

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
MARQUETTE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
MARCH 24, 2026

A regular meeting of the Marquette City Planning Commission was duly called and held at 6:00p.m. on Tuesday, March 24, 2026, in the Commission Chambers at City Hall. This meeting is also available as a video recording on the City's website.

ROLL CALL

Planning Commission (PC) members present (7): M. Rayner, J. Guter, N. Vermaat, D. Fetter, J. Fitkin, S. Lawry, Vice-Chair A. Wilkinson

PC Members absent: Chair Kevin Clegg

Staff present: City Planner and Zoning Administrator D. Stensaas; Zoning Official A. Landers.

AGENDA

It was moved by J. Guter, seconded by M. Rayner, and carried 7-0 to approve the agenda as presented.

MINUTES

It was moved by M. Rayner, seconded by J. Fitkin, and carried 7-0 to approve the minutes of 03/03/26 with the corrections annotated by S. Lawry.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Nobody stated a conflict.

CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION ON AGENDA ITEMS

Nobody provided comments.

NEW BUSINESS

A. 01-CSD-03-26 & 02-SPR-03-26 – McClellan Meadows Site Condominiums

A. Landers stated, while showing visuals of the referenced materials:

City staff has reviewed the proposed site condominium subdivision to be named McClellan Meadows, consisting of seven units located on McClellan Ave., and have provided comments regarding the case. Those comments are in the staff report, and the Land Development Code specifies a two-step review process. The Planning Commission will review the site condominium proposal and provide a recommendation to the City Commission, and then the City Commission will review it. In the agenda, you have the staff file review, including the site plan review application and the applicant's narrative regarding the site plan review items that were not in the set. See staff comments, their responses to staff comments, the area map with parcels outlined in blue, the block map with parcels outlined in blue, photos of the site, and then the site condominium proposal. Did the Planning Commission have any questions to the staff?

S. Lawry said that he had a procedural question for staff, and read from the Land Development Code "the Planning Commission shall consult with and receive a written response from the Planning Director, City Attorney, City Engineer and Zoning Administrator regarding the adequacy of the master deed, deed restrictions, utility systems and street, development layout and design."

A. Landers said that staff is working on a text amendment on that, which will be brought to the Planning

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Commission soon, because in part H of that section, it states that they don't do the Master Deed until the City Commission approval. She talked to the City Attorney and she said that part H supersedes the first section.

S. Lawry said the utilities have all been installed ahead of time in this area, and is wondering why that happened, and asked why a different procedure was followed in this case.

A. Landers responded that the question should be addressed to the applicant.

Megan Hornbogen, representing the applicant, said that she is the President for Habitat for Humanity in Marquette County and also an architect for Barry Polzin's office. She said this project started with Habitat for Humanity acquiring property on Spring St. to build housing, but the Beacon House wanted that parcel and assisted Habitat in finding another parcel for them. She related that a new parcel was found on McClellan Ave., but Habitat's stipulation for swapping parcels was "like for like", in that utilities had to be installed, as they were installed at the Spring St. parcel prior to ownership. She said the McClellan Ave. parcel has been split into parcel sizes allowed by zoning in the Mixed Use district to build some affordable housing in Marquette.

It was moved by S. Lawry, seconded by J. Guter, and carried 7-0 to suspend the rules for discussion.

A. Wilkinson began a review of relevant items covered in the Staff Report, reading the staff comments for items in Land Development Code section 54.503, beginning with item/subsection (E) and through item (N). He then began to read through the list of eleven Site Plan standards of review (section 54.1402(E)) and relevant staff comments from the Staff Report. The following comments were raised during this part of the review:

D. Fetter asked for clarification of the process and what the Planning Commission is being asked to do.

A. Landers said that this is an administrative review, a site plan review, and that it's now your opportunity to evaluate staff findings and make any comments that you may have on these items, and in your motion on the case, you will refer back to your review of these sections.

D. Stensaas said that this is a finding of facts process. He also said that the LDC process follows the State [site condominium] law, and that it basically requires the same process.

J. Fitkin said since it's not a construction proposal, a lot of the things aren't applicable or don't need a ton of review.

S. Lawry said even though utilities aren't part of this, he still had questions about utilities. He asked if they had been accepted as public utilities.

A. Landers said she didn't know if the City was still in the process of that.

S. Lawry didn't seem to think the utilities met City standards.

Ms. Hornbogen said North Country Surveying and Engineering had submitted the drawings and obtained permits from the City. The only City comment was to create an easement, so the water line was far enough away from the sanitary line. There was a 25' easement to accommodate the request at the front of the property.

S. Lawry said there is a high-pressure water main near the structures being built and asked whether that

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was being taken into consideration, or if any precautionary measures were being taken to account for it in the design.

Ms. Hornbogen said the required structure setback the easement for the water lines are in the same area, and there will be at least ten feet (10') between the utilities and the homes, but the exact location of the houses will be determined later.

J. Guter asked staff about the recommended condition of approval in the model motion. Staff confirmed that it should be used in the motion.

It was moved by J. Guter, seconded by J. Fitkin, and carried 7-0 that after review of the site plan and the supplemental documentation dated 02-17-26, and the Staff Report for 02-SPR-03-26 & 01-CSD-03-26, the Planning Commission finds substantial compliance with the City of Marquette Land Development Code Section 54.1405 and Section 54.503 and hereby recommends that the City Commission approve 02-SPR-03-26 & 01-CSD-03-26 with the following condition that an amended plan is submitted to meet staff comments.

B. Presentation – Climate Action Plan Outline

Anna Tousley, introduced herself, saying that she is an NMU student and Rural Leadership Fellow, and this Climate Action Plan is her fellowship project. She said she will be an MPA student next year and is finishing her bachelor's degree in political science. She used slides and spoke to them, informing the Planning Commission that a climate action plan is a strategy document that sets goals and outlines a set of initiatives that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. She read the content of her slides, which were included in the published agenda, and summarized or paraphrased some of the content. She then asked if anyone had questions.

S. Lawry said the City has done several energy efficiency improvement projects in the past with Johnson Controls and their records would be a major source of historical information.

Ms. Tousley said she is using Johnson Controls, as well as City employees as resources.

J. Guter asked about the timeline for the project.

Ms. Tousley said that the goal is to have a final draft completed by December, which is the end of her fellowship term.

J. Fitkin asked Ms. Tousley about public engagement opportunities.

Ms. Tousley said there will be a survey, a steering committee, stakeholder sessions or open houses, and possibly public engagement "where people are" such as at people's employment. She said the plan would be a community plan, not her opinions, and represent what the community wants.

D. Stensaas said Anna asked him about the repealed Woodland Protection portion of the Land Development Code, and he explained a bit about that, and said that he hopes the Climate Action Plan can help us to create a tree canopy standard that would then make its way into the LDC and the City's tree ordinance for street trees and other public trees. He said that after the repeal, the Planning Commission

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was eager to see us create a replacement to the section, but that it is a very problematic task, and he learned at the state planning conference a couple of years ago that no community in Michigan has been successful in creating a legally-defensible tree protection ordinance. He related that having a canopy standard seems to be the most likely way that we can accomplish tree protection.

Ms. Tousley said the recommendation would be part of the natural resources section of the Plan.

A. Wilkinson asked about the Tree City USA requirements.

Ms. Tousley said that she wasn't sure about the requirements, but that the City has maintained that status for 44 years.

S. Lawry said the responsibility was originally with the Parks Department, but it now falls to the City Arborist division of Public Works to maintain that. He said that the National Arbor Day Association standards require a tree committee, which we used to have as a standing committee. He said those responsibilities were later given to the Public Advisory Board, and now either the Planning Commission or the City Commission is listed as a qualifying tree board, to basically resolve any disputes over trees. He said that the standards are based on the community population and a certain level of tree planting. He said the standards can be found at the National Arbor Day foundation.

J. Fitkin asked if the scope of the project was going to be limited specifically to City of Marquette activities and operations, or can it branch into zoning.

Ms. Tousley said it will be based on what the City can do, but she can make recommendations for the Plan, such as updating the Land Development Code. She said that there are going to be actions that are for the government, and recommendations for the community.

D. Stensaas said that to keep expectations realistic, this Plan is going to be mainly about city operations, just like the County's climate plan is.

Ms. Tousley said that is based on jurisdiction and law.

D. Stensaas said and also the scope of what the City can manage and reasonably expect to accomplish.

Ms. Tousley said that she is still trying to figure out which buildings need to be included.

J. Fitkin thanked Ms. Tousley for her presentation.

CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Nobody provided comments.

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WORK SESSION ON REPORTS/PLANS/ORDINANCES

A. Land Development Code (LDC) Amendments

A. Landers presented the proposed addition of content to Article 54.611, sections (E) and (H). She also addressed proposed changes to Figures 6 and 7, to provide further clarification of yard and right-of-way areas on typical interior lots, corner lots, and through lots. She also presented proposed text additions to clarify definitions and meanings of three terms in Article 54.321, the G3 subdistrict of the Marquette Downtown Waterfront form-based code.

D. Stensaas presented proposed amendments to Article 54.1403(A), the standards for Special Land Use review, and to Article 54.1405, the standards for the review of Land Development Code text and Zoning map amendments.

The Planning Commission asked several questions and discussed these potential LDC changes for approximately forty minutes, and staff was asked to do some follow-up regarding the Conditional Rezoning Agreement requirements.

COMMISSION and STAFF COMMENTS

M. Rayner asked if staff knew how big, in square feet, the Habitat homes on McClellan Ave. are going to be. Staff replied that they aren't certain, but that the concept renderings show moderately sized homes.

S. Lawry said Habitat has four adjacent homes they constructed on Union St, and a pretty good idea of size can be gathered from them, as he thought they used a limited pattern book.

D. Fetter said she thought flowcharts would be beneficial for an applicant to see for the steps of the development processes. Also, she said that since Grammarly is being used, the comments function may be beneficial for us during our LDC amendment reviews by providing explanations for the proposed changes.

J. Guter asked if they were still going to re-word temporary wildlife fencing in the front yard, and if there had been any work done or a response from the City Manager regarding data centers. Staff replied "yes" regarding the fence text and "no" to the second question.

A. Landers said that there is a case that will be on the agenda for the April 7th meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

A. Wilkinson adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

David Stensaas

Prepared by A. Cook, Administrative Assistant (transcription), and D. Stensaas, Planning Commission Staff Liaison (transcription and editing).