



Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 20, 2021 at 7:00 PM
27400 Southfield Road, Lathrup Village, Michigan 48076

ZOOM REMOTE MEETING INFORMATION

Webinar ID: 996 6174 3524

Password: 435623

CLICK HERE: [Online Link](#)

Telephone: 646.558.8656 or 312.626.6799

CLICK HERE: [Public Comment Form Link](#)

In accordance with Emergency Orders issued by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Oakland County, local officials, and State of Michigan legislation, which allows for electronic meetings of public bodies, notice is hereby given that the City of Lathrup's Planning Commission will be meeting electronically using www.Zoom.us for videoconference and public access.

Call to Order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Piotrowski

Commissioners Present:

- Mark Piotrowski, Chair
- Jason Hammond – Vice Chair
- Bruce Kantor, City Council Liaison
- Anna Thompson, Secretary
- Charito Hulleza, Resident
- Les Stansbery, Resident

Absent: Commissioner Wilbert Fobbs, III

This meeting is being held remotely. All Commissioners who were present announced they are in Lathrup Village, Michigan, Oakland County with the exception of Anna Thompson who is located in Ann Arbor, Michigan, Washtenaw County.

Staff Present: Dr. Sheryl Mitchell, City Administrator, Scott Baker, City Attorney, Susie Stec, Community and Economic Development Manager, Yvette Talley, City Clerk

Also Present: Jill Bahm, Giffels

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Pledge of Allegiance

All present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Board member Hammond, seconded by Board member Kantor to approve the Agenda.

Yes: Hammond, Hulleza, Kantor, Piotrowski, Stansbery, Thompson

No: None

Motion carried.

Approval of Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

Motion by Board member Thompson, seconded by Board member Kantor to approve the minutes of March 16, 2021.

Yes: Hammond, Hulleza, Kantor, Piotrowski, Stansbery, Thompson

No: None

Motion carried.

Public Comment

Dawn Medley – (18609 Rainbow) said she wanted to know about the progress with cannabis ordinance. City could benefit from the tax revenue of cannabis sales. Board Member Kantor stated the city has opted out with a sunset clause that will end in August.

New Business

A. Public Hearing - Zoning Text Amendments: Building Materials

Chair Piotrowski opened the public hearing.

Annette Kingsbury (18450 San Jose Blvd.) is speaking on behalf of the board of the Lathrup Village Historical Society stated they object to the building material zoning amendment two reasons: 1. Deed restrictions on bldg. materials is recorded along with the plats of the subdivisions 2. Most of the city is in the national historic district which has its own guidelines. Their focus is to protect the homes of the city by abiding by the historical building standards.

Robin Roberts (28221 Lathrup Blvd.) stated with the system we have now where you can request a variance, it gives the city control as an alternative on a case-by-case basis.

Lanie Dixon (18619 Middlesex Ave) – commented via zoom chat -about the deed restrictions of Louise Lathrup.

Karen Miller (18755 Glenwood Blvd.) - submitted a letter April 19, 2021 read by Susie Stec. (see attached)

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Discussion:

Board Member Bruce Kantor stated in order to have a variance you must have a hardship. When some residents may want to use a more affordable material, it would not be considered a hardship and they would not receive a variance.

Attorney Scott Baker stated residents should not have to pay for variance for a tough shed. Materials are changing; therefore, the ordinance should change. People are trying to improve their homes.

Jason Hammond discussed what is being added: glass, stone updating the ordinance will not decrease the value of the homes in the city.

Materials, consistency, masonry, residents are requesting these changes.

Les Stansbery that stated items have been discussed, building materials have been approved.

Discussed ways to update the ordinance to use various products. How percentages are calculated for residential structures.

Further discussion of section 3.4.3 does allow for shingles/siding on 2nd floor and the possible changes/modifications of this section.

Commissioners will walk the community, take pictures and have a discussion on building materials.

Chair Piotrowski closed the public hearing.

Motion made by Commissioner Hammond, seconded by Commissioner Kantor to table this discussion until the next Planning Commission meeting and re-notice a new public hearing for the additional ordinance amendments.

Yes: Hammond, Hulleza, Kantor, Piotrowski, Stansbery, Thompson

No: None

Motion carried.

Zoning Text Amendments - Chapter 5: Site Standards & Chapter 6: Development Review

Jill Bahm gave an overview and answered specific questions. This will allow the City Administrator or her designee to provide review or determinations as appropriate. The amendments are included in Chapter 5 and 6. Discussion of adding cannabis facilities regulated by the State of Michigan to the standards in Chapter 18 Article III of the Lathrup Village Code of Ordinances as well as the Special Use Standards.

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Discussed fencing, corrections and updates. Schedule public hearing for May 18, 2021.

Motion Commissioner Hammond, Commissioner Thompson to schedule a public hearing for May 18, 2021 to review recommended changes to the Zoning ordinance for Chapter 5 Site Standards and Chapter 6 Development review.

Yes: Hammond, Hulleza, Kantor, Piotrowski, Stansbery, Thompson

No: None

Motion carried.

8. Old Business and Tabled Items

A. Cannabis discussion – draft zoning ordinance and general code language

Jill Bahm gave an overview and answered specific questions. Discussed – provisioning center language, separation requirement between provisioning centers.

Commissioner Hammond stated - since there will be only 2 retail cannabis facilities, that language is added if the number of retail facilities licensed is above 2 then the distance will be 500 ft. (the distance can be changed by the Planning Commission and City Council)

Discussed appeals process, hours of operation, point-based merit system. Appeal process, hours of operation for cannabis retail facility 7:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. How will City determine tie breakers – in the event of a tie among applicants, the tie will be resolved through a blind lottery drawing to determine which applicant will receive recommendation for approval. Community benefit will be a component of the scoring criteria.

Further discussion of Cannabis

May 3rd – City Council Study Session, Planning Commission Public Hearing on June 15th, first reading of general ordinance June 21st and second reading of general ordinance will be July 26.

Zoning map explanation - Village center is the City's commercial core – heart of the city serves as downtown. Explanation of the map considered separation distance between parks and plaza's but didn't cross a main road but this doesn't have anything to do with cannabis ordinance. If you're a local business owner or resident you will receive points.

Motion by Commissioner Hammond, seconded by Commissioner Stansbery to schedule a public hearing to discuss the Zoning Ordinance relevant to Cannabis facilities on June 15, 2021 with the noted changes of distance between facilities, (which can be changed by Planning Commission and City Council) percentage of points required to be considered an eligible application and the operating hours.

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Yes: Hammond, Hulleza, Kantor, Piotrowski, Stansbery, Thompson

No: None

Motion carried.

Other Matters for Discussion

Commissioner Kantor said - are flags part of temporary sign ordinance? More research will be done on this matter.

General Communication

Susie Stec stated – DDA will have - Spring into self-care, businesses are having a raffle and you can place your receipts for purchases at City Hall or email Cori Dahl. Upcoming events – Spring roll, corridor clean-ups. Earth Day is Saturday, April 24, hazardous waste drop-off and dog park clean-up- if interested meet at the dog park at 12 noon.

Commissioner Kantor stated – pre-road projects have started and road projects will begin May 3rd.

PSA on infrastructure on the home page to find which road projects will take place and the inconveniences because of the projects. Reminder to do self -identification of your water meter – a very easy test and this is a state mandate. (directions are on the city's website)

Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Hammond, seconded by Commissioner Kantor to adjourn this meeting.

Yes: Hammond, Hulleza, Kantor, Piotrowski, Stansbery, Thompson

No: None

Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Submitted by Yvette Talley

Recording Secretary

April 18, 2021

Dear Planning Commission Members –

After serving as a member of the Lathrup Village Planning Commission for five years, I know very well that the majority of things brought before you come from people that don't live in our community, who for the most part will not be impacted by the recommendations you make to the Lathrup Village City Council. I also know that many of the things brought before you are in anticipation of something that city leadership knows may be coming down the road. i.e. adding language to cover storage facilities; making changes to allow for gas stations and drive-through restaurants; changing the allowable size of storage sheds; honoring commercial property owner's requests over what is best for residents; and now, perhaps, paving the way for a developer of the House in the Woods property. Very little comes from the people living in Lathrup Village.

The residents of this community have long been committed to maintaining the integrity of our many beautiful homes and buildings through the historic designation we have received; through the work of the Lathrup Village Historical Society; and with the strict building requirements you are considering eliminating. While watching the Planning Commission discussion regarding this change, I heard that this recommendation is a result of a commercial property owner's complaint about the requirements he had to follow when rehabbing the development that formerly housed Happy's Pizza. Ironically, the pursuit of the National Register of Historic Places designation came about because historic buildings in Lathrup were demolished by the same commercial property owning family making the above referenced complaint.

Besides living in Lathrup Village for over 30 years, I have been a Realtor for 17 years. In that role, I can unequivocally say that this proposed change will impact the value of Lathrup Village homes. We should not aspire to be like "new developments" as suggested by the city attorney. We are a community of quality historic homes and that should be respected. I have viewed thousands of homes and the quality of Lathrup Village homes can't be matched in newer builds or in homes built in other communities with more lax standards. New homes may look nice but even those in the multi-million dollar range would not measure up to our Lathrup Village homes when it comes to quality of workmanship and materials. Products other than brick and wood very often aren't better or more durable. There are a lot of cheap products and irresponsible contractors and do-it-your-selves installing them. Poorly done renovations, additions and construction detract from the value of a home. Without strict guidelines, many people will choose the cheapest products available – products that may look good but will not stand up to time.

Please consider the following suggestions, questions and comments - based on my knowledge of the housing industry and viewing the Planning Commission meeting - before you choose whether or not to recommend this monumental change:

1. Involve residents in these kinds of discussions in meaningful ways. Contrary to what current city leadership tells us, sending links to Zoom meetings is not meaningful or transparent. These decisions should not be made in a vacuum. Actively solicit input from residents. Listen to residents. A change like this has long-reaching consequences. The decisions should not be taken lightly.
2. While we are a community of beautiful, well-built homes, we are also a community that has, for the most part, a poorly constructed and maintained commercial business district. Most of the commercial property owners don't have the same commitment to the quality of life in Lathrup Village as residents do, which is evidenced in the way their properties are maintained. Implementing a request like this based on the recommendation of a commercial property owner does not take into consideration what is in our best interest to maintain the value of our homes.
3. Consult with the Lathrup Village Historical Society regarding the National Register of Historic Places designation and what is required to maintain the designation. Also ask about the impact of cheap renovations on the integrity of historic homes.
4. Study and follow the deed restrictions for Lathrup Village homes.
5. I know that some of the current requirements are more expensive than other newer options might be but property owners have the opportunity to ask the city for a variance if they want to do something besides what is in the code. The variance request also requires that neighbors within a certain distance of the property be notified by the city of the request and that neighbors are given the chance to express any concerns they may have. This provides a check and balance in the process.
6. What is the problem with looking at each case individually through the variance request process? I believe that not taking time to assess each request on its own merits is due more to staff, planners and consultants not wanting to do it rather than to what best fits the needs of our residents. During my time on the Planning Commission, I heard that multiple variance requests indicate a need for the requirement to be changed. I disagree. Even if 10 residents make a variance request - which would be considered to be a lot - that is only a miniscule representation of all of the LV residents. By looking at the merits of each

request individually, the City and its residents can still maintain control over the quality of new builds, renovations and additions. The wholesale abandonment of quality standards is not in our best interest.

7. No part of a resident's home is "hidden" – the "hidden" parts are what one's neighbors see.

8. Due to LV residents aging out of their homes, we have many homes that have been and will be flipped. Weakening the standards will allow for the use of cheap materials as the goal of a flipper is to make money.

9. Consult with the owners of the condominiums in the Village of the Circle. This change will ultimately impact them through any development of the House in the Woods property. There were promises made and requirements set in the Master Deed for the Village of the Circle regarding such things as future development; size of homes; and common areas. Though the City may not feel they have to follow the requirements that were set because their property was unplatted, anyone taking out a mortgage for one of the 9 properties in the circle must receive and acknowledge the Master Deed and Condominium By-Laws for the Village of the Circle development. They believe that these are the governing documents for the property they have purchased. It is unfair not to consider them when making decisions that go against what they based their purchase decisions on.

10. Instead of lowering standards, the City should help residents find resources to maintain and improve their homes with quality materials. Much effort has been put into helping business owners during the pandemic – even hiring an additional person to deliver financial grants – yet nothing has been done to help residents. Also, know that the commercial property owners – the group that must follow these requirements – are not necessarily the same as the business owners. The majority of the businesses in Lathrup Village lease their space from the property owners. Awarding grants to businesses doesn't necessarily benefit our residents or contribute to the upkeep and maintenance of the commercial properties.

Please don't make a short-sighted decision that will have immense negative consequences long after you are no longer part of the Planning Commission.

Sincerely,
Karen L. Miller
18755 Glenwood Blvd.
Lathrup Village, MI 48076