

**CITY OF ISHPEMING PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, August 12, 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. on August 12, 2024.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Philip Carter, Mike Tonkin, Renelle Halverson, Torrey Dupras, Cory Richards, Brooke Routhier, and Mike Elliott (arrived at 6:35 pm) (7). Absent: Lindsay Bean and Mike Kinnunen (2). Also present was Al Pierce, Zoning Administrator (ZA).

C. PUBLIC COMMENT

Carol Palmer, 759 White Avenue, advised the neighborhood was very quiet and was concerned about the level of noise an apartment building may bring to the area; and added the alley was used by residents all the time.

Scott Manninen, 770 White Avenue, was aware of the proposal for the former Wonderland Hotel; this was basically in his backyard, and just did not want to see anything bad in the City; if the location was for good affordable housing in the City, it would be beneficial.

Jessica Bourdeau, 898 Palms Avenue, asked to reserve time under the Wonderland Motel property public hearing.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Member Routhier, seconded by Member Dupras and carried unanimously to amend the agenda and add new member introduction immediately following approval of agenda and also add the Update on Prairie Avenue under New and Continuing Business, No. 3.

New Member Introduction

Member Routhier welcomed new members Mike Tonkin and Renelle Halverson. Members introduced themselves to each other.

E. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES FROM

A motion was made by Member Carter, seconded by Member Dupras and carried unanimously to approve the June 3, 2024 minutes as presented.

F. PRESENTATIONS - There were none.

G. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. RZ 2024-03 Proposed Rezoning from SR (Single Family Residential) to GC (General Commercial)

ZA Pierce provided background on the proposed rezoning from Single Family Residential to General Commercial. The developer was proposing to change the current motel to apartments. He recommended the proposed rezoning which would allow this use as a Conditional Use.

Member Richards questioned why the property was not being rezoned to Multiple Residential (MR) versus General Commercial. The MR District would allow multiple family structures as a permitted use and would not require a conditional use permit after the rezoning.

Member Routhier questioned if there were any concerns with spot zoning; and noted the Master Plan goal was to encourage young workers and families to move to Ishpeming and to expand quality affordable and attainable housing options.

There was discussion related to the proposed conversion to apartments; other possible zoning districts; surrounding properties; other areas along the corridor where there are both residences and businesses; and past discussion related to creating a new zoning district along the US-41 corridor.

Member Routhier opened the public hearing 6:57 p.m.

Jessica Bourdeau, 898 Palms Avenue, and with Lutheran Social Services, was concerned that if this MSHDA, HUD or Section 8 funding there really needs to be someone working on the grounds to help the people on site and hold the tenants accountable. She questioned if this was income-based housing. There are many people in need of income-based housing, however, there should be staff on site.

Kyle Aho, Jack Holdings Group, LLC and AV Rentals Michigan, was their operating manager, provided information on various housing projects, noted their intent was to keep the apartments at this location as affordable as possible. This site was planned for work force housing which is needed in this area. He suggested residents and the Commissioners look at various other projects that they have worked on in the surrounding areas.

Antonio Adan, Housing Specialist in Marquette County and works for the County Landbank, provide some data and information related to how this project would be beneficial to the housing needs in Ishpeming. To have the property rezoned so this project could move forward is great opportunity to provide the needed housing in Ishpeming. He also questioned the rezoning to General Commercial versus Multiple Residential and he would like to see the shortest allowable process followed.

Loretta Roncaglione, 886 Palms Avenue, across from the site, expressed her concern with potential noise; the traffic that will be pulling out onto the highway from this location could be dangerous because she thought the traffic in that area was already to capacity. She suggested the house be made into a duplex and instead of an apartment building, construct a second duplex; she questioned how taxes might be affected by the proposed construction.

Eddie Bourdeau, 898 Palms Avenue, explained he has worked with juveniles for the court system for many years and has seen a lot of homeless, particularly in Ishpeming over the last several months at the Wonderland Hotel. He would like to see affordable housing in Ishpeming but does not want to see homeless or very low income in Ishpeming

Kyle Aho, Jack Holdings Group, explained in more detail previous projects completed; gave more background information on the company and employees; their vision was to continue to provide work force and affordable housing in the area; and they have done research/evaluation of the traffic at that location. He added he resides in Gwinn so he is a local investor.

Member Routhier explained one goal of the Planning Commission was to increase housing stock and reduce blight in the community. Discussion followed related to the downside of rezoning the parcel to Multiple Residential versus General Commercial which included lot width being non-conforming; allowing housing on that site or opening it up to general commercial use; and the need for housing in Ishpeming. Also talked about among the Commission and staff were the permitted and conditional uses allowed in the Multiple Residential district and the General Commercial district.

Judy Phare, 885 Juniper, expressed her concerned about it being changed to general commercial and what could be built on that site if the apartment is ever sold.

Closed public hearing at 7:35 pm.

Member Richards recommended the motion be amended to rezone the parcel from Single Family Residential to Multiple Residential instead of General Commercial

A motion was made by Member Routhier, seconded by Member Elliott to rezone the parcel as recommended from Single Family Residential to General Commercial consistent with the Master Plan, Goal 4.1 and Objective 4.1.3. The motion failed 1-6 with Member Routhier voting aye.

A motion was made by Member Routhier, seconded by Member Richards and carried unanimously to direct staff to redo the rezoning of this parcel and rezone from Single Family Residential to Multiple Residential.

2. CU 2024-05 Conditional Use for 2 Duplexes

ZA Pierce advised this has been a lengthy process for this site. A conditional use permit is required to place (2) two additional duplexes on the site which would be located closer the road (to the north of the existing duplex) due to wetlands. A report prepared by North Jackson Company was provided by the owner regarding wetlands. He also provided an update to the road issue in that location.

Member Brooke Routhier opened the public hearing at 7:43 p.m. There being no public comment, the public hearing was closed at 7:44 p.m.

A motion was made by Member Routhier, seconded by Member Dupras and carried unanimously to grant the conditional use permit for development of (2) duplexes east and south of the SE quadrant of Washington and Junction Street also known as parcel 1 and parcel 3 on the Certificate of Survey; and this will require that the buildings meet the Plan as demonstrated in the report to EGLE showing construction would stay outside of the wetland description.

H. NEW OR CONTINUING BUSINESS

1. Recreational District Overlay -Member Routhier gave some background on the proposed Recreational District Overlay. She would like to postpone any further action until a new zoning administrator is onboard and we can get the additional information from CUPPAD regarding the development of an overlay.

2. Master Plan: 2024 Goals Continuing Review/PC input - Member Routhier suggested this be on hold until the new City Manager and new Zoning Administrator are onboard.

3. Update on Prairie Avenue - DPW General Foreman Anderson advised there would be a change in the traffic pattern at Prairie and the “partial” road next to Straight Line Archery. He advised Prairie Avenue would be reduced in width however, there would still be on street parking for the Church. There will also be curbs along Second Street.

4. Structure Violation – 440 Ready Street Permit

ZA Pierce advised this would be brought to the Zoning Board of Appeals in September as a variance is required. There was some brief discussion related to the height of the structure.

5. Update Zoning Map – ZA Pierce advised the zoning map update has been completed and staff would be receiving two large maps and also a digital zoning map.

6. Fish Hatchery Rehab ZCP 2024-08/Alex Weems – ZA Pierce advised there has been no contact from the property owner regarding applying for a conditional use permit. Discussion took place on the issues that had occurred at the site, property lines, and trails located on the property.

7. Capital Improvement Plan Sub-Committee - Member Routhier advised the Planning Commission is required to have input on the Capital Improvement Plan as outlined in the Planning and Zoning Enabling Act. She suggested this be on hold until there is a new City Manager and a new Zoning Administrator onboard.

8. Zoning Administrator Replacement

ZA Pierce advised he has been meeting with the LSCP to develop a guide on planning and zoning work.

I. Old Business

1. Antilla Junkyard at Greenwood - ZA Pierce advised this issue would be brought for discussion at the September Planning Commission meeting.

J. Correspondence – There was none.

K. Meeting Adjournment

At 8:20 p.m., a motion was made by Member Elliott seconded by Member Halverson and carried unanimously to adjourn.

Prepared by:


Cathy Smith, City Clerk


Alan K. Pierce, Assistant Secretary


Torrey Dupras, Secretary