

2022 Annual Report
City of Clare Planning Commission
January 11, 2023
Encompassing the Period January to December 2022

Purpose. The Michigan Planning Act of 2008 mandates the submittal of an annual report of the municipal planning commission to the legislative body of the municipality regarding the operations and status of planning activities, including recommendations to the legislative body related to municipal planning and development.

Period of Report. This report is inclusive of actions of the City of Clare Planning Commission during the period January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022.

General. The City of Clare Planning Commission consists of nine members appointed by the Mayor of the City of Clare with the approval of the majority of the Clare City Commission. Six of the nine members are required to be qualified electors of the City; the other three members are not required to be qualified electors. The current composition of the Clare Planning Commission is eight qualified electors of the City and one non-resident Clare business owner; the current slate of commissioners is attached to this report. The Planning Commission elects its own chairperson annually; the current chair is Commissioner Jason Lowe. The Planning Commission Chair concurrently serves as a representative on the Clare Zoning Board of Appeals. Commissioner Nick Wyman serves in the position of vice chair. The commission is scheduled to meet once monthly on the second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at Clare City Hall. Special meetings may be called by the commission chairperson, the city manager, or the city clerk. All meetings are required to be open to the public. The City of Clare Planning Commission met on twelve (9) occasions during the period of this report. The City Commission and Planning Commission will conduct the required annual combined meeting at the beginning of 2023 to review the Planning Commission's 2022 Annual Report to the City Commission and discuss other topics of mutual interest.

Public Engagement, Primary Accomplishments, and Notable Activities.

- a. **Ordinance Amendments.** Public engagement announcements were made for the City Planning Commission to hold public hearings for the following Ordinance Amendments. The Planning Commission accepted public comments and then considered and made recommendations regarding the three (3) following ordinance amendments.
 1. **Ordinance 2022-001 - Zoning, Chapter 52 – Permitted Uses in the DDA.** Provided language to allow for use by right, second-floor dwelling units, in the Downtown Development District.
 2. **Ordinance 2022-002 - Chapter 30 – Camping in Pettit Park.** This Ordinance established rules to prohibit park users from disturbing or annoying other park users or occupying the campground as a permanent or semi-permanent residence.
 3. **Ordinance 2022-003 - Chapter 52 – Rezoning Commercial (C-2) to Industrial (I).** With both the North and South Industrial Parks being full, the city rezoned city-owned property south of Industrial Parkway from Commercial (C-2) to Industrial (I) with the intent to create a third industrial park.

- b. Site Plans, Façade Changes, & Special Use Permits. The Planning Commission conducted public hearings for and approved four (4) site plans, two (2) Façade Improvement Plans, and two (2) Special Use Permits.
1. Renosol Corporation Site Plan. Renosol experienced a structure at their Bay City facility in 2021 and while they do not intend to close that facility, they desired to construct a new facility on the last remaining parcel in Clare’s North Industrial Park. Thus, they submitted a Site Plan for consideration by the Planning Commission. A public hearing was held and the Commission voted to approve the site plan as submitted.
 2. Special Use Permit and Site Plan Annual Renewal –Recreational Marijuana License – 555 Industrial Drive – Vault, LLC. Following a public hearing, the Planning Commission approved the annual special use permit and site plan for one adult-use marijuana cultivation facility for Vault, LLC.
 3. McEwan Street Fudge & Ice Cream Shop Façade Improvement. Mr. John Gross purchased the former Clare Electronics store at 511 N. McEwan Street with the intent of giving the storefront a much-needed facelift prior to completing interior renovations and opening a fudge and ice cream shop. The DDA recommended approval of the façade. The Planning Commission held a public hearing and then approved the proposed façade improvement design.
 4. Special Use Permit and Site Plan Annual Renewal –Recreational Marijuana License – 380 Industrial Drive – THC (Chronicseur Farms). The Commission approved annual special use permits and site plans for one medical marijuana grow facility, one adult-use grow facility, and one adult-use processing facility for THC.
 5. Ideal Theater Façade Improvement. The DDA recommended approval of proposed façade improvements to the historic Ideal Theater located at 609 North McEwan. Sandra Wright and Lisa Benic have taken on the enormous and costly task of rehabilitating and renovating the exterior as well as the interior of this building. Following a public hearing by the Planning Commission, the façade improvement was unanimously approved by the Commission. NOTE: The theater was also able to secure a Revitalization and Placemaking Program Grant for just under one million dollars to help with the renovations.
 6. Airport Lot 207 Site Plan – Mr. Donald Nevill. The Planning Commission approved a site plan application from Mr. Donald Nevill to construct a 960-square-foot addition to his current airplane hangar at the Clare Municipal Airport on Lot 207.
- c. Master Plan Update and Alignment with Master Plan Zoning. A major accomplishment of the Planning Commission in 2022 was to complete an update to the city’s Master Plan to align with community goals through strategic planning. With the assistance of McKenna & Associates in 2022, the Planning Commission completed a review of their accomplishments in aligning with the city’s zoning plan as part of the Master Plan update. The Planning Commission took advantage of opportunities to modernize and streamline zoning as a proactive measure in aligning with the City’s Master Plan to provide for growth and new development. The alignment with the Master Plan, which is meant to support the community’s values, is an ongoing process to be reviewed annually as a means to promote the desired outcomes in community growth. The Planning Commission successfully navigated the city’s Master Plan update with input from the community via community outreach (online and targeted email survey, solicited calls) for input and several public hearings.

- d. Redevelopment Ready Communities. The Planning Commission worked on several items that were required in order to achieve Redevelopment Ready Community status. One of those items was creating and adopting a Public Participation Plan to serve as a guide for the City to effectively foster citizen feedback. The plan was developed to engage citizens and encourage public input by providing a detailed outline for soliciting feedback and involvement in community activities. It is also designed to provide direction to city staff, current boards, and future board members, to effectuate public communication and collaboration throughout the City of Clare. The City of Clare was able to obtain Redevelopment Ready Community Essentials status in 2022 which has opened up additional funding opportunities and grants for local businesses. Match on Main grants are now available and one business has already been awarded \$25,000 (McEwan Street Fudge and Ice Cream Shop).
- e. Review of Proposed Capital Projects. The Planning Act requires that the planning commission review all public capital projects recommended for construction or implementation within the City's geographical boundaries. The planning commission conducted a preliminary review of all proposed capital projects for the City's 2022/2023 fiscal year prior to submittal to the City Commission in conjunction with the City's budget approval process and determined that the projects appear to support the goals and objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Master Plan of the City.

Professional Development & Budgetary Considerations. The Planning Commission's professional development budget was used to further the education and knowledge of Planning Commission members at various training events and educational classes. The budget for 2023/2024 allocated for continued education should be increased in order to keep up with the rising costs of memberships, educational publications, training, and travel. The City's funding for public capital projects appears to be adequate.

Recommendations. See Other Comments below.

Other Comments. The Clare City Commission and the City's Planning Commission are tentatively scheduled to conduct an annual joint meeting in conjunction with one of the City's scheduled Planning Commission meetings in early 2023 to discuss items of mutual importance and to review general philosophy, vision, and objectives for the City. The Planning Commission continues to view this annual meeting as of significant importance and strongly recommends that these annual meetings continue. As in years past, the Planning Commission again suggests continuing discussions related to a Rental Ordinance, though this still remains a tough discussion with the recent action in the Legislature to allow for short-term rentals (VRBO, Airbnb, etc.). Input from the City Commission is welcome as the Planning Commission will soon be making recommendations regarding Ordinance amendments relating to the odor issues from Marijuana facilities in the south industrial park; changes to the ordinance regarding recreational vehicle/trailer storage; and now that the sign has been installed at Peterbilt, the sign ordinance should be revisited in light of the ZBA approving a sign height/dimension variance for the Peterbilt sign.

Attachment. Planning Commission Member Slate.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jason Lowe
Chairperson, City of Clare Planning Commission