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City of Mackinac Island Planning Commission

ATTN: Katie Pereny

PO Box 455

Mackinac Island, MI 49757

January 10th, 2025

We have received your letter notifying us of the City of Mackinac Island Draft 2024 Master Plan. We appreciate you sending us the notification. The effort and care that has gone into crafting this Master Plan is apparent, and we believe it does a great job describing the community, addressing the land use issues, and visualizing the planning goals of your municipality. Many of the housing policies you propose, such as utilizing incentives for housing development and permitting greater density for worthwhile and affordable projects, are sound and applaudable.

We do have one comment on the plan. On page 75, your housing policies note a desire to protect the neighborhood feeling of residential areas, seeking to maintain their viability to support year-round residents, and to discourage any plans or projects which would result in the loss of housing units for year-round residents. Your employee housing action strategies then note the following:

View the mainland communities of St. Ignace and Mackinaw City as acceptable locations for employee housing

The Village of Mackinaw City, much like the Island, finds challenge in balancing support for our region's tourism economy against our need to provide quality year-round neighborhoods for our residents. Developable space within Village limits is limited and in high-demand; while not an Island, the Village is bounded by state-regulated wetlands and poor soil conditions. Given our desire to have thriving residential neighborhoods and the constraints that exist in further expansion, we must be adamant in planning for our businesses and residents. We have spent the better part of 2024 developing clear regulations in how employee housing (rooming and boarding housing) is planned in Mackinaw City and have a clear enforcement process to see our ordinances realized. We note this because, while we do have areas where this use is permitted, we generally do not plan our Village around accommodating other communities' needs for seasonal employee housing. We likewise are concerned about the economic and social impacts of losing homes and productive structures to seasonal or vacant uses, especially those that do not directly serve our immediate community.

If you encounter a developer or business interest that is seeking to build or convert a building to rooming or boarding house uses in Mackinaw City, we recommend you direct them to our Planning and Zoning department so they can fully understand the regulations we hold prior to purchasing land and structures.

Yours in planning,

Dean Martin,

Zoning Administrator, Village of Mackinaw City

Phil Siebigteroth,

Chair, Village of Mackinaw City Planning Commission



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