



## **City of Ypsilanti**

Planning and Development Department

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**Date: January 16, 2013**

## **2012 Annual Report Planning Commission Ypsilanti, Michigan**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Planning Commission of the City of Ypsilanti is governed by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, State of Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, and by the City of Ypsilanti's Zoning Ordinance.

In 2012, the Planning Commission's membership was as follows:

Roderick Johnson (chair)	Daniel Lautenbach
Richard Murphy (vice-chair)	Brett Lenart
Mark Bullard	Kelly Weger
Gary Clark	Cheryl Zuellig
Phil Holifield	

Under the Planning Enabling Act, the Commission must provide an annual report to City Council, as the legislative body of the City. This report discusses,

1. The operations of the Commission during the past year
2. The status of any on-going planning activities
3. Recommendations to the legislative body related to planning and development

### **PLANNING COMMISSION OPERATIONS**

The Planning Commission met monthly during 2012, except for the months of January, April and August. From the perspective of formal applications, the Commission's agenda maintained an average load compared to previous years. The Commission considered 23 actions, including 7 site plans, 2 special use permits, and 2 text amendments.

In addition to a above-average number of applicants, the Commission addressed a number of significant issues that weren't tied to individual sites or applications.

- a series of study items including a draft disposition policy for City-owned property, a proposed expansion for Parkridge Community Center, consideration of Master Plan Changes for City-owned property including the former Boys and Girls club site and Superior Road property as well as a proposal for a Road Diet on State Trunk lines including Huron and Hamilton Streets and portions of Washtenaw Avenue.
- In July the Commission received the final presentation of the [Climate Action Plan](#) from the Michigan Suburbs Alliance. The plan was ultimately adopted by City Council on July 17, 2012 and is available on the City's website.
- The Commission also continued reviewing and making recommendations on capital improvement projects in the City of Ypsilanti, as called for in the Planning Enabling Act.
  - In October, the Planning Commission reviewed initial plans for the Grove Road project in the area between Emerick and Service Drive. Planning Commission recommended addition of a pedestrian crosswalk at Service drive, the addition of three ADA ramps at the crossing, and continuous sidewalk on the east side of S. Grove in the project area.
- Three committees were active during the past year
  - The Master Plan Committee met more regularly as funding was secured through Washtenaw County's Community Challenge grant for a full master plan and zoning ordinance revision. The committee developed the RFP for consultants, reviewed applications and recommended a process for two finalists to be recommended by the Planning Commission to City Council for the contract. Ultimately ENP & Associates was hired to conduct the Master Plan and Zoning ordinance revisions, along with their team of sub-consultants.
  - The Non-Motorized Committee met monthly and has representation from the DDA and Recreation Commission in addition to Planning Commission. The Committee will be submitting their annual report to the Commission in March.
  - The ordinance committee took on changes to zoning ordinance related to food production, processing and sales. The committee welcomed additional members to this process and guided staff to provide text amendment proposals which were considered twice by the Planning Commission and will be considered by City council in Feb. 2013.

Table 1: Planning Commission actions by type

<b>Planning Commission Actions</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
Site plan review	7	7	6	6	7	10	2	7	11	7
Amend approved site plan	0	0	0	0	4	1	1	1	2	1
Special use permit	3	3	6	3	3	6	1	1	7	2
Zoning map amendment	2	1	4	5	2	5	2	3	2	3
Zoning text amendment	2	1	3	1	2	2	3	6	6	2
Master plan amendment	0	2	3	2	0	2	0	1	0	0
Planned unit development	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Amend approved PUD	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Alley/Street closure/vacation	0	1	2	2	0	0	1	0	2	1
Change in non-conforming use	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Allow add'l floor area in B1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Historic Overlay discretionary zoning (tally starts 2010)								1	0	0
Capital Improvements Review (tally starts in 2011)									2	1
Special topic planning (tally starts in 2012)										1
Study item (tally starts in 2012)										4
Conditional rezoning (tally starts in 2012)										1
<b>Total Actions</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>23</b>

Figure 1: Planning Commission applications by year



## ONGOING PLANNING ACTIVITIES

As of the end of 2012, a few specific planning activities remain in-progress.

- Reimagine Washtenaw – Work continues on the overall effort as well as a right-of-way study for the corridor, and a Traffic Demand Management analysis including Eastern Michigan University and other major employers.
- 2013 will see the revival of work on the Huron/Whittaker pedestrian crossing of I-94. Progress had stalled on this effort after the study in 2004. The HUD Community Challenge grant includes funds for engineering design of the crossing. WATS will take the lead and the Planning Commission intends to be reengaged as the process restarts in the spring of 2013.
- Master Plan Revision formally began in November 2012, but will more formally kick off with a website, regularly Steering Committee meetings leading into a discovery charette in March, followed by a design charette in April. The entire master plan and zoning ordinance rewrite is expected to last 18 months.
- The property disposition strategy remains in a draft form and will likely be revised for Planning Commission in 2013.

## COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission urges that the importance of these and similar projects to Ypsilanti's future not be overlooked.

- Ypsilanti City Council has included in their 2011-2012 goals consideration of the sale of City-owned property. Planning Commission would like to be engaged in potential reuse considerations for the properties under consideration, as well as providing recommendations for a disposition policy for properties returned to the City through tax foreclosure sales. Some of this work is also likely to be addressed in the master plan revision process.
- The Commission would like to activate the Capital Improvements Committee to work on a 5-year Capital Improvements plan as it is a requirement of the State Planning Enabling Legislation. In addition to this being required by state law, it's recommendation of the recent SEMCOG report as well as the Redevelopment Ready Communities Certification administered by MEDC.
- Ongoing projects such as Water Street redevelopment remain priorities that require staff time and may further engage the Commission as the City continues a partnership with Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission to develop a portion of the site.

## **ACTION**

The Planning Commission will reviewed this report at its January16, 2013, meeting and approved transmittal to City Council.