
AGENDA

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.

** 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.*

I. Regular Meeting - Call to Order**II. Pledge of Allegiance****III. Roll Call****IV. Approve Agenda****V. Public Comments - Agenda Items****VI. Approve Minutes****A. Minutes**

1) Consider approving the Regular Meeting Minutes from May 14th, 2024.

2) Consider approving Special Meeting Minutes from July 18th, 2024.

VII. Old Business

A. Zoning Project- *discussion on the Zoning Project objective and timeline.*

VIII. New Business

A. Downtown Reconstruction Project and other Downtown Project Updates.

IX. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only**X. Community Development Director Comments****XI. Commissioner Comments****XII. Adjournment**



CITY OF BUCHANAN PLANNING COMMISSION

TUESDAY, MAY 14, 2024 – 6:00 PM

CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN MI

MINUTES

III. Regular Meeting - Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01pm.

IV. Pledge of Allegiance

McDonald led in the pledge of allegiance.

V. Roll Call

Present: Vice Chair McDonald, Secretary Tony Houser, Jacob Brown, Matt Pleasant, Peter Lysy, Jen Garry

Absent: Mayor Sean Denison (at the Mayor Blossomtime Event)

City Staff: Community Development Director, Rich Murphy; Assistant Community Development Director, Ashley Regal; City Clerk, Kalla Langston

VI. Approve Agenda

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

VII. Public Comments - Agenda Items

None.

VIII. Approve Minutes

A. **Minutes**- Consider approving the Public Hearing and Regular Meeting Minutes from April 9, 2024.

Amend the minutes to include:

- i. Under **I. Public Hearing Item E. Presentation by the Applicant, Ordinance and Licensing Information**, amend "There is nuance the licensing" to "There is nuance **with** the licensing."
- ii. Under **IX. New Business Item A. Consider an ordinance amending the city of Buchanan zoning ordinance, Motions on Proposed Amendments** where it says, "with the finding of facts," change to "with the findings of fact **per the submitted staff report by Rich Murphy.**"

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

IX. New Business

A. Presentation of the Buchanan St. Joseph Riverfront Master Plan. – Murphy & Abonmarche Team

Introduction

Things started with *A Vision for Buchanan*. We approached the AEP Foundation to request grant funding for a master plan which they awarded, allowing us to contract with Abonmarche. AEP is also a major landowner adjacent to some of the public access areas. The Steering Committee has been very helpful. The Great Lakes St Lawrence Cities Initiative Grant gave us money which helped market both our Master Plan for the Riverfront and any subsequent ecological restoration plan. We won the kayak launch grant and currently have two applications in for an improved boat launch and an eco-playground equipment grant – each for several hundred thousand dollars.

Project Process

1. Solicit Public Input for Preliminary Design
2. Conceptual Land Use and Design
3. Review Conceptual Land Use and Design Options
4. Public Design Workshops
5. Develop Finals Plans for Consideration
6. Committee Review and Input
7. Finalize Waterfront Master Plan

Community Engagement Overview

Community Survey: 162 respondents 79.63% agree or strongly agree that the city should improve access to the St. Joseph River

Steering Committee: seven members, responsible for reviewing concepts and provide input on the community engagement process, significant conversation with the Pokagon Band, propose improvements you might see at a state or national park (lower footprint, maximum stewardship)

Community Workshops: held two in October, 32 people participated, consensus from discussions – eco-playground, council ring, trails, gathering space, over looks only on the AEP property, no additional buildings, and interpretive signage

Consistency with A Vision for Buchanan

- Engaging the River → increased access and safety, low-impact construction, raised boardwalk
- Honoring Culture → Pokagon Band of Potawatomi indigenous history through interpretive signage
- Celebrating Ecology → Education markers, promote restoration of native species ecology
- A Northside Destination → Redevelopment opportunities, making a local and regional destination
- Pedestrian & Bike Connectivity → sharrows, wayfinding signage, safe pedestrian/bike connections

Buchanan Waterfront Master Plan

Project Site: ~50 acres – 20 acres owned by the city with the rest owned privately and by AEP, 2,000ft of linear shoreline, plan is focusing on the available public land

Master Plan Option 1: Pullouts at boat launch landing and at the bluffs, upgraded boat launch, accessible kayak and canoe launch, fishing platforms, restrooms, picnic pavilion, natural play area, nature trail, river front seating, restrooms

Master Plan Option 2: High end details, investigates potential with privately owned property like reuse of the former marina site, different layout to access landing area, adds in dedicated sidewalk for pedestrians, elevated overlook in the bluffs, keep access points as far from the dam as possible

Next Steps: Master plan will be refined to create a site development plan. If pursuing option 2, next steps would include potential partnership with private landowners to bring additional assets.

B. Consider the adoption of the Buchanan St. Joseph Riverfront Master Plan.

We do want to reserve the right to make an amendment under the Celebrating Ecology section that will open more funding opportunities on climate resiliency. It would help to outline how our plan builds resiliency and adaptability through sustainable choices and low-impact techniques.

Motion made by Brown, supported by Pleasant, to approve the Riverfront Master Plan with an amendment to outline how the Master Plan builds resiliency. Motion is moved to a roll call vote.

Yea: Brown, Pleasant, Lysy, Gerry, McDonald, Houser

Nay: None

Motion carries.

X. Old Business**A. Discussion regarding the status of Cannavista Wellness, 120 E. Front St, Mill Alley wall painting.**

The Planning Commission approved them to paint the façade red to maintain harmony with Mill Alley. They painted it grey, they say it is primer. We would like is to reaffirm the position of the Planning Commission and provide a letter with language such as;

On this day the Planning Commission voted they would proceed with the project painting it Mill Alley red due to the harmony considerations of Mill Alley. At this time, we find that it is painted grey. Please indicate to us by X date when it will be painted red, and you will be in compliance.

Motion made by Lysy, supported by Brown, to reaffirm their motion from the meeting held on December 12th, 2023 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.” The Planning Commission also directs Rich Murphy to send a letter to the owner of Cannavista to the effect of the previous motion. The motion is moved to a roll call vote.

Yea: Pleasant, Lysy, Gerry, McDonald, Brown

Nay: None

Abstain: Houser

Motion carries.

XI. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only

Flenar – Thanks for the water bottle.

Casey Schlutt– Disabled vet new to the area, an avid canoe and kayaker, this river is 206 miles and perfect for a canoe and kayak marathon, wants to get involved with the community.

XII. Community Development Director Comments

Murphy – Your ordinance you recommended for approval at the last meeting was approved last night.

XIII. Commissioner Comments

Gerry – Loves the plan.

Pleasant – Loves the plan, the Buchanan tree friends could help consult on tree maintenance

Houser – Thanks for the presentation tonight, where are we with the assigned meetings about changing the zoning ordinance?

Murphy: We resigned the contract that gives us until the end of 2025 to do this project. Ashley, Emma and I are meeting most Thursday’s at 11am to create a strategy to reactivate the zoning project. The meetings are open to everyone.

Brwon – Plan was great, would like to revisit the parking.

McDonald – Again, thank you for that fantastic presentation. Also, you received the minutes for the trial meetings for the last two months. Please review those when you have time.

XIV. Adjournment

Motion made by Houser, supported by Brown, to adjourn at 7:35 pm. Voice vote carries unanimously.



CITY OF BUCHANAN PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING
THURSDAY, JULY 18, 2024 – 3:00 PM
CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN MI

MINUTES

I. Regular Meeting - Call to Order

The regular meeting was called to order by Vice Chair McDonald at 3:02 PM.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call

Present: Vice Chair McDonald, Mayor Sean Denison, Secretary Tony Houser, Jacob Brown, Matt Pleasant, Peter Lysy, and Jen Garry

City Staff: Community Development Director, Rich Murphy & City Clerk, Kalla Langston

IV. Approve Agenda

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

V. Public Comments - Agenda Items

None.

VI. New Business

A. Rear Façade Proposal for 109 E Front St. Impressive Lettering.

Murphy: The owner of the building received a grant from Main Street and requested we try to accommodate the timeline for her to spend the grant money which is a significant amount.

Lysy: Nobody on the DRC had a problem with stuccoing the raw block. One exterior brick wall was originally plastered which had been damaged and the bricks are deteriorating. The committee agreed to plaster over that area and tuck point the brick above the soffit line. There was discussion about creating some kind of frame around the two glass block windows. The idea is to use the expanded control joint to form a frame around the openings. This just refers to the two glass block windows. In terms of the second-floor windows, there is one original double-hung window remaining so there was discussion about replacing that with a pseudo-divided light replacement window or going with a single one-over-one window. There is a window opening for the shared stairwell between 107 and 109. The exterior and endura clad will all be painted white.

Motion made by Houser, supported by Pleasant, to approve the Design Review Committee recommendation for the proposed rear façade improvements at 109 E Front St with their conditions as presented. Voice vote carries unanimously.

VII. Public Comment

Dan Vigansky – The code enforcement, I don't know if the commission can do very much, but the video store has been for sale for 20 years. She's asking an extortionate price for it. We've lost our drug store. Small time pharmacists don't want a building that big. This goes back on the PD and renting half of that. They want to use that whole building for evidence, and we don't have a drugstore.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion made by Houser, supported by Lysy, to adjourn at 3:21 PM. Voice vote carries unanimously.