

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
PLANNING COMMISSION-CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CITY OF LOWELL, MICHIGAN
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2018 AT 7:00 P.M.**

1. **CALL TO ORDER: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, ROLL CALL.**

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Barker.

Present: Commissioners David Cadwallader, Marty Chambers, Colin Plank, Amanda Schrauben, and Chair Barker.

Absent: None.

Also Present: City Manager Mike Burns, City Clerk Susan Ullery and Williams and Works Planner Andy Moore.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

IT WAS MOVED BY CADWALLADER and seconded by CHAMBERS to approve the agenda as written.

YES: 5. NO: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

3. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.**

IT WAS MOVED BY CADWALLADER and seconded by CHAMBERS to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2018 meeting for the Public Hearing for Ordinance 18-01.

YES: 5 NO: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

IT WAS MOVED BY CADWALLADER and seconded by CHAMBERS to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2018 meeting for the Public Hearing for Ordinance 18-02.

YES: 5 NO: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

IT WAS MOVED BY CADWALLADER and seconded by CHAMBERS to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2018 regular meeting as written.

YES: 5 NO: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS CONCERNING ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA.**

Greg Canfield of 306 Elm Street spoke in reference to the need of submitting a site plan when someone is just putting up a wall or partition in the basement of a house.

5. **OLD BUSINESS.**

a. Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments.

Andy Moore of Williams and Works stated that at the January Planning Commission meeting, there was a Public Hearing in reference to Short-Term Rentals and Chapter 22, which is Administration and Enforcement.

Moore stated that at the last City Council meeting there was little bit of concern regarding the language in Section 22.02 (c) regarding zoning compliance permits. Some of the discussion was that if someone is doing work inside the building or in the basement, and not affecting anything on the outside, why are building compliance permits required. Moore explained that the City Council tabled this discussion and suggested the issue be brought back to the Planning Commission for further review.

Greg Canfield spoke in reference to the language in Section 22.02 (c) and what the need is for a compliance permit if they are just putting a wall partition in the basement. Canfield commented that this is all about revenue, but why would he need a site plan to put a wall up in a basement when there is nothing affected on the outside of the building.

Moore explained that because Cascade Inspection Services does the City's building inspections, the City needs a paper trail so that we can view what's going on. Zoning enforcement doesn't include just the outside of a building but also how the property is used. There could be instances where the use of the building has changed and it would have an impact on the rest of the neighborhood, such as parking or noise. The City needs to make sure it is still compatible with how the property is zoned. He believed there is value in having a process and making it work.

Chair Barker stated that he sympathizes with the idea that there are closed repairs that necessarily should not need a permit, but also sympathizes with the City position and the Commission position that if you start eliminating some of those, where do you draw the line and who draws the line, but the point of the matter is, who makes the decision as to how many permits you need and things of that nature.

By general consensus, the Commission agreed to have Moore bring recommendations and changes to the City Council for approval.

6. **NEW BUSINESS.**

a. Chapter 19 - Parking.

Andy Moore of Williams and Works reviewed Chapter 19 – Parking.

Section 19.03 (B) requires that parking lots be surfaced with either asphalt or concrete or “such surfaces approved by the Planning Commission.” This language is acceptable, though the Commission should consider alternative surface materials such as pervious pavements, asphalt millings, and similar materials and discuss what would be acceptable. Moore stated there are no changes to this section.

Section 19.03 (D) requires that any parking lot adjacent to a residential district (even if it is across the street) be setback at least twenty feet from its property line. This is a difficult provision to enforce in most of the City where there exists a traditional grid pattern of streets and blocks. By applying a 20' setback around the perimeter of these areas, plus the required landscape islands, the potential amount of

parking is significantly reduced. The Commission should consider revising this provision due to the amount of property that is owned, especially when it comes to churches.

Section 19.03 (J) would allow for the amount of required parking to be reduced in instances where parking lots are shared and peak parking demand overlaps.

Section 19.03 (M) permits the Planning Commission or Zoning Enforcement officer to adjust the parking requirements of the Ordinance, if the applicant sufficiently demonstrates that fewer spaces are needed.

Chair Barker advised there is a training session scheduled for March 15, 2018. It will be held at the Eberhard Center in Grand Rapids. This would be beneficial for new members.

7. **STAFF REPORT.**

There was no report.

8. **COMMISSIONERS REMARKS**

Chair Barker thanked Commissioner Cadwallader for filling in for him while he was gone. Chair Barker also mentioned that the Vergennes Township Master Plan has been distributed for comments and it is available on their website. If you have any questions or comments on their process or on the Plan document, please write to the Planning Commission at Vergennes Township or email them within 42-days.

9. **ADJOURNMENT.**

IT WAS MOVED BY CADWALLADER and seconded by CHAMBERS to adjourn at 8:02 p.m.

DATE:

APPROVED:

Bruce Barker, Chair

Susan S. Ullery, City Clerk