22, 11/14/22, 12/5/22, 12/21/22

City Clerk Cathy Smith advised she was still working on the 8/1/2022 minutes and would try to have those and September 2022 for the next meeting.

A motion was made by Member Elliott seconded by Member Carter and carried unanimously to approve the December 4, 2023 minutes as presented.

F. PRESENTATIONS – There were no presentations.

G. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. RZ 2023-03, Partridge Creek Farms, Proposed Rezoning from GC to DD

Chairperson Routhier opened the public hearing for the proposed rezoning for Partridge Creek Farms at 7:09 p.m. She read the findings of fact into the record and noted the memo received from City Attorney Caroline Bridges.

ZA Pierce advised he was trying to complete some tasks before his retirement in September, which is why he was proposing a rezoning for the Partridge Creek Farm area to Deferred Development. However, since there are other gardens located around the City, the City Manager and the City Attorney would like amend the ordinance to include these along with any other future gardens. He advised it would be best to not take any action on the rezoning as proposed for Partridge Creek. Staff would work on a text amendment to allow gardening in specific districts as a conditional use and move forward a zoning text amendment at a future meeting.

A motion was made by Member Bean, seconded by Member Dupras and carried unanimously to table this item for a future meeting.

The public hearing was closed by Chair Routhier at 7:17 p.m.

2. ZTA 2023-02, Proposed zoning text change RRC requirements-Increase Diversity in MR District

The public hearing was open at 7:18 p.m. by Chair Routhier. ZA Pierce advised the only requirement for the text amendment was an advertisement to be published in the Mining Journal, no mailing was necessary. There was discussion related to becoming Redevelopment Ready Communities certified and the multitude of benefits that a certification would provide to the City.

Proposed findings of fact:

- 1. Ishpeming is working with MEDC's Re-development Ready Community (RRC) and they are encouraging more housing development options / diversity than currently available in Ishpeming's Zoning Ordinance. Changes in evaluation criteria and demand for less traditional housing types as Permitted Uses require more flexibility than the current Zoning Ordinance offers by right.*
- 2. The addition to the Ordinance of "Stacked Flat Dwellings" and "Townhouse Dwellings" to our Multiple Residential Zoning District is anticipated to offer more diversity by right to our current housing options.*
- 3. Accordingly 2 new definitions are proposed (Dwelling, Stacked Flat and Dwelling, Townhouse), along with the addition to the Multiple Residential Zoning District as a Permitted Principal Use. In order to accommodate the Stacked Flat Dwelling, the maximum height in the district is proposed to increase to 48'. Ishpeming's Fire Department has the capability to address this increase in building height per the Fire Chief.*
- 4. The Ishpeming Planning Commission desires to bring these facts and this situation to the attention of the City Council and recommends that the proposed text revisions be adopted to offer more flexibility and diversity to Multiple Residential options.*

There was discussion related to the MEDC encouraging more housing development options/diversity than currently available in the Zoning Ordinance; height of structures; and adding more flexibility for housing options.

Member Carter would like to keep as much nature in the community as possible, so he thought for the city to grow upward versus outward was a good thing.

A motion was made by Member Dupras, seconded by Member Carter and carried unanimously to recommend the City Council adopt the proposed zoning ordinance text amendment which adds to Section 3.0 Definitions: Dwelling, Stacked Flats and Dwelling, Townhouses; amends Section 12.0 (MR) Multiple Residential District to add Townhouse Dwelling and Stacked Flat Dwelling under section 12.2 permitted principal uses; and amends Section 19A Size, Height, and Placement Regulations by increasing the Multiple Residential maximum height requirement from 35 feet to 48 feet.

H. NEW OR CONTINUING BUSINESS

1. Initial Draft -- Short Term Rental Ordinance – ZA Pierce advised no additional work has been done on the proposed ordinance. Member Bean would like to see work continued on this ordinance with completion by September, before ZA Pierce leaves employment with the City.

There was discussion related to public comments made at meetings and concerns that have been received by some members of the Planning Commission and City Council; using the density approach versus not limiting the number of rentals; and the financial drive for owners to provide a nice short-term rental.

2. Master Plan: 2024 Goals Continuing Review/PC Input – Work was continuing on the goals.

3. Sign Ordinance and Lighting – ZA Pierce advised work on the amendment has not started to date.

4. Accessory Structure Violation at 440 Ready Street (too high variance required)

ZA Pierce provided an update on the violation and advised the County Building Codes had completed their review. He has contacted the owner; however, the owner has not returned the call.

5. DDA / PC Open Items

It was the consensus of the Planning Commission to include the items from the December 4th meeting minutes on the next regular Planning Commission agenda so a draft recommendation to Council could be prepared and discussed at the next joint meeting with the DDA in March.

I. Old Business

Member Bean asked staff to continue to look into allowing marijuana processing facilities in the City and drafting an ordinance amendment. This should be added as a continuing business item on the agenda.

J. Correspondence – There was none.

K. Meeting Adjournment

At 8:23 p.m., a motion was made by Member Bean supported by Member Elliott and carried unanimously to adjourn.

Prepared by:



Cathy Smith, City Clerk



Alan K. Pierce, Assistant Secretary



Torrey Dupras, Secretary