

A Special Meeting of the Ishpeming City Council was held on Monday, April 6, 2015, in the Ishpeming Senior Center. Mayor Tonkin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Mike Tonkin, Council Members Claudia Demarest, Joseph Juidici, and Justin Koski. Also present were City Manager Mark Slown, City Attorney Bonnie Hoff, and Zoning Administrator Al Pierce.

PUBLIC COMMENT – There was no public comment.

JOINT MEETING WITH THE ISHPEMING CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE

Richard Hill from CUPPAD gave a presentation on ways the City of Ishpeming could improve their current zoning ordinances. Zoning laws become outdated over time due to federal and state legislation, courts setting precedence, changes in the industry's best practices, and due to a community's attitudes and perceptions. Current definitions could be more refined for the sake of consistency and also to protect the City from liabilities. Current language that could be better defined include residential vs. non-residential districts, condominium districts, mobile home vs. manufactured homes, to name a few. CUPPAD would utilize a code system which would align with the North American Industrial Classification System—a system which classifies manufacturing, agricultural, and other industries. The code system would help assure that all zoning issues would be covered, across the board.

Aside from clarifying definitions, many subjects ranging from medical marijuana, to roadside farm stands, garage sales, and home occupation standards should be looked at during the process of addressing the current zoning ordinances.

In order to become a Redevelopment Ready district, the City of Ishpeming would have to streamline its Site Plan Review Process—which would include providing property owners with a clear cut process for approval or denial of their Site Plan. Site Plan review could be done by the Zoning Administrator, the Planning Commission, or a combination of the two. Other requirements in order to become Redevelopment Ready include making information more readily available via the internet, incorporate web-based technology in developing site plans, and making the process more customer/user friendly. Conditional rezoning is allowable, however, the local unit of government is not able to require conditions of the property owners while the applicant themselves can propose conditions.

Updating the current zoning ordinance will be a very time consuming process but will be necessary if Ishpeming wants to plan for long-term growth and survival. Richard's recommendation would be to maintain as much of the original ordinance and to only make the changes that are needed. The goal is to align the zoning ordinance so that Ishpeming is eligible to become a Redevelopment Ready city.

According to Al Pierce, the process of revising the ordinances will consume a timeline of nine months to one year. The City of Alpena is a good model to consider using. The City of Ishpeming Master Plan was updated in 2010 and could likely be tweaked as this evolves. There is no pressure to meet a deadline; the goal is to draft quality ordinances.

In hopes to lessen the workload, Mark Slown would like to have the City Council review ordinance drafts periodically. It's integral to get as much community input and support as possible. Zoning standards directly reflect the community's standards, and should be molded and shaped to reflect the community's intent. Updates should be made to provide the City a clear and defined path for growth and development.

HEMATITE HEIGHTS DEVELOPMENT

Al Pierce introduced the conceptual idea of Hematite Heights—a parcel of property to the west of Malton Road, connecting off of Wabash Street and New York Street. This development would utilize the current roadways and trails, with hopes of tying into the current water and sewer utility systems. Lots are 200 feet wide, and the smallest lot is nearly an acre with lots as large as three acres. It's a highly desirable location for recreation enthusiasts, as it's so close to a network of multi-use trails—a rural feel with city amenities.

There are a couple of different routes this development could take. A developer could come in and purchase as a package or the City could sell individual lots. There is a chance to obtain USDA funds to install the utilities. If the City were to develop this property, it would need to remove Hematite Heights from the TIF district first. The DDA would have to proceed with removing that designation. There is a potential for contamination, which will require an environmental testing before anything else is done.

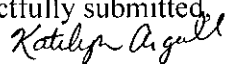
Driveway access was discussed. Al Pierce had designed the parcels in hopes that no driveways would utilize Malton Road. Whether or not the City or developer could carry the infrastructure over to the east side of Malton road was another topic brought up. Could the old gas lines from Malton Electric area be utilized?

Councilwoman Demarest made a motion to support the environmental testing of the Phase 1 parcel. Councilman Juidici supported the motion, and the motion carried.

EASEMENT REQUEST FOR BUILDING IN BANK STREET RIGHT OF WAY

The Crossbridge Church is developing plans for an addition to their building. Current plans include an easement request which would put the north side of the building into the right of way on Bank Street. This is more of a policy concern. Both the entrance off the alley and the west side of the building would require variances. It is not good practice to allow buildings into the right of way. Council members felt as though granting an easement would result in a safety concern and hazard to traffic, especially with winter maintenance. Council unanimously felt as though they would prefer not to set precedence by allowing an easement into a right-of-way.

A motion was made by Councilman Juidici, supported by Councilwoman Demarest and carried unanimously to adjourn at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
  
Katelyn Argall  
Recording Secretary