

Planning Commission 2023 Annual Planning Report and 2024 Work Plan to City Council

City of Grosse Pointe Woods, MI

The Commission's Annual Report is intended to serve as a planning document that outlines the work plan for the next fiscal year and is a communication tool to share recent achievements and plans for future goals to the community.

MEMBERSHIP

We thank the following Commission members for their time commitment and good work:

- Stephen Gerhart, Chair
- Christian A. Fenton and Michael Fuller, Vice Chair
- Donna O'Keefe, Commissioner
- Douglas Hamborsky, Commissioner
- George Bailey, Commissioner
- Grant P. Gilezan, Commissioner
- James McNelis, Commissioner
- John A. Vitale, Commissioner

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

As required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) Act 33 of 2008, as amended, the Planning Commission shall submit a report of its 2023 activities.

"A planning commission shall make an annual written report to the legislative body concerning its operations and the status of planning activities, including recommendations regarding actions by the legislative body related to planning and development."

In addition to fulfilling this requirement, the Annual Report and Work Plan increases information-sharing between staff, boards, commissions, and the governing body and allows for the anticipation of upcoming priorities, in order to prepare and budget.

MEETINGS

The Planning Commission met nine times in 2023.

1. Tuesday, March 28, 2023
2. Tuesday, April 25, 2023
3. Tuesday, June 25, 2023
4. Monday, July 31, 2023 (Special Meeting)
5. Tuesday, August 22, 2023
6. Tuesday, September 26, 2023
7. Tuesday, October 24, 2023
8. Tuesday, November 28, 2023
9. Tuesday, December 12, 2023

2023 in Review

The following tables outline various Planning Commission activities, including development reviews (site plan, special land use, etc.), and Zoning Ordinance and map amendments (rezonings) that were considered by the City in 2023. Below the table is an overview of the additional projects addressed by Planning Commission in 2023, it includes work on the Master Plan rewrite and Ordinance Amendments.

Meeting Date	Project Type	Location	Project Description	Request	Planner's Report	Planning Commission Motion / Result	City Council Result
January 24 (Canceled)							
February 28 (Canceled)							
March 28	Site Plan Review	19850 Mack (Crispelli's)	Building Remodel & Addition	Demolition of a portion of the rear wall to accommodate the installation of a walk-in freezer.	Recommend Approval	Approved	-
	Site Plan Review	19876 Mack (now Bucharest)	Building Remodel	Renovation of the storefront and conversion from retail to a restaurant.	Recommend Approval	Approved	-
April 25	Master Plan Update Work Plan Discussion	-	-	-	-	-	-
May 23 (Canceled)							
June 27 (Canceled)							
July 25	Sign Ordinance Review	-	-	-	-	Tabled	-
	Site Plan Review	20139 Mack (Ahee Jewelers)	Building Remodel & Addition	Demolition of the vacated space at 20109 Mack, addition to the 20139 Mack space, and movement of the parking area to the newly vacated space.	Recommend Approval with conditions	Approved	-
	Site Plan Review	21336 Mack (Crosspointe Christian Church)	Building Addition	Addition to the existing structure.	Recommend Approval with conditions	Tabled	-
	Social District Discussion	-	-	-	-	Tabled	-
July 31 (Special Meeting)	Master Plan Discussion and Workshop	-	-	-	-	-	-
August 22	Sign Ordinance Review Discussion	-	-	-	-	Tabled	-
	Front Yard Structures (8-336)	-	-	-	-	Tabled	-
	Site Plan Review	21336 Mack (Crosspointe Christian Church)	Building Addition	Addition to the existing structure.	Recommend Approval with conditions	Approved with conditions	-

September 26	Site Plan Review	19700 Mack (Bank of America – EV Charger)	EV Installation & Parking Alterations	Installation of EV chargers and transformer, reduction of parking spaces.	Recommend Approval with conditions	Approved with conditions	-
	Sign Ordinance Review Discussion	-	-	-	-	Tabled	-
	Front Yard Structures (8-336)	-	-	-	-	Recommended City Council deny raised garden beds, approve mini-libraries	Council tabled raised garden beds, approved mini-libraries
	Off-Street Parking Requirements (50-5.3)	-	-	Add Parking Waivers and Shared Parking Agreements	Recommend Ordinance Amendment	Tabled	
	Discussion on Master Plan House Event	-	-	-	-	-	-
October 24	Sign Ordinance Review Discussion	-	-	-	-	Tabled	-
	Off-Street Parking Requirements (50-5.3)	-	-	-	-	Recommended changes, Tabled	-
November 28	Sign Ordinance Review Discussion	-	-	-	-	Tabled	-
	Off-Street Parking Requirements (50-5.3) Discussion	-	-	-	-	Public hearing to be scheduled	-
	Commercial Lighting Requirements Discussion	-	-	-	-	Tabled	-
December 12	Zoning Ordinance Amendments to Permitted Uses (Home-based business, Mixed Occupancy, and Outdoor Cafes)	-	-	-	-	Tabled	-
	Amendments to Sections 50-5. And 50-5.5 (Off-street Parking and Semicircular driveways)	-	-	-	-	Public Hearing, subsequently recommended City Council approval	TBD
	Amendments to Sign Ordinance (32-7 Illuminated Signs, 32-11 Temporary Signs, 32-29 Design of Lettering)	-	-	-	-	Recommend City Council Approval	City Council Approved

REZONINGS (CITY COUNCIL)

Date	Location / Project	Description	Status
January 9	20100 Mack	Rezone from P1, Parking to RO-1, Restricted Office.	Approved

LIQUOR LICENSES (CITY COUNCIL)

Date	Location / Project	Description	Status
June 5	19850 Mack / Crispelli's	A new class C, SDM, Sunday a.m./p.m. sales liquor licenses.	Approved
	30930-20934 Mack / Pendency's	A transfer of class C with outdoor service area / p.m. Sunday sales permits and new SDM with a.m. Sunday sales permits liquor licenses.	Approved

VARIANCES (ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS)

Date	Location / Project	Description	Status
Aug. 21	20139 Mack / Ahee Jewelers	Variance from required off-street parking.	Approved
Nov. 20	551 Roslyn	Variance from side yard setback requirements.	Approved
Nov. 20	1398 Anita	Grant a variance to allow the enlargement of a legal nonconforming structure.	Approved
Nov. 20	707 N. Renaud	Variances from lot coverage and first floor elevation requirements.	Approved with conditions

SIGN REVIEWS (ADMINISTRATIVE)

Date	Location / Project	Status
January 13	21020 Mack / Subway	Approved
January 18	20599 Mack / Emcura Immediate Care	Expired
February 14	20567 Mack / Bloomfield Nails	Approved
February 24	19391 Mack / Pet People	Approved
March 21	19727 Mack / Qamaria Yemeni Coffee Co.	Approved
March 28	20599 Mack / Emcura Immediate Care	Approved
May 18	19850 Mack / VDG Grosse Pointe	Approved
June 5	19683 Mack / Henry Ford Optimeyes	Approved
June 6	20311 Mack / Visiting Angels	Approved
June 8	19467 Mack / Hollywood	Approved
August 28	19876 Mack / Bucharest Grill	Approved
October 5	19733 Mack / Flagstar Bank	Approved
November 17	21035 Mack / 313 Lacrosse	Approved
December 22	19852 Mack / Crispelli's	Approved

MASTER PLAN REWRITE

The Planning Commission, City Administration, and other relevant parties, in conjunction with their planning consultants from Giffels Webster, have been undergoing a comprehensive update to the community's Master Plan, which was last updated in 2006. During multiple surveys, planning commission meetings, special meetings, and an open house in October 2023, the consultants have been gathering input and an understanding of the community assets and challenges of the City. A new Master Plan is expected to be presented and adopted in 2024 and will direct further projects engaged by city departments and the boards and commissions within the City.

ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

Over the past year, Planning Commission worked on the following amendments to the City's Ordinances:

Code of Ordinance

1. **Sign Ordinance**

Tasked with updating the Sign Ordinance, Planning Commission worked with the City Planner and City Attorney to recommend updates to Chapter 32 of the Ordinance to Council. The updates modernized the language and regulations to comply with legal standing and remove invalid content regulations. Other revisions updated the lighting requirements, size requirements for logos, restrictions to certain fonts, wall sign clarification, etc.

Zoning Ordinance

1. **Parking**

Planning Commission worked with the City Planner to allow for reasonable flexibility in parking requirements and to optimize space are proposed to Section 50-5.3 Off-Street Parking and Section 50-5.5 Semi-Circular Driveways. Planning Commission recommended amendments to allow for **compact car parking spaces, shared parking agreements** between property owners, and **parking waivers** to be granted by City Administration and/or Planning Commission, and to **reduce the radius of semicircular driveways**.

2. **Regulated Uses**

Started in 2023, Planning Commission worked with the City Planner to expand the uses permitted to allow for home-based businesses as well as mixed occupancy, year-around outdoor dining, and rooftop dining along Mack Avenue. The proposed changes are still be revised and are expected to be adopted in the coming months.

Looking Ahead: 2024 Work Plan

In the coming year, apart from working to actualize the goals and objectives laid out in the Master Plan once adopted, the following are additional projects for the Planning Department and Commission to accomplish:

Task	Lead	Involved	Priority
<p>Ordinance Text Amendments Expand uses, multiple uses, mixed uses, expanded dining (outdoor + rooftop) and add modern lighting standards to the ZO. Incorporate changes listed in the new Master Plan once adopted.</p>	Planner, Building Official	Planning Commission, City Manager, City Council, Building Official	High
<p>Zoning Map Amendments Evaluate and consider amendments to the zoning map based on the final Future Land Use Map in the Master Plan</p>	Planner	Planning Commission, City Manager, City Council, Building Official	Medium
<p>Residential Development Standards Prepare design guidelines and development standards for residential properties. Address concerns first floor elevations, grading, etc.</p>	Building, Planning	Planning Commission, City Manager, City Council,	Medium
<p>Social District Based on feedback received from the Planning Commission in 2023, the City will work with the business community to launch a pilot social district.</p>	Planner	City Manager, Council, DPW, Avenue of the Woods, Class C Licensed Businesses	High
<p>Parking Analysis Understand current parking usage to identify areas of need for greater parking (municipal lots) and zoning ordinance text amendments.</p>	Planner, Building, Engineer	Planning Commission, City Manager, City Council	High
<p>EV Installation Conduct an analysis of land use and parking demand to strategically place EV chargers supporting business activity and stimulate economic opportunities in the City.</p>	City Manager, Planner, Building	Building, Engineer, DTE, City Council	Medium
<p>Parks and Recreation Planning Long-term planning for parks and recreation services: gauge public interest and needs in parks and recreation services.</p>	Planner, Recreation Department	Recreation and DPW Dept., GPW Foundation, City Council	Medium
<p>Crosswalks and Multi-modal Transportation Opportunities Evaluate and work with the county to implement mid-block crosswalks and identify active transportation (bike/scooter) pathways</p>	Planner, City Manager	Planning Commission, City Council, DPW, Wayne County Commission,	High

Eastern Wayne County Planning Conference

Based on feedback from the Planning Commission during the Master Plan process, McKenna has been planning an event for Planning Commissioners and officials in Eastern Wayne County communities to foster greater regional collaboration. We are working with regional and state planning entities such as SEMCOG, MEDC, etc. and are aiming for the event to occur in May or June 2024.