

CITY OF GRAND HAVEN
GRAND HAVEN, MICHIGAN
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

May 12, 2020



A special electronic meeting of the Grand Haven Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Bill Ellingboe at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom. On roll call, the following members were:

Present: Tim Deiters, Ryan Galligan, Bob Grimes, Andrea Hendrick, Kevin McLaughlin, Kirsten Runschke, David Skelly, Mike Westbrook, Chair Bill Ellingboe.

Absent: None.

Also present were Jennifer Howland, Community Development Manager and Pat McGinnis, City Manager.

Motion by Grimes, seconded by Runschke, to approve the April 21, 2020 minutes was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Call to Audience (no comments)

Case 20-11: A work session to determine if the application for a Special Land Use Permit for a drive-through business (Consumers Credit Union) located at 901 South Beacon Boulevard parcel #70-03-28-155-020) is complete and ready to schedule a public hearing.

Howland introduced the case. Amy Manley with Bosch Architecture was available to answer questions.

Hendrick expressed concerns about lack of connectivity to adjacent parcels. Howland explained there was no such requirement in the Zoning Ordinance but encouraged Manley to consider adding a pedestrian connection from the public sidewalk on Beacon to the parking lot. Manley was amenable to doing so. The commissioners all felt it was ready for a public hearing.

Motion by McLaughlin, seconded by Grimes, to set the public hearing for June 9, 2020 carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Case 20-12: A work session to determine if the application for a Zoning Change of 427 North 6th Street (parcel #70-03-21-302-009), 423 North 6th Street (parcel #70-03-302-010), and 532 Jackson Avenue (parcel #70-03-21-302-008) from OT, Old Town District to C, Commercial District is complete and ready to schedule a public hearing.

Howland introduced the case and noted several letters received by neighbors and shared with the commissioners. Denny Dryer, Dryer Architects (220 ½ Washington Avenue) was available to answer questions.

Deiters asked for confirmation of land use for various nearby parcels and said his only concern is the house to the immediate south of the subject property because it was so close to the

property line.

Dryer said they had not met with the owner of 532 Jackson Avenue but they have met with pretty much everyone else. He would be happy to bring a preliminary site plan to the public hearing.

Galligan pointed out that there is no commercial zoning contiguous to the subject property, the master plan future land use map didn't support it, and lots of people thought the rezoning would be detrimental to the neighborhood. Grimes shared the same concerns and did not favor spot zoning because it skips over and into the neighborhood too much, and the future planning doesn't line up with the request.

Hendrick disclosed that she works in the marijuana industry but didn't have financial ties to this particular property. Due to limited provisioning center licenses available in the City, there would be competition. Grimes reminded Hendrick that the request was for a rezoning and the property could be used for any use allowable in the Commercial District, not just medical marijuana. After hearing from a few other members that there were no concerns, Ellingboe stated that it didn't appear to be a conflict of interest.

McLaughlin asked Howland to explain the statement in the application about how staff would rather see the property rezoned than Old Town be opened up to medical marijuana. Howland explained that when she met with the applicant several months ago, she laid out the two options so they could make their own decision; staff's opinion was not relevant. McLaughlin asked about a use variance; Howland stated the City doesn't allow use variances.

Runschke stated she has a hard time considering the request because it is spot zoning but would talk more during the public hearing. Skelly agreed with Galligan's points and wants to see the site plan to understand how the property would be developed. Westbrook shared the same concerns as Galligan. Ellingboe said he believed it was ready for a public hearing. He asked Howland to clarify the nonconforming uses. Howland corrected a statement in the staff report and stated that Eating & Drinking Establishments were permitted in Old Town on Key Street Segments (like the subject property), but that Retail was not permitted in this location. Ellingboe stated that the property was very close to other commercial businesses and thought perhaps an ordinance review would be warranted in the future related to key street segment land uses.

Motion by McLaughlin, seconded by Westbrook, to set the public hearing for June 9, 2020 carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Case 20-13: Proposed text amendments to the Grand Haven zoning ordinance related to regulations governing business operations such as but not limited to sidewalk cafes and temporary use permits in an effort to aide businesses in the transition back to full operation following the pandemic.

Howland provided an overview of the proposed text amendments. Jeremy Swiftney, Main Street DDA Executive Director, said that the DDA is open to accepting a diverse mix of opportunities and options, they are willing to try everything, and possibly use public spaces like streets and sidewalks. The commissioners were supportive of the changes and trust staff's judgment with administrative reviews. There was discussion about how use of sidewalks and streets could work and potential challenges. Ideas shared by the commissioners included glass house popups, food trucks, clustering businesses in

large parking lots, remembering businesses on side streets, ensuring adequate emergency access especially if streets are closed, considering the needs of businesses other than restaurants and bars, and being mindful of what is in the best interests of the general public (adequate separation, etc). McGinnis assured the commissioners that the public hearing notice was intentionally written to be broad but that one can never think of everything. The City is looking to be as progressive, open and sensible as possible. Departments would be involved in the review, including Public Safety, Public Works, MSDDA, and Planning. He urged commissioners to reach out to staff right away if in the future they see something that gives them heartburn. He also encouraged businesses to reach out to staff with their ideas sooner rather than later. The ideas will ultimately come from the businesses; the proposed text amendments are meant to streamline the approval process. Hendrick asked if there was going to be a best practices guide; McGinnis said that the Michigan Restaurant Association is working on that, and he has reached out to policymakers in Lansing about liquor control and health department issues. The commissioners look forward to the public hearing on May 19th.

Case 20-09: Zoning Ordinance Update

Howland provided an introduction. Andy Moore from Williams & Works said the final three chapters to gather feedback on were special land uses, parking and landscaping. He'd compile the changes and repost the drafts for further review. He is also exploring other methods for virtual engagement.

McLaughlin suggested that we take a break from reviewing the draft chapters until people can meet face to face. Deiters agreed. Runschke said it was taxing to have a 3 hour meeting over Zoom. Hendrick said she will continue to work through reviewing the chapters, but she wishes she could walk over to check out the neighborhoods in action to contemplate proposed changes, but that is not possible right now.

Howland and Moore informed the commissioners that there wasn't a hard deadline and that the combination of social media engagement and future in-person engagement was expected to help reach more stakeholders. Howland said she'd place this on the agenda for May 19th instead of reviewing it tonight. The commissioners agreed that would work well.

There was discussion about different online methods to share feedback on draft chapters. Due to concerns about open meetings requirements, Howland asked the commissioners to continue to email her comments and she would share them with the full commission. Moore will look into creating a website or social media postings summarizing proposed changes so the public can easily digest the information.

ZBA Liaison Report

None

Community Development Manager's Report

None

Call to the Audience – second opportunity

Pat McGinnis read comments from the Facebook feed.

Adjournment:

Motion by Galligan, seconded by Runschke, to adjourn was unanimously approved by roll call vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Howland", written over a horizontal line.

Jennifer Howland
Community Development Manager