
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

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Vice-Chair Houser.

IV. Pledge of Allegiance

Houser led in the pledge of allegiance.

V. Roll Call

Present: Vigansky, Pleasant, Houser, Brown, Lysy

Absent: McDonald, Garry

VI. Approve Agenda

Motion made by, seconded by Lysy to approve the agenda as presented. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

VII. Public Comments - Agenda Items

Bud Holmes – Holmes is a local property owner who'd like clarity on the short-term rental ordinance moratorium. He owns a property that was intended to be an Airbnb before the moratorium, but would be outside of the proposed district.

VIII. Approve Minutes

A. Consider approving Regular Meeting Minutes from June 10, 2025.

Motion made by Vigansky, seconded by Pleasant, to approve the minutes as presented. Voice vote carried unanimously.

IX. Old Business

None.

X. New Business

A. Zoning Draft & Map

Murphy introduced Susan Henderson of Placemakers and presented a timeline for approval by September.

Henderson presented draft 3 of the new zoning code. This version incorporates a few new standards that help the new code meet Redevelopment Ready Community guidelines. There were changes made

to the map and other minimal edits as suggested by Staff and the Planning Commission. Larger edits included going back to draft 1 Neighborhood Plans and incorporating our tree preservation standards.

Henderson and the Commission discussed the timeline for submitting last edits, hearings, and approval.

B. Short-Term Rental Ordinance

McGhee introduced the draft short-term rental ordinance. Expecting to see more and more short-term rentals in the City, it makes sense to proactively establish a policy since we currently do not have one. He and some City Commission members would like to restrict short-term rentals to commercial areas and Michigan law allows municipalities to regulate them this way. At that time a moratorium on new short-term rentals was put into place pending approval of an ordinance. Current short-term rentals can continue to operate but will be required to register. Murphy created a draft based on comparable communities in this area. It has been reviewed by the City attorney.

Pleasant is opposed to restricting short-term rentals to a specific area, feeling it is an infringement of property owners' rights. Lysy agrees that they should not be limited to one area, which could see a dense accumulation of short-term rentals instead of the spread we have now, and suggested restricting the total number and potentially limiting their placement based on proximity to each other. Langston believes it will be difficult to restrict the number administratively.

Vigansky is in favor of restricting short-term rentals to one area. There was discussion of short-term rentals' effect on the schools, and it was generally agreed that the total number should be limited.

McGhee believes short-term rentals should only be in commercial areas. Pleasant pointed out that the proposed district includes R-1 zoned blocks, and Houser added that our new zoning code encourages mixed use and home occupations.

Vigansky believes variances can be sought outside the proposed district. Brown asked if we could add small numbers of permits outside of the zone each year. Langston answered they could always go before the City Commission to amend the ordinance if they'd like to change it in the future.

There was discussion of how best to restrict and account to permits. McGhee reiterated that the City Commission would like to see short-term rentals restricted in R-1 neighborhoods. Lysy said the Planning Commission must give the City Commission good advice, not just what it wants to hear. There was a discussion of whether to restrict the total number or not.

Motion made by Vigansky, seconded by Brown, to approve the Short-Term Rental Ordinance as presented.

Yay: Vigansky, Brown

Nay: Pleasant, Houser, Lysy

Motion fails.

Motion made by Houser, seconded by Pleasant to allow Short Term Rentals throughout the City with a maximum 25 Permits.

DISCUSSION: Lysy believes the number of permits should be higher and restricting them based on proximity to other short-term rentals should be explored. Brown personally does not like short-term rentals would not allow them in R-1 neighborhoods. He would prefer the map as it does not include the area where he lives. He also reiterated that the map can be expanded later or extra permits can be added if they wish.

Pleasant believes it is fairer to the property owner for short-term rentals to be available everywhere. Houser would like to see a restriction to the total number since the area proposed in the map is small.

McGhee asked if the permits would be transferable. Browns thinks they should be. Pleasant doesn't think they should be. Lysy pointed out that in the draft ordinance, they are non-transferable.

Vigansky emphasized that it would be a hard push to get the City Commission to approve this concept.

Roll call vote

Yay: Lysy, Pleasant, Houser

Nay: Vigansky, Brown

Houser would like to change his vote. Langston informed him that per Robert's Rules of Order, he must vote in the affirmative since he introduced the motion. Langston gave the option to rescind the previous motion.

Motion made by Houser, supported by Brown, to rescind the previous motion.

Yay: Vigansky, Houser, Brown

Nay: Pleasant, Lysy

Motion made by Brown, seconded by to approve the ordinance with a maximum of 15 new permits in the map area, and 15 grandfathered short-term rentals that may or may not be in the map area proposed.

The Commission clarified that they're proposing a cap of 15 permits in the map area. Lysy doesn't like the area and believes it will negatively impact the Days Ave corridor, which includes some of Buchanan's oldest homes and is seeking recognition from the National Register of Historic Places.

Houser doesn't believe their proposition without a map will pass, which is why he has changed his mind.

Yay: Vigansky, Houser, Brown

Nay: Pleasant, Lysy

Motion carries.

XI. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only

Randy Hendrixson: Thanked the Plan Commission and Staff for not eliminating the PUD his property is in in the new zoning map. He appreciates them listening to property owners. When he was on the Planning Commission in 2017, they had started this project and he is pleased to see it being finished.

XII. Community Development Director Comments

Murphy will continue to update the Commission on the timeline for approval of the zoning ordinance.

XIII. Commissioner Comments

Lysy: Hopes the City Commission takes the Planning Commission's advice with an open mind.

Brown: Thanked the Commission for the discussion and he appreciates their different perspectives.

Vigansky: Changed his mind on the direction they'd take for short-term rentals out of concern for the school losing students. He appreciates that Buchanan is being proactive on this issue. Vigansky asked if the resident who spoke at public comment could immediately come to City Hall to ask for a variance. E. Lysy clarified that there is a high bar for obtaining a variance, and it wouldn't be a tool to add

additional short-term rentals; the Planning Commission would need to amend its ordinance. He is happy to see the zoning ordinance closer to completion.

XIV. Adjournment

Houser adjourned the meeting at 7:46 PM.