



CITY OF PLYMOUTH

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City of Plymouth Planning Commission 2021 Annual Report

The City of Plymouth Planning Commission is made up of nine members. They regularly meet on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm in the Commission Chambers at City Hall located at 201 S. Main. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the Commission met online via Zoom January through December. A typical meeting consists of public comments, review of the previous meetings minutes, commissioner comments, public hearings, new and/or old business, and reports and correspondence from staff. Planning Commission members for the 2021 year included: Karen Sisolak (Chair), Jennifer Kehoe (Vice-Chair) (retired in October), Joe Hawthorne, Shannon Adams, Scott Silvers, Chuck Myslinski (retired in April), Adam Offerman (retired in August), Tim Joy, Hollie Saraswat, and Eric Stalter (appointed in October).

The Planning Commission met fifteen times during 2021. Of those fifteen meetings, twelve were regularly scheduled meetings. This meets the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) for the minimum number of meetings (4).

The main purpose of this report is to meet the requirements of the MPEA. However, this report increases information sharing between staff, boards, commissions, and the City Commission. This report anticipates upcoming issues and asks the Planning Commission to identify priorities so that staff may appropriately allocate time and resources. Lastly, it is the opportunity to reflect on the hard work of the past year and thank our dedicated appointed and elected officials for their support of the City’s planning and zoning efforts.

The Planning Commission’s primary accomplishments for the year were completing nine site plan reviews, an update of the Planning Commission Bylaws and amending the multi-family residential district.

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Planning Commission 2021 Goals

The goals adopted on January 13, 2021 are below:

1. Focus on education by scheduling four educational, working sessions on the following dates: February 24, March 24, October 27, and November 17.
 - a. COMPLETED: See Trainings on page 7.
2. Draft a Form Based Code test case.
 - a. IN PROGRESS: Discussed MAP training video on FBCs on March 24.
3. Approve a mixed use, high density zoning ordinance.
 - a. IN PROGRESS: This goal evolved and got combined with form based code initiatives. Initial presentations were made to the Planning Commission on February 10 with subsequent discussions on March 10, April 14, June 9, and July 14.
4. Review existing ordinances for amendments related to residential building heights and habitable space within accessory buildings.
 - a. IN PROGRESS: Held joint educational working session with ZBA on February 24.

Master Plan Review

The Planning Commission and City Commission adopted the Master Plan update on August 15, 2018 and September 17, 2018, respectively.

Below are the Master Plan goals

CC Strategic Plan Goal Topics	Guiding Master Plan Goals for Land Use
Goal I: Quality of Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage appropriate home sizing & massing • Create lifelong neighborhoods of diverse housing for various income levels • Maintain and enhance the tree canopy • Encourage historic preservation
Goal II: Financial Stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for a variety of land uses that creates a dynamic environment supportive of residences, community institutions, and businesses
Goal III: Economic Vitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a welcoming environment for commercial business & industry • Encourage environmentally sensitive/context sensitive and sustainable development
Goal IV: Service Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve street mobility, connectivity & safety • Plan for vehicular needs, including parking

Reflection:

To accomplish the various goals outlined in the document, the Planning Commission needs to identify their top priority (topic) out of the Implementation Matrix of the Master Plan and the Master Plan Goals for Land Use. Once this is identified, the Planning Commission, with the help of Community Development staff and approval of the City Commission, can take steps to implement those goals. The next page includes some of the actions identified in the Master Plan Implementation Matrix that could be selected as accomplishable tasks during 2022.

Master Plan Implementation Matrix

The table on the following page are the actions listed in the Implementation Matrix from the Master Plan which has the Planning Commission as one of the responsible parties.

Action	Priority Term	City Commission Goal Area				Responsibility	Funding
		I	II	III	IV		
Regulatory and Policy Change							
<i>Redevelopment Ready Communities</i>							
Ensure clear definitions and requirements are included in necessary sections of the ordinance	Short	X				PC, CDD	CDD
Review the Zoning Map annually, update if and as necessary	Cont.	X				PC	CDD
Align the zoning ordinance with the Master Plan goals.	Mid.			X		PC	CDD
Review and clarify special land use approval processes	Short				X	PC, CDD	CDD
Ensure industrial districts allow for compatible new economy-type businesses	Short				X	PC	CDD
Allow for non-traditional housing types in appropriate areas	Short	X		X		PC	CDD
<i>Site Design</i>							
Adopt clear, concise, enforceable ordinance requirements for landscaping, signage, lighting, parking, and access management for Commercial/Business districts	Short	X		X		PC	CDD
Adopt standards that encourage shared parking access and locates parking behind buildings	Short				X	PC	CDD
Adopt ordinance requirements that accommodate pedestrian activity within and around development	Short				X	PC	CDD
Adopt flexible parking standards	Short				X	PC	CDD
<i>Residential</i>							
Increase residential densities in the appropriate areas	Mid.	X	X	X		PC	CDD
Monitor and encourage appropriate home sizing and massing	Immed.	X				PC, CDD	CDD
<i>Environmental</i>							
Encourage environmentally sensitive/context sensitive and sustainable development	Mid.	X				PC	CDD
Maintain and enhance the City's tree canopy	Immed.	X				PC, CDD, DMS	CDD, DMS
Adopt standards that require low-impact development, sustainability, and energy conservation practices.	Short	X				PC	CDD
<i>Transportation</i>							
Adopt Complete Streets policies	Short	X			X	PC, CC	CDD
Plan for vehicular needs, including parking	Mid.				X	PC, CC, DDA	DDA, CC
<i>Administrative</i>							
Research the use of "form-based-codes" and "overlay districts" in the appropriate areas	Mid.	X		X		PC, CDD, CC	CDD
Review lists of uses in all Zoning Districts. Research/add zoning categories for "Parks/Open Space" and/or "Institutional" uses.	Short	X				PC, CDD	CDD
Partnerships, Programs, and Promotion							
Become a Redevelopment Ready Community through MEDC	Short			X		CDD, PC, CC	CDD, CC
Identify priority redevelopment sites/transitional properties and determine desired future use and development	Cont.	X				PC, CDD	CDD
Develop a clear vision for development outcomes and criteria for priority sites	Short	X				PC, CDD	CDD
Promote a welcoming environment for commercial businesses and industry	Short			X		CDD, CC, PC	CDD

Zoning Ordinance Amendments

The Planning Commission approved one zoning ordinance text amendment during the 2021 calendar year. That was the multi-family residential district.

Community Development staff expects 2022 to include continued discussion and research into zoning ordinance amendments. The ordinances listed below include some of the sections the Planning Commission may wish to examine and discuss further.

1. Landscaping requirements (Section 78-203)
2. Fences in front yards (Section 78-208)
3. Creation of non-conforming parcels (Section 78-351)
4. City-wide parking requirements (Section 78-270 through 78-275)
5. Projections into yards (Section 78-217)
6. Permitted and special land uses within each zoning district (Various sections)
7. FAR for zoning districts that allow single family as a special land use (Various sections)
8. Habitable space in accessory buildings
9. What does and does not contribute to lot coverage
10. What does and does not contribute to floor area ratio
11. Temporary uses
12. Mobile and temporary sales

Along with the items above, the Planning Commission, through their 2022 Goal Setting session should consider the relevant one year-tasks in the Strategic Plan approved on January 18, 2022, by the City Commission. These include:

Goal Area One – Sustainable Infrastructure

One-Year Tasks

1. Explore/create impervious surface ordinance

Goal Area Four – Attractive, Livable Community Key Objectives

One-Year Tasks

1. Audit current zoning ordinance and identify the approach for updating ordinances

The Planning Commission may choose to address some, all, or other ordinances during the 2022 calendar year. There may be some ordinances that can be “batched” together to expedite the ordinance amendment process. Additionally, staff is suggesting setting a priority and only discussing ordinances that meet the priority.

Development Reviews

Project Type	Location	Description	Meeting Outcome	Fwd. to CC?	Date of Action
Text amendment and rezoning	Old Village/North Main	Create new mixed use, high density district and rezone affected parcels stated in the future land use map to said district	Tabled	No	Feb. 10, Mar. 10, Apr. 14, Jun. 9, Jul. 14
PUD amendment	550 N Holbrook	Amendment to allow building heights greater than 25-feet	Approved with conditions	Yes	Apr. 14, May 12
Site plan review	296 S. Main 006 02 0206 004	Permanent, year-round outdoor dining space adjacent to the Penn Grill in the alley behind Kilwin's	Approved	N/A	May 12
Site plan review	1250 S. Main	Adaptive reuse for Canzano Salon	Approved with conditions, fwd. to ZBA	N/A	May 12
Site plan review	690 Junction	New construction building and site improvements for Consumers Energy	Approved with conditions	N/A	Mar. 11
Text amendment	City-wide	Update RM-1, RM-2 zoning ordinance to accommodate modern housing types	Approved	Yes	Aug. 11, Sept. 8
Policy review	N/A	Planning Commission bylaws	Approved	N/A	Aug. 11, Sept. 8, Oct. 13
Site plan review and special land use	500 Forest	Front entrance reconfiguration and permanent enclosure of existing outdoor dining	Approved with conditions	N/A	Oct. 13, Oct. 27
Site plan review and special land use	844 Penniman	Building addition and permanent expansion of outdoor dining area	Approved with conditions	N/A	Oct. 13, Nov. 10
Site plan review	1115 S. Main	Addition onto the existing building	Approved with conditions, fwd. to ZBA Dec. 2	N/A	Oct. 13, Oct. 27
Site plan review and special land use	1490 W. Ann Arbor Road	New construction drive-through coffee shop	Approved with conditions	N/A	Oct. 13, Dec. 8
Site plan review	885 Fralick	Reconfiguration of Westborn Market parking lot	Tabled	N/A	Dec. 8

Variance Requests

Variance Type	Location	Description	Meeting Outcome	Date of Action
Use	606 Maple	Habitable space in detached garage	Denied	Jan. 7
Non-Use	1071 N. Holbrook	Rear yard lot coverage	Approved	Jan. 7
Non-Use	365 Joy	Front yard setback	Approved with conditions	Jan. 7
Non-Use	696 Forest	Front yard setback along Linden	Approved with conditions	Feb. 11
Non-Use	925 Fairground	Front yard setback	Approved with conditions	Feb. 16
Non-Use	1294 Maple	Side yard setback	Approved with conditions	Mar. 4
Non-Use	629 Herald	Front yard setback	Approved with conditions	Mar. 4
Non-Use	271 S. Main	Windows facing interior lot line within the side yard setback	Approved	Apr. 1
Non-Use	921 Sutherland	Garage height	Denied	Apr. 1
Non-Use	933 Church	Front yard setback	Approved with conditions	May 6
Non-Use	1012 William	Front yard fence height	Approved with conditions	Jun. 3
Non-Use	290 E. Pearl	Front yard setback for attached front-facing garage	Approved	Jun. 3
Non-Use	690 Junction	Front yard setback and front yard fence height	Approved	Jun. 3
Non-Use	1250 S. Main	Landscaping	Approved with conditions	Jun. 3
Non-Use	1112 Hartsough	Distance between house and garage and side yard setback for detached garage	Approved with conditions	Jul. 1
Non-Use	148 E. Spring	Side yard setback and front yard setback for porch	Approved with conditions	Sep. 2
Non-Use	123 N. Union	Side yard setback	Approved with conditions	Sep. 2
Non-Use	718 Burroughs	Generator location	Approved with conditions	Oct. 7
Non-Use	885 Fralick	Landscape buffer along Fralick, private parking area exceeding six spaces, locating parking area not in the rear yard, parking area exceeding 19-foot maximum depth	Approved	Oct. 7
Non-Use	1115 S. Main	Landscape buffer and AC screening	Approved with conditions	Dec. 2

Actions by City Commission

The following list includes all the planning and development related actions taken by the City Commission during 2021.

Description	Date of Action
Beck Road Business Corridor Improvement Project – Resolution of Support – approved	April 5
Wayne County Stormwater Standards Ordinance amendment – first reading	June 21
Wayne County Stormwater Standards Ordinance amendment – second reading + approval	July 6
Starkweather School PUD amendment – first reading	July 6
Starkweather School PUD amendment – second reading + approval	July 19
GIS Tax Map (Plat Map) – contract approved	Sept. 20
City Planner retainer renewal – contract approved	Oct. 4
Downtown patios – extension to December 31, 2021	Oct. 18
RM-1, RM-2 text amendment – first reading	Oct. 18
RM-1, RM-2 text amendment – second reading + approval	Nov. 1

Zoning Map

There were no changes made to the Zoning Map during 2021.

Trainings and Joint Meetings

Due to COVID-19, training sessions were provided virtually this year.

A Joint Educational Working Session with the ZBA was held on February 24th which covered how building height and grade are determined based on the current ordinances for residential homes and accessory buildings. Habitable space was also discussed.

The Planning Commission completed the following Michigan Association of Planning (MAP) Workshop Modules:

1. Form Based Codes
2. Planned Unit Development
3. Roles and Responsibilities

An Educational Working Session was held on March 24 where Commission members reviewed information presented in the Form Based Codes module, with particular emphasis on how Form Based Codes can impact aesthetics and to what extent they might be helpful in Plymouth. It was agreed that the administration would prepare an outline of a viable process to introduce a test case in the city. The Planning Commission Discussed the Roles and Responsibilities and Planned Unit Development modules at the July 14th meeting.

Potential training(s) in 2022 include Carlisle-Wortman Associates session(s) and Michigan Municipal League (MML) and Michigan Association of Planning (MAP) conferences and sessions.