



A HERITAGE OF GOOD LIVING

2022 PLANNING COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

February 2023

Prepared with Assistance by:

giffels 
webster

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INTRODUCTION

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended) requires the Planning Commission to prepare, file and present an annual written report to the City Council. This document is intended to meet the state requirement as well as provide an overview of 2022 accomplishments.

The Planning Commission in Lathrup Village is comprised of seven members. These members come from a variety of professional backgrounds in architecture, business, finance, city planning, and education. The various perspectives and knowledge brought by these members creates a well-rounded Commission that maintains fair and thoughtful deliberations.

2022 PLANNING COMMISSION ROSTER - AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2022

Name	Term Ending
Jason Hammond (Chair)	2024
Les Stansbery (Vice Chair)	2025
Wilbert Fobbs III (Secretary)	2023
Mark Dizik	2025
Robert “Bo” Tamarelli	2024
Alicia Powell	2025
Bruce Kantor, City Council Liaison	

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT STAFF

Susan Stec, Community & Economic Development Director.

Giffels Webster assists the city with planning and zoning services. Our team assists city staff with technical planning and zoning related calls, emails, and visits to the city. We also prepare reviews, memoranda, and reports for the Planning Commission, ZBA, and City Council, as needed. We attend all Planning Commission meetings as well as City Council meetings as requested. The GW team is directed by Jill Bahm, AICP, partner at GW, and supported by Eric Pietsch, senior planner, as well as our GIS team.

2022 Department Activities

DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS

In 2022, the Planning Commission reviewed four (4) development applications. The Zoning Board of Appeals considered one (1) application.

Site Plan Reviews. Site plan review takes place when an application is submitted for new construction or additions to ensure that development plans meet the standards of the Zoning Ordinance. These standards are primarily non-discretionary standards – these are objective standards such as setback, landscaping, lighting, and parking requirements.

Four site plans were reviewed by the Planning Commission in 2022. One site plan represented an application for “by right” development (permitted uses), two accompanied special land use requests, and the final one was the city’s first Planned Unit Development submittal. Site plan approvals are valid for twelve months, with a one-year extension permitted by the Planning Commission. These site plans included:

- 26727 Southfield Road – BP Gas Station (Modification for screen wall)
- 18411 W. 12 Mile – LOGOS (change of use & special land use)
- 26647 Southfield Road – Ambassadors Institute (change of use & special land use)
- 27777 Southfield Road – Panera Bread (planned unit development)

Special Land Uses. Special land uses are uses that may be permitted in certain locations within the city, provided that certain standards are met. The Zoning Ordinance provides general standards for special land uses, and some uses have their own additional standards. Generally, most standards are non-discretionary, but there are some discretionary standards that the Planning Commission considers during the review process. A site plan is required with special land use request, with the Planning Commission acting on the site plan and making a recommendation to City Council on the special land use request. There were two special land use requests submitted to the city in 2022 – for LOGOS on W. 12 Mile and Ambassadors Institute on Southfield Road.

Public Input/Public Hearings. The Planning Commission meetings are open to the public, and “public comment” is an agenda item at every meeting. Public hearings are required for PUD, special land use, and rezoning applications. Throughout 2022, there were three development review items that required public hearing (Ambassadors Institute, LOGOS, and Panera Bread). Additionally, three public hearings were held for the zoning ordinance amendments discussed below.

ZONING UPDATES

The Planning Commission worked on several amendments to the Zoning Ordinance this year, one of which was initiated in 2021:

- **Electric Vehicle Amendments.** Towards the end of 2021, the Planning Commission began discussions related to electric vehicle charging stations and invited experts in the field to present to the body. A public hearing was held, and amendments were adopted in April 2022.
- **Permanent Power Generators.** Following a series of variance requests for generators, the Planning Commission explored amendments to the permanent power generator standards. Those discussions began in the summer with amendments adopted in October 2022.
- **Impervious Surface Coverage.** Towards the end of 2021, the Planning Commission explored ways to incorporate sustainable standards into the Zoning Ordinance, specifically ways to

improve storm water management. Flooding is prevalent in many areas of the city, in both the public rights-of-way and on private property. While the city is actively upgrading its water and sewer infrastructure, the Planning Commission is focused on smaller-scale improvements that may be accomplished on a household level. Zoning Ordinance language was drafted to address impervious surface coverage to help better manage stormwater. A public hearing was held, and a recommendation forwarded to City Council; however, the amendments were not passed. The Planning Commission is likely to take up this item again in 2023.

- **Dumpster/Rubbish.** During a development plan review, the Planning Commission identified a conflict between the Zoning Ordinance and General Code of Ordinances. Amendments were drafted to bring the conflicting standards into alignment. A public hearing is scheduled for early 2023.
- **Future amendments:** In mid/late 2022, the Planning Commission identified several areas of the Zoning Ordinance that could benefit from amendments including definitions, permitted uses, and inclusion of solar energy standards. Amendments will likely be prepared in early 2023. Additional amendments planned for 2023 include updates to the City's landscaping standards and front yard parking for residential homes.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

- The Community & Economic Development Department continues to have discussions about long-range improvements to Southfield Road with the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC). The city's Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has built upon these conversations and received permission from RCOC to install a HAWK signal near the intersection of Margate Avenue and Southfield Road.
- The Community & Economic Development Department continues to work with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to ensure that the city retains its Redevelopment Ready certification.
- The Community & Economic Development Department continues to work with Main Street Oakland County on redevelopment strategies and organizational support.

MEETINGS

Body	Number of Meetings
Planning Commission	9
Zoning Board of Appeals	3
Joint City Council, Downtown Development Authority & Planning Commission	0

THE YEAR AHEAD

Zoning Amendments. The Comprehensive Plan includes zoning action strategies that recommend specific changes needed to the Zoning Ordinance. Zoning-related work has been initiated with the research on amendments that promote sustainability noted above. This work will continue in 2023.