



PLANNING COMMISSION

August 18, 2022

A regular Planning Commission meeting was held in the City Council Chambers, Petoskey, Michigan, on Thursday, August 18, 2022. Roll was called at 6:00 P.M. and the following were:

Present: Cynthia Linn Robson, Chairperson
Carolyn Dettmer
Rose Fitzgerald
Richard Mooradian
Rick Neumann
Ted Pall
Charles Willmott

Absent: Betony Braddock
Doug Buck

Others: David Finely, North Central Michigan College, 1515 Howard Street
Andrew Kohlmann, image360, 1702 Barlow Street, Traverse City, MI
Tom Ziedel, North Central Michigan College, 1515 Howard Street

Staff: Zach Sompels, City Planner
Shane Horn, City Manager

Upon motion and support, the minutes of the July 21, 2022 regular meeting were approved with minor changes. Motion carried 7-0.

North Central Michigan College **Master Site Facilities Plan – Sign Plan**

Commissioner Pall made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Dettmer to approve the North Central Michigan College Master Site Facilities Plan amendment – Sign Plan, with the following conditions:

1. All signs are located on college property unless approval has been given for location in a City of MDOT right-of-way; and
2. Final illumination approval on the signs would be approved by the City Planner with the option to come back to the Planning Commission for approval if the City Planner deemed it necessary.

Motion passed 7-0.

Andrew Kohlmann, image360, gave a presentation on the proposed sign plan and went into the detail on each type of sign as well as their reasoning for choosing them.

The overall goal was as few signs as possible while keeping as much traffic out of the neighborhood as possible.

Commissioner Pall voiced concerns over neighborhood facing signs.

Commissioner Willmott voiced concerns with the setback of the main sign.

Commissioner Neumann had questions on the building ID sign differences, various sign base heights, and the faculty lot sign being slightly bigger than others but was pleased with the overall detail provided to everyone.

Chairperson Robson voiced concerns with the size of the main sign and lighting options but liked the overall location placement of the signs.

Site Plan Review/ Administrative Review Possible Changes

After continued discussion on what plans the Zoning Administrator was able to approve and what plans the Planning Commission was able to approve, it was decided to address this issue in the new zoning ordinance rewrite.

Halo Lit Sign Language

Commissioner Neumann made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Willmott, to approve the proposed language as follows and schedule a public hearing:

Section 2.1

Halo illuminated signs – Signs consisting of individual, internally illuminated letters and graphics with opaque face and sides. Halo illuminated signs are characterized by indirect illumination, with all illumination projecting from the rear of each letter or graphic onto the background surrounding the letters.

Section 3.1(5)

Halo illuminated signs must meet the following criteria:

- The lighted area that exceeds the solid surface of the sign face shall count as part of the signs calculated area;
- Only neutral light tones may be used;
- No neon lights shall be permitted;
- The face and sides of letters and graphics shall be opaque;
- All lights, transformers, fasteners, spikes, zappers and connections shall be concealed from view;
- Up to 20% of the total sign area may be the lighted portion of the sign;
- Halo illuminated signs shall follow the size restrictions laid out under wall signs and free standing signs in their prospective districts; and
- No sign shall emit more than 100 Nits.

Motion passed 7-0.

Chairperson Robson and staff lead the Commission through the reasoning behind the Sign Committee's suggested language for Halo Lit signs. Chairperson Robson requested to add "or graphic" into the definition on the third line.

Review and Acceptance of 2023-2028 Capital Improvement Plan

Commissioner Pall made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Fitzgerald, to approve and recommend the 2023-2028 Capital Improvement Plan to City Council based on the finding of facts that it was in line with the current Master Plan goals, objectives and strategies.

Motion passed 6-1. Commissioner Willmott was the dissenting vote.

The Commission discussed specifics about the plan, primarily for years 2023 and 2024, in relation to location of the arboretum, resurfacing locations in the wheel way, and sidewalk repairs. Commissioner Pall expressed interest in more participation in choosing and designing projects.

Commissioners asked why the 2023 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) included funds to demolish a house the City owns at 620 Ingalls Avenue and pointed out that there is a significant housing shortage. The City Manager explained that the City would look into seeking bids for a potential redevelopment through a Request for Proposal (RFP). Several Commissioners agreed the City should pursue that option and not demolish existing housing.

Commissioners then discussed the CIP process and the Planning Commission's role. Commissioners felt earlier involvement in the draft process would be more appropriate while also allowing the public an earlier look and time to comment. The City Manager stated that he was used to doing that and he would like to do so going forward. Commissioners felt it would be a better process.

Zoning District B-3a Amendment for Height Language

Commissioner Pall made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Dettmer, to approve the proposed language amendment for the maximum height allowance in the B-3a District to three stories, 37 feet.

Motion passed 7-0.

The Commission discussed how the previous height maximum in this district was four stories, 45 feet but for some reason was greatly reduced to the current two stories years ago. The current restriction on height makes this district, which is intended to be primarily for hotels and lodging, very difficult to work financially for any future developer.

Public Comments

No comments were received.

Commissioner Comments

No comments were received.

Updates

Staff thanked the Commissioners that were able to attend training the week before; showed the Commission the prospective plans for the adoption of Northmen Oaks Drive, which will be built and paid for by the developer; and discussed the possible need for a special meeting in November to discuss recreational marijuana.

Staff then thanked Commissioner Fitzgerald for her service on the Planning Commission as this was her last meeting.

The meeting was then adjourned at 9:35 P.M.

Minutes reviewed by Ted Pall, Vice, Chairperson