

MINUTES

I. *The City of Buchanan Planning Commission, in compliance with Michigan’s Open Meetings Act, hereby gives notice of a Planning Commission meeting to be held in the Chamber of City Hall.*

II. ** Comments may also be submitted in writing at least 4 hours in advance to the Community Development Director Richard Murphy at rmurphy@cityofbuchanan.com*

** Buchanan City will provide necessary and reasonable auxiliary aide and services to those individuals with disabilities who wish to attend the public meeting upon receiving at least one (1) week’s prior notice. Any such individual requiring such aids or services should contact the city in writing or by telephoning: Buchanan City Clerk; 302 North Redbud Trail, Buchanan, MI 49107, 269-695-3844.*

III. Regular Meeting - Call to Order

Barker called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

IV. Pledge of Allegiance

Barker led in the pledge of allegiance.

V. Roll Call

Present: Kevin Barker, Ralph MacDonald, Sean Denison, Tony Houser, Jacob Brown, Matt Pleasant, Peter Lysy

Absent: None.

City Staff: City Clerk, Kalla Langston; Community Development Director, Rich Murphy; Commissioner Patrick Swem

VI. Approve Agenda

Motion made by Denison, supported by Houser, to approve the agenda as presented. Voice vote carries unanimously.

VII. Public Comments - Agenda Items

Frances Terry, 16398 Rynearson Rd – I just wanted to say that Patrick has been working very hard on his project, we are kind of working alongside him. And any person especially our younger generation, I can say younger because I know I’m old, that is willing to put time and effort in to promote Buchanan really deserves all of our respect.

VIII. Approve Minutes**A. November 14, 2023- Regular Meeting Minutes**

Motion made by Houser, supported by Brown to approve the amended minutes. Voice vote carries unanimously.

IX. Old Business**X. New Business****A. Presentation of alternative parking solution for the Historic Livery Project, 206 Days Ave.**

Update by Swem – You approved a parking lot plan for this project with a couple caveats to be approved by Rich. That was until the appraisal came in and the cost made it unfeasible for us to

proceed with that plan. It did bring us to this solution, which I actually think is better not only for the community but the project itself. It allows us to preserve the house on the property. As we dug into the easements on Days Ave we realized pretty quickly that there was a much larger city easement to the front of 206 Days Ave where all that concrete is currently existing space now. What we are looking to do is mirror what is already on Days Ave on the same side of the street just on the north end in front of the library and place angled parking there. It's unmarked, undesignated parking today in front of 206 so now the 208 is part of the C3 district we would like to expand that down. Make that clear public parking so our company is willing to do all that work and put all that in at no cost to the city as part of our project. We are not looking for anything extra there. It won't be specific parking for our property it would be public parking for the entire community but it will allow us access points for our tenants for the hotel. Specifically to drop off their luggage to find a longer overnight space. Ideally for us, long-term we come up with a better solution for overnight parking in the community as a whole. But parking adjacent to the property is important to its value which impacts our financing, impacts our grants – all those things. We are looking for an extension of what's already available to us at 206 into the newly zoned C3 in 208. Again, all of that cost will come from our pockets and we are preserving the big tree that was asked to be preserved at our previous meeting when we were putting in the parking lot. We are reducing the available spots from 14 in the other parking projection to 12 spots so minimal impact. It's our understanding that parking isn't even a formal requirement being in the C3 so we think this is just an overall amenity added to the community.

Murphy – I would just add it's a blessing in disguise. We preserve the house, less invasive parking, and there was precedence for angle parking in the C3 on Days Ave and other areas of Main St. I agree that parking is necessary for the hotel experience, it's an expectation of someone staying there so it's essential to the project.

Denison – Can you explain overnight parking in town?

Murphy – I talked to Chief Ganus about this, right now there's a practice that if you live downtown you can get parking passes and there's designated areas. overnight parking Perhaps that's Patrick's interim solution, we are going to look at that. It's very rare to have no parking overnight in a downtown setting. Bottom line if you want a hotel we have to have parking. At some point we need to look at parking strategies for the whole downtown.

Barker – At some point are you eventually looking at parking where the house is or are you leaving that as a permanent thing. If you do decide to park on that in the future under your approved plan then you're going to take two parking spaces away from the city – are they gonna give them back?

Swem – We already have an approved plan we can put on shelf for when it's economically feasible. This may be a better solution where we can choose to reinvest this money differently into the property or surrounding area. We have a plan B if it's necessary, right now it's just not feasible until the project at least becomes stabilized. I would much rather ask for variance for the overnight parking and I think that's better for the community as a whole than me paving over paradise and putting a parking lot in.

Barker – Handicap aisle parking is near the service entrance not the main entrance, consider moving that north.

Swem – We thought it was the closest proximity to the main entrance. What about the space in front of the access point for the dumpster there since it's typically less used and since there's no overnight parking now we will have to come up with a solution for the one night we need trash

access similar to much of downtown where shop owners put their cans out in front of those spots for example or a cone. Or set up scheduled pickups.

Barker – The handicap ramp per entrance per code is supposed to be as close as possible to the main entrance under ADA requirements. Requirement is a 9ftx6ft aisle, my recommendation would be to put it near the entrance because that leaves your entrance visibly more open. If were to do something I would maybe figure out a way to do a dumpster enclosure all the way to the south and eliminate a parking space. Maybe 10ft off the sidewalk and create a drive there that can just go in and grab it.

Swem – We are incredibly flexible on where the handicap space goes on this plan.

Pleasant/Houser? – Does this new plan change the lighting scope?

Swem – I don't believe I'm required any additional lighting so I don't have to have any intrusive lighting into the neighboring properties its legally not my property at this point. I'm basically willing to pay to redo all the concrete infrastructure there.

Lysy – Likewise you've eliminated the storm drains

Swem – We don't have to deal with the county anymore on a retention strategy because we didn't make any existing changes to the sidewalk.

Swem – I'm looking for I believe is a favorable recommendation of the proposed alternative parking plan to the City Commission.

Denison motions, supported by Houser, to recommend the proposed alternative parking plan for the Historic Livery Project as presented to the City Commission.

Barker – It's to bad there's not a way to utilize giving up one spot to make a small enough single drive to get in to the dumpster and you could also park two cars there side by side for staff.

Construction will take a year, hopefully we can work with the city on a longer-term overnight parking plan that better suits this site. In the meantime, this is a viable option to allow us to proceed.

Denison amends his motion, supported by Houser, to recommend the proposed alternative parking plan for the Historic Livery Project to the City Commission providing that they have flexibility to locate the handicap space wherever they see fit. Roll call vote carries unanimously.

Swem, Timing Update – Final grant meeting with the state of Michigan on January 23rd, we are scheduled to close right after that.

B. Consider a recommendation from the Design Review Committee regarding a revised scope proposal for Cannavista, 120 E Front St. only for repainting of the Mill Alley wall (referred back to DRC from the Plan Commission meeting 11/14/2023 Regular Meeting).

Cannavista presented a proposal that discussed painting the Mill Alley side of their building as well as the south side of the first story part of their building a French Grey color. There was discussion whether the two facades should be considered together or separate. The decision was to consider only the Mill Alley side proposal and let them come back to the DRC with a proposal for the south side of the building. The DRC recommended painting the Mill Alley side but not the French Grey because that's different from the wall other wall of Mill Alley – the alley is considered one unit with two walls and a floor – the paint is to be close to or compatible with the color of the opposing wall. They also recommend not painting the wainscoting brick.

Motion made by Lysy, supported by Barker, to approve the recommendation of the Design Review Committee as submitted which is to paint the west wall of the Cannavista building a red close to or compatible with the opposing wall and providing that the wainscoting brick is left unpainted in its natural state. Motion is moved to a roll call vote.

Yea: Brown, Pleasant, Lysy, Barker, Denison

Nay:

Abstain: Houser

Motion carries.

XI. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only

Fran – Just want to wish you all a Merry Christmas. Thank you all for the hard work you do because usually it's not appreciated but there are members of the community that do appreciate you.

XII. Community Development Director Comments

The Victory Park Pavilion is substantially completed, I was just there it looks amazing. Great design Kevin, thank you.

XIII. Commissioner Comments

Pleasant – I'm thankful to be here and look forward to learning and helping however I can.

Houser – None.

Brown – None.

Lysy – I hope the positive progress of Cannavista continues.

Denison – About the DPW building, they started pouring foundations at the end of last week. Steel should be going up right after Christmas.

Barker – My only comment is that I resigned from the Design Review Committee, and I recommend that Peter Lysy be put on there because he has more history on the downtown buildings than anyone I've ever known in this town.

XIV. Adjournment

Motion made by Houser, supported by Brown, to adjourn the meeting. Voice vote carries unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:37pm.