

The regular meeting of the Clare City Planning Commission was called to order in the city commission chamber of Clare City Hall, 202 W. Fifth St., Clare, MI, at 6:31 p.m. by Chair Josh Clark who led the Pledge of Allegiance. Present were: Commissioners Steve Barnes, Josh Clark, Glenda Carmoney, Angie Cozat, Brett Moser, Jan Winter, Nick Wyman and Darren Acton. Absent: Elaine Demasi. Also present were Ken Hibl, City Manager; and Diane Lyon, City Clerk.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Moved by Commissioner Acton second by Commissioner Carmoney to approve the agenda. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Elaine Demasi. *Motion approved.*

Moved by Commissioner Acton second by Commissioner Demasi to approve the agenda as amended. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Elaine Demasi. *Motion approved.*

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Moved by Commissioner Carmoney second by Commissioner Winter to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Elaine Demasi. *Motion approved.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**A. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: ORDINANCE 2016-002 (AMEND CHAPTER 52-ZONING)**

The Clare Downtown Development Authority (DDA) spent approximately three months reviewing and refining its current downtown sign standards and has asked our City Attorney to draft revised standards to accommodate the requested changes. Our City Attorney has offered those revised standards in the form of an ordinance change with a cover memo clarifying two aspects of implementation of the ordinance change with concurrent updates to Sections 52-437 thru 442 of the City's existing sign ordinance. The DDA reviewed the revised sign standards in May 2016 and unanimously recommended that the Planning Commission and City Commission adopt the new standards.

The City Commission is the approval authority for all ordinance codes. But any zoning codes must be reviewed and considered by the City's Planning Commission and a recommendation(s) provided to the City Commission prior to adoption of changes or amendments to the zoning codes. But prior to consideration of any proposed zoning ordinance change, the City Planning Commission is required to conduct a public hearing.

The City Planning Commission conducted the required public hearing and subsequently considered the proposed ordinance amendment at its meeting of July 13th and voted to set the matter aside pending further discussion with the Planning Commission. Chairman Clark appointed Commissioners Steve Barnes and Brett Moser to accompany him to the next-scheduled DDA meeting on August 5th to represent the Planning Commission in discussing the concerns highlighted in the Planning Commission's discussions.

This topic was placed on the DDA Agenda for the August 5th meeting and discussed with the DDA and a significant number of downtown merchants present at the meeting. A number of other downtown topics were discussed at the meeting, to include sidewalk clearances and sidewalk seating and merchant displays. A collective decision was made to have two members of the DDA, two members of the Planning Commission, the Exec Director of the Chamber of Commerce, and the city manager form a committee to discuss and formulate recommendations related to all of these topics. The DDA appointed two members of its Design Committee to represent them; Chairman Clark decided to discuss the matter with the full Planning Commission prior to appointment two members of the Commission to the committee.

After lengthy discussion among the Commission, it was moved by Commissioner Winter second by Commissioner Carmoney to appoint Commissioners Moser and

Wyman to the proposed downtown committee which will serve an advisory role to the DDA by adoption of Resolution 2016-011PC. Roll Call Vote, Ayes: Darren Acton, Steve Barnes, Glenda Carmoney, Josh Clark, Angie Cozat, Nick Wyman, Brett Moser, and Jan Winter. Nays: None. Absent: Elaine Demasi. *Motion approved.*

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **A. CONTINUATION OF MASTER PLAN UPDATE**

Mr. Greg Elliott, our lead representative from McKenna Associates met with us to continue the process of assisting the Planning Commission update the City Master Plan. The primary topic of discussion was review of the significant changes to the proposed update to our Master Plan and the recommendation to the City Commission for approval of the distribution list for review of the update. Once the distribution is authorized by the City Commission, there will be a 63 day window for public comment. Revisions can still be made within that timeframe. The Planning Commission is the approval authority unless the City Commission expressly requests that they make the final approval.

Mr. Elliott outlined the changes to the document:

Survey results and information from the community focus groups were incorporated into the Document.

Demographic data from the entire Grant Township expansion area.

Housing data-pricing & availability. Most notable was the change in housing affordability. For home owners, housing costs went from 13% to 26.9% of income from 2000 to 2014. For renters the costs are much higher, increasing from 32% to 55% of income.

Hospital and healthcare jobs are very important to Clare and efforts should be made to accommodate their needs.

A complete streets policy is recommended under the new Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (MZEA). The City adopted a Complete Streets Ordinance in 2014.

Connectivity-We lack an east/west route from the City proper to Grant Township.

Pathway Development- with Clare being located in the heart of Michigan, a north/south route should be encouraged and developed due to the emerging major bicycling network and health and welfare benefits.

Missing Middle Housing Development-The City lacks middle housing development (duplex, triplex, fourplex, courtyard apartments, bungalow court, townhouse, multiplex and liveandwork).

A recommendation to install new signage to connect the north end development and expanding commercial district to the downtown district.

Improve and enhance gateways into the community.

Recommendation for the adoption of a rental inspection policy.

Expansion of Attraction and Arts & Culture in the downtown district.

Commissioner Clark expressed concern about the increased cost of housing for renters. The drastic change is likely due to a lack of income-wages remained fixed while consumer costs have steadily increased. While it is unknown whether an increase in available low income housing may drive the cost of rent down for those affected, we do know that we need to bring better paying jobs to the area.

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) has been updated with changes discussed at the last meeting. However, Mr. Elliott did request clarification as to what the intent was for certain areas on the map. On the 2006 FLUM, the area north of the highway and south of Colonville Road (McNeilly property) was zoned Multi Family Residential which didn't make sense due to the lack of access to the downtown district and the location being adjacent to industrial property, regional commercial property, and adjacent to the highway. The current reiteration of the FLUM identifies the property as rural residential. However, it was Mr. Elliott's recollection that the Planning Commission desires to zone that property as a Special Planning Area that would merit further study and more particularized recommendations due to the natural features in that area. Mr. Elliott suggested a campus type setting for offices or apartment community, or other uses that respects the layout of the property.

The second area in question was the (school) property located west of the Mobile Home Park, Dollar General, and "Hamburger Hill" area. On the current revised FLUM there are three large parcels which the Planning Commission had identified for Multi Family Residential use at the last meeting. It occurred to Mr. Elliott that the Commission may desire to zone this area as a Special Planning Area which would merit further study given the fact that 50% of the population is currently housed in Multi Family Residential housing, 61 acres are currently zoned Multi Family Residential (which equates to 32.5% of total housing units in the city and is much more densely populated than other areas), and zoning these parcels Multi Family Residential would increase the acreage (220 acres) to more than four times what is currently designated as Multi Family Residential. The Planning Commission had determined that the area adjacent to this Commercial District would be better suited to Multi Family rather than Single Family Residential due to the proximity to jobs that will likely become available with the commercial development at the north end of the city. Mr. Elliott suggested that the Planning Commission could designate specific areas of these parcels as Multi Family Residential with other areas designated as Special Planning Areas of Concern which would allow the Planning Commission to particularly describe what the vision is for those specific areas. The Planning Commission determined that there is a need for additional subsidized housing, identifying the eastern most portion of those properties located closest to the commercial area on McEwan Street as being best suited for Multi Family Residential due to the proximity and walkability to businesses currently in the area and those anticipated in future commercial development. A transition zone and/or greenspace should be incorporated west of Multi Family Residential zoned area with the remaining property being designated as Special Planning Areas of Concern with specific design guidelines which could be used for the development of condominiums, townhouses, and or bungalow courts. There were concerns regarding access to the western most parcels. A developer would need to come in and build infrastructure to access those properties.

The Planning Commission had considered the Dunlop Road area for additional Multi Family Residential however with exception to the "Hubel Ranch", the majority of that property has been purchased by the Rogers Group. The Commission determined that if the Rogers Group intends to expand their industrial business, this area should be zoned Industrial to allow for Industrial expansion.

The Planning Commission was in favor of implementing a Rental Inspection Program to get rental property maintenance up to Code standards. Once the Program is implemented it is likely that some tenants will be displaced, requiring a new place of residence, if the landlord opts not to bring the rental property up to Rental Inspection standards.

The Planning Commission suggested extending the Special Planning Areas of Concern north to Colonville Road to allow for an access point.

The area north and east of Multi Family Residential area on the corner of Vinewood and Brookwood is not buildable; it is considered wetlands.

The Planning Commission opted to wait until the August 31 special meeting to make a recommendation to City Commission for the disbursement of the Master Plan so that they have an opportunity to conduct a final review of the Future Land Use Map.

The Recreation Department had inquired about incorporating an ADA (Adults with Disabilities Act) Transition Plan. Mr. Elliott offered that while it can be mentioned in the Master Plan an ADA Transition Plan is outside the scope of a Master Plan; they are typically incorporated as part of the Capital Improvements Plan.

### **INTRACOMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS**

Walmart's Site Plan was approved last year but construction has not started. The expiration date for that Site Plan is September 30. Walmart must submit a request for an extension, start construction, or start the Site Plan process over if the request for an extension does not pass or if they allow the current approval period to lapse.

As approved in their Site Plan, the Consumer's Energy property along Colonville Road has been allowed to remain a natural area where they intend to place walking trails. While there was some concern regarding the current appearance of the property, Consumer's has planted many trees at the location and eventually the area will look much different than it does at this time.

We have nearly reached our Clare Depot Crowdfunding goal; as of this morning we were \$1,500 shy of our \$25,000 goal. If we reach our goal, the \$25,000 will be matched by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC).

Commissioner Carmoney reported that the DPW have been made aware of trees that need trimming on Hemlock but they will be required to obtain the property owner's permission to do so; and the Susan Street sign is missing from the corner of Schoolcrest and Susan Street.

In answer to a question issued by Commissioner Acton, the Tree Advisory Board has a plan in place to replant trees in place of the numerous Ash trees that have been lost (due to the Emerald Ash Borer) although it will take time due to the lack of available of funds.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Commissioner Winter and seconded by Commissioner Acton to adjourn. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Elaine Demasi. *Motion approved.* Meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

---

Diane Lyon, City Clerk