

CITY OF BUCHANAN PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2025 – 6:00 PM
CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN MI

MINUTES- AMENDED

III. Regular Meeting - Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ralph McDonald at 6:00 PM.

IV. Pledge of Allegiance

McDonald led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

V. Roll Call

PRESENT: Chairman Ralph McDonald, Vice-Chair Tony Houser, Secretary Jen Garry, Commissioner Dan Vigansky, Peter Lysy, Matt Pleasant

ABSENT: Jacob Brown

CITY STAFF: Community Development Director, Rich Murphy; City Manager, Tony McGhee; City Clerk, Kalla Langston; Administrative Assistant Emma Lysy

VI. Approve Agenda

Motion made by Vigansky, supported by Houser to approve the agenda, as presented. Voice votes carry unanimously.

VII. Public Comments - Agenda Items

None.

VIII. Approve Minutes

A. *Consider approving the Regular Meeting Minutes from December 10th, 2024.*

Motion made by P.Lysy, supported by Vigansky to approve the minutes as presented. Voice votes carry unanimously.

IX. Old Business

X. New Business

A. *Discussion about ADUs.*

At the last meeting, we reached a consensus to focus on the zoning project with renewed energy. We are undertaking a complete overhaul, and while we have encountered some issues, we have until 2026 to complete this project. Our approach will involve work sessions where we will seek input and opinions.

We will start discussing ADUs and prioritize the zoning items necessary for Redevelopment Ready Certification.

The Planning Commission sought clarification on ADUs and DADUs. McDonald's opinion detached accessory dwellings are acceptable with limitations and oversight. Concerns include parking, access, and services (utilities), which must adhere to restrictions and setbacks.

These structures can be high quality, when done well, they are great. They may not be "by-right", but rather through a special use permit. No members are opposed of Detached ADUs.

McDonald suggested reviewing a draft write-up. They are used in Draft 2. E. Lysy has some questions about the definitions related to rental units. Additionally, there was a discussion about ADUs and possibly short-term rentals. This may be an issue worth addressing at some point to keep it on the Planning Commission's radar.

Consensus among the planning commission to allow ADUs by special use permit. They will suggest edits to Draft 2 with ADUs.

Vigansky addressed PUDs. E. Lysy clarified that Draft 1 had no PUDs; it instead had neighborhood plans, which in essence work better with a form-based code. More discussion will take place at the next meeting for PUDs and neighborhood plans.

B. *Prioritize the zoning items that need to be included in our new zoning ordinance for Redevelopment Ready Certification.*

The planning commission reviewed the outlined RRC-ready document. The following topics were discussed for inclusion by right in the next draft zoning code.

Housing Diversity

Interested in the following

- Townhomes/Rowhouses in General Neighborhood (GN)
- Stacked Flats in General Neighborhood (GN) & Neighborhood Center
- Residential units above commercial which is already included.

Concentrated Development

Interested in the following

- Open store fronts
- Outdoor dining but regulated
- Minimum ground floor transparency
- Parking located in rear building- more information requested
- Walk-up windows
- Public Art Program

Green Infrastructure

Interested in the following

- Green roofs
- Permeable pavement
- Steep slope protection
- Street tree planting standards
- Tree preservation standards
- Required native or low maintenance plantings
- Renewable energy
- Buffering standards around water bodies or other natural resources

Parking Flexibility

Interested in the following

- Reduction or elimination of required parking when on-street or public parking is available
- Connections between parking lots
- Parking waivers
- Electric vehicle charging stations
- Bicycle parking

XI. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only

XII. Community Development Director Comments

No comments from Murphy or E. Lysy.

McGhee gave praise and appreciation for the work they are doing.

XIII. Commissioner Comments

- **P.Lysy** welcomed McGhee and expressed enthusiasm for restarting the Zoning Ordinance Project.
- **Garry** appreciated the great work session.
- **Houser** had questions about the subcommittees with the DRC and the change in times for the Planning Commission Meetings. Lysy addressed these comments and discussed recommendations for the DRC's role in the new zoning code. **McDonald** mentioned that the DRC's involvement was initially tied to DDA grants, which required meeting design standards from the DRC. The team will look into this further for clear direction and recommendations. The **time change** for Planning Commission Meetings will be addressed through an amendment of the bylaws.
- **Vigansky** requested additional information, which will be sent out after Murphy and Lysy consultation. Attendance was also discussed.
- **Pleasant** concerns with supporting the Buchanan Tree Friends, McGhee will be addressing those concerns with Chairman Murphy of BTF to start collaboration.
- **McDonald** provided meeting minutes from the last two trail meetings. Welcomed McGhee and appreciated everyone for showing up, working and communicating.

XIV. Adjournment

Motion made by Houser, supported by Vigansky to adjourn the meeting at 7:34 PM. Voice vote carries unanimously.

City Clerk, Kalla Langston

Chairperson, Ralph McDonald