

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

Meeting called to order at 7:01pm.

IV. Pledge of Allegiance

V. Roll Call

Present: Chairman Jason Lietz, Kevin Barker, Ralph McDonald, Sean Denison, and Richard Martin

City Staff: Director of Community Development, Rich Murphy; Administrative Assistant, Emma Lysy

VI. Approve Agenda

Barker suggested adding a recurring item under old business to discuss and update progress on the new zoning ordinance project.

Motion made by Barker, supported by McDonald to add an update and discussion of the new zoning ordinance project under item B, Old Business. Voice vote carries unanimously.

VII. Public Comments - Agenda Items

Don Ryman – We are getting an off the self, completely new zoning code which is not what Buchanan needs. We only need updates and amendments to the existing code. A new zoning code be an unnecessary burden on those who will need to use it. The elimination of the single family residential district and PUD is not proper. (See attached A)

VIII. Approve Minutes

A. 1) *Consider approving Minutes from the Regular Planning Commission Meeting on November 15th, 2022.*

2) *Consider approving Minutes from the Special Workshop Planning Commission Meeting on November 29, 2022.*

Barker noted workshop minutes seemed sparse. Murphy can supply supporting materials from Placemakers if needed. Denison noted that it would be hard to distill a one and a half hour discussion, but the notes from Placemakers would be helpful. Planning Commission decided to table approval.

Motion made by Denison, supported by McDonald to approve minutes with correction of Murphy's last name under Item 12. Voice vote carries unanimously.

Motion made by McDonald, supported by Barker to table action on 11/29 Workshop minutes pending revision. Voice vote carries unanimously.

IX. Old Business

A. 128 Main St.- Honor Credit Union

The Honor team and architect presented the 128 Main St site plan. The Planning Commission asked for more detail on how the flow of traffic would work. Currently, the four lanes are divided into exiting either into the parking lot or the access road to the south. There had been concern that people exiting onto the exit road would meet people pulling out from parking spaces along the access road. As this is how the exit is already functioning, the team does not have plans to change it. There was further discussion of the traffic flow and plans for the curb area and lanes. Dashed lines and additional signage were agreed upon as good measures to help traffic flow.

McDonald noted that greenspace would be a good option for space made available by the elimination of parking spots.

Motion made by Barker, supported by Martin to adopt the site plan for 128 Main St with the addition of dashed lines and signage at lane exits. Roll call vote carries unanimously.

B. Zoning Ordinance Update and Discussion

Barker requested to move item B of Old Business to after New Business to accommodate those from out of town.

Murphy reported on the workshop with Placemakers, city boards, and the public. Extensive notes were taken to record all discussion and feedback. They've incorporated that feedback into a matrix that will inform their next draft. They propose a meeting in January that incorporates those proposals.

There was discussion regarding the nature approach to the new zoning ordinance. Barker felt that it was not made specifically for Buchanan, Denison supported that Placemakers had come to Buchanan and tailor made their proposed draft for Buchanan. There was discussion over whether the proposed changes increased flexibility or represented greater constrictions, as well as what's covered in the city ordinance.

The commission felt it would be helpful to see progress on the new ordinance in smaller sections, rather than an entire new draft at a time. Murphy was asked if there was a timeline for approving the new zoning ordinance. He confirmed that there wasn't, not until it was done right. The zoning ordinance is the blueprint for accomplishing what's outlined in the masterplan.

X. New Business

A. Approve recommendation from Design Review Committee for Honor Credit Union Facade, 128 Main Street

The Honor team and architect summarized their presentation for the Design Review Committee. They've amended their design to keep the pea gravel panels and have lowered the canopy below the roofline.

Motion made by Barker, supported by Martin to approve the 128 Main St Façade plan as recommended by the Design Review Committee. Roll call vote carries unanimously.

C. Consider the application submitted by Anthony "Tony" Houser to the Planning Commission.

Houser introduced himself to the Planning Commission. Lietz noted that they like representing different stakeholders in the city and that Houser would represent a good addition to the commission.

Motion made by Martin, supported by Denison to recommend support of the application of Anthony Houser to the City Commission. Voice vote carries unanimously.

XI. Subcommittee Reports (if any)

Martin was not present at the last Friends of the Trail meeting.

McDonald reported on upcoming plantings done by the Tree Friends. There was discussion of training DPW workers in proper pruning procedure for trees they maintain.

XII. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only

None.

XIII. Community Development Director Comments

Murphy just represented the City at the Urban Guild Awards via Zoom, accepting the award for best student work with Andrews University for A Vision for Buchanan.

The DNR Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant will soon be awarded. Buchanan has scored 3rd out of over 100 cities, so this will likely be the grant that secures the remaining funding needed for the trail expansion project.

XIV. Commissioner Comments

None.

XV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04pm.

*Relating to the New Business
Progress Report Main Street Winter 2022
Application submitted by Anthony "Tony"
Harris to the Planning Commission.*

The people who are advising ^{the city} us on zoning are giving ^{us} an off-the-shelf complete new zoning code. That is not what we need. We only need suggested amendments to our present zoning code to reflect improvements in zoning practice since the zoning code was last amended. A complete new zoning code will require an unnecessary investment in time to familiarize themselves with the many page complete new zoning code by the citizens using the code, by the city employees enforcing the code, and the general public. And a whole new off-the-shelf code makes it very difficult to identify the substantive changes from the present code.

We know that an elimination of the single family residential district is proposed, plus an elimination of the PUD districts, and an elimination of the heavy industrial districts. I think none of these changes is proper. I find it strange that our Industrial Development Director is favoring elimination of some of the zoning classifications that a potential business coming into Buchanan might wish to take advantage of.

What we need is a marked up copy of the present zoning code showing proposed changes, so the Planning Commission and the City Commission and the general public can know what changes are being suggested and voted upon.