

**CITY OF GRAND HAVEN  
GRAND HAVEN, MICHIGAN  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

**March 14, 2023**

A regular meeting of the Grand Haven Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Dora at 7:00pm. Upon roll call, the following members were present:

**Present:** Jennifer Smelker, Magda Smolenska, Tamara Owens, David Skelly, and Chair Mike Dora

**Absent:** Debi Hulverson, Amy Kozanecki, Robert Grimes, Vice-Chair Ryan Galligan,

**Also Present:** City Planner Brian Urquhart, members of the public

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion by **Skelly**, seconded by **Owens** to approve the February 14, 2023 minutes with correction. All ayes. **Motion passes.**

**Call to the Audience; First Opportunity**

No public comments

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**Case 23-05: A vacation of a portion of Sherman Street, portion of Harbor Drive, and Sand Piper Drive as part of the diesel plant redevelopment at 518 S. Harbor Dr.**

Urquhart introduced the case. He said the appropriate public notice for vacating of public streets per Chapter 32, Article IV, was posted following the resolution of intent to vacate public streets was passed by City Council on February 20<sup>th</sup>. Urquhart said the vacation of the streets would align with the proposed property boundary lines that were identified in the preliminary survey as part of the buy-sell agreement. Urquhart confirmed with legal counsel the right of-way vacation will need to be completed in order for the sale of the diesel plant to occur.

Urquhart said the city did not receive any public correspondence.

Chair Dora opened Public hearing at 7:06pm. No public comments.

**Owens** made motion to close the public hearing. **Smelker** seconded. All ayes. Public hearing closed at 7:07pm.

**Smelker** asked about the southwest corner of the building. Urquhart said the right-of-way of Sherman Street would follow the shape of the building, which was mutually agreed upon by both parties.

Motion by **Smolenska**, seconded by **Smelker**, to approve Case 23-05, a request to recommend to City Council the vacation of a portion of Sherman Street, portion of Harbor Dr., and Sand Piper Drive as part of the former diesel plant redevelopment at 518 S. Harbor Dr.

All ayes. **Motion passed.**

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**Case 23-06: Lot Split Application at 400 N. Beacon Blvd. (parcel #70-03-21-326-042) in the C-Commercial District.**

Urquhart introduced the case. He said the property is zoned C – Commercial and if the lot split was approved, all zoning standards for lot sizes, lot width, setback, lot coverage, paring, and signage would remain in compliance. He said there would be no physical improvements to the site, and the recorded private access easements and sign easements would remain. Because the split would result in 2 child parcels, planning commission review is required. Urquhart said that all other departments did not have any concerns with this question.

Skelly asked why the property owner is asking for the lot split. Cam Lear of Exxel Engineering representing the property owner, said the purpose of the lot split is to provide for more flexibility in interments and financing for property.

Motion by **Skelly**, seconded by **Smolenska**, to approve Case 23-06, for a lot split application of 400 N. Beacon Blvd. (parcel #70-03-21-326-042).

All yeas. **Motion passed.**

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**Case 23-07: Site plan amendment for a mixed-use building at 1103 ½ Washington Ave (parcel #70-03-21-453-013) in the NMU – Neighborhood Mixed-Use District**

Urquhart introduced the case. Urquhart said the planning commission approved PC Case 21-34 in July 2021 for the conversion of the building into a mixed-use from retail on the bottom level, to office space on the upper level. However, during the course of the construction, the office use was never completely finished and thus the property owner elected to convert the upper level back to residential. Discovery of this change occurred during the submittal of building permit. Urquhart said per Sec. 40-115.09.B this requested change from an approved site plan was a major amendment and thus required Planning Commission approval.

Property owner Bobbi Sabine of 703 Lake Avenue explained the change occurred because they received incorrect information from their architect regarding the need for fire suppression for an upstairs office use. Considering the upstairs was previously a residential use, they decided to convert it back.

Owens commented the planning commission reviewed a minor amendment to site plan last year for a window on the lower level.

Smolenska asked if the upstairs renovations were completed for residential use. Sabine said the upstairs is finished.

Skelly inquired how would the renter access the unit. Sabine responded there is a separate entrance and stairway.

Dora reviewed the ordinance and stated he had concerns over planning commissioners option to waive the residential on-site parking. Urquhart noted the parking ordinance requires 1.2 spaces for a

residential unit above retail. Because of the lot coverage exceeding 95%, there is no space for on-site parking. Urquhart noted the applicant provided information from Dept. of Public Safety which allowed the previous tenants to parking on the street without any need for an overnight parking waiver. However, since recent improvements to Ferry Street, that parking space is no longer available. Urquhart provided documentation from the Dept. of Public Safety that an annual off-street parking waiver from 2am-6am from Nov. 1. to March 31 was approved on February 28<sup>th</sup>. Urquhart said this is the most recent information he received regarding parking.

Motion by **Smolenska**, seconded by **Smelker**, to approve Case 23-07, for a site plan amendment for a mixed-use building at 1103 ½ Washington Ave. (parcel #70-03-21-453-013).

All ayes. **Motion passed.**

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**April meeting date:**

Urquhart said he was invited to speak at a Michigan Healthy Climate Conference in Detroit on April 11 & 12 and would be not present at the meeting. The planning commission asked if there would be many items on the agenda, and Urquhart said no and City Manager Latsch would be willing to attend. Commissioners agreed to keep the meeting date on April 11<sup>th</sup>.

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**Zoning Board of Appeals Liaison Report:**

Urquhart noted there would be a ZBA meeting in March to consider a variance request at 116 Prospect for an elevated deck into the side yard setback.

**City Planner Report:**

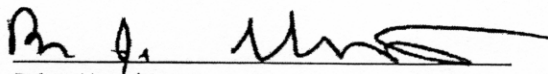
Urquhart said he would expect two site plans to be placed on the April agenda. The public comment period for the Master Plan update is open and the city has already received a few comments. The public hearing to recommend approval to the City Council is on the agenda for May 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Call to Audience; Second Opportunity:**

No public comments

**Adjournment:**

**Skelly** made motion to adjourn. Support by **Owens**. Voice vote. All ayes. Chair Dora adjourned the meeting at 7:33 pm.

  
Brian Urquhart  
City Planner

