



CITY OF MADISON HEIGHTS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

May 16, 2023
Council Chambers – City Hall
300 W. 13 Mile, Madison Heights, MI 48071

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Champagne called the meeting of the Madison Heights Planning Commission to order at 5:31 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Josh Champagne
Mayor Roslyn Grafstein
Mayor Pro Tem Mark Bliss
Commissioner Eric Graettinger
Commissioner Melissa Kalnasy
City Manager Melissa Marsh
Commissioner Cliff Oglesby
Commissioner Grant Sylvester arrived at 5:39 p.m.

Absent: none

Also Present: City Planner Matt Lonnerstater
Assistant City Attorney Tim Burns
Business Services Coordinator Mary Daley

3. EXCUSE ABSENT MEMBERS

None

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion by Bliss, seconded by Grafstein to approve the minutes of the regular Planning Commission meeting of February 21, 2023.

Motion carries unanimously.

5. PUBLIC HEARING

No public hearing scheduled.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT - For items not listed on the agenda

Matthew Savaya, owner of Victoria Jewels, located at 28731 Dequindre addressed the Commission. Mr. Savaya is interested in converting his jewelry store into a pawn shop and he gives the following reasons:

- It will provide essential services to the community
- Provide a safe place for people to buy and sell items of value
- Provide a place for people to obtain loans to those who may not have any other resources
- It would allow his business to grow and stay in the same location

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Planner Lonnerstater gave an update on the zoning ordinance rewrite. Recently, the Ordinance Rewrite Steering Committee met with City staff to discuss the zoning rewrite project and felt the following topics should be discussed in detail by the Planning Commission as a whole:

- “Missing Middle Housing” and housing unit diversity
- Accessory dwelling units
- Mixed-use building height
- List of Regulated Uses

Missing Middle housing – The Master Plan adopted in 2021 has a section that specifically discusses Lincoln Ave and its potential future development.

[...] Lincoln Avenue presents an opportunity to add higher density housing adjacent to the single family uses. This housing, known as missing middle housing, is essential to providing affordability to neighborhoods. This housing should be compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods in scale. Duplex, triplex, and quadplex dwellings in structures that look like single family homes are envisioned.

The Steering committee felt that “missing middle” housing types such as triplexes and quadplexes could be appropriate within the R-T district. Discussion amongst the Planning Commission as a whole followed.

Commissioner Grafstein, Commissioner Bliss, Commissioner Oglesby, Commissioner Grant, Commissioner Kalnasy and Chair Champagne all spoke favorably in support of adding more middle housing. Reasons given include:

- critical to bring more affordable housing options
- will appeal to all types of people and families
- encourage reinvestment in existing neighborhood

Accessory dwelling units or ADU’s – Discussion was had amongst the Commissioners regarding accessory dwelling units such as: interior ADU, detached ADU, attached ADU. These are sometimes referred to as “granny flats” or “in-law suites.” This is usually a dwelling unit that is much smaller than the main unit and typically not visible from the road.

Planner Lonnerstater directed the discussion. Some items to address further includes lots sizes, non-conforming garages, parking, and short-term rental situations. Attorney Burns mentioned that because accessory dwelling units can attract air b-n-b style short-term rentals, he strongly suggests the commission develop a detailed strategy for addressing the potential air b-n-b aspect.

Mixed-Use Innovation District 2 (MUI-2) Building Height - As currently proposed, building height in the MUI-2 zoning district is capped at 50 ft., which would permit a four or five story building. The Steering Committee discussed the potential for increasing the permitted building height in the MUI-2 district to encourage greater residential density. Planner Lonnerstater led the discussion with the Planning Commission as a whole to explore the possibility of raising the cap on the building height within the MUI-2 zoning district and also discussed various heights.

After some discussion, a suggestion was made in favor of raising the cap but not to exceed 100 feet. Another member suggested from a developer's standpoint to cap it at 55 feet to the lowest occupied floor because it would then be considered a high-rise which adds additional requirements such as a fire command center.

Regulated Uses – In our current ordinance we have current regulated uses, in order to control or limit where certain uses can be placed. Regulated uses are only permitted in the B-2 and B-3 zoning districts as a special use and are subject to strict standards. The ordinance has two categories of regulated uses: 1. Adult oriented uses and 2. Other uses added as amendments not traditionally classified as “adult” businesses. City Council asked the Planning Commission to discuss the topic of regulated uses to ensure the list is up-to-date and only restricting those uses that truly have “objectionable operational characteristics”. Per Planner Lonnerstater, we have three parcels in the entire City that allow these uses. The Commission continued discussion on the following:

1. Should non-adult-oriented businesses, such as tattoo parlors, used good uses, billiard halls, pawnbrokers, and massage parlors/spas, continue to be classified as Regulated Uses?
2. If certain uses should be removed from the list of Regulated Uses, in which zoning districts should they be permitted (either by-right or as a special land use)?
3. Should certain uses currently permitted by-right, including firearm stores, firearm ranges, tobacco/vape shops, and smoking lounges, be added to the list of Regulated Uses? Alternatively, should these types of uses be subject to standalone use-specific standards or siting restrictions?

There was some question by Commissioners as to why some of these uses are listed as regulated such as pool halls, pawn shops, massage parlors, and tatoo parlors since they are no longer viewed as “taboo” and perhaps add value. After lengthy discussion, Planner Lonnerstater will draft new language and bring it to the Planning Commission for review at the next meeting.

8. MEMBER UPDATES

No member updates.

9. PLANNER UPDATES

Planner Lonnerstater briefly updates the Commission on the current RFP in the DDA for streetscaping on 11 Mile Road focused on general design and actual engineering plans to redesign the street.

10. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Meeting adjourned by the Chair at 6:50 pm.