

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS**  
**MARQUETTE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**JANUARY 20, 2026**

A regular meeting of the Marquette City Planning Commission was duly called and held at 6:00p.m. on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, in the Commission Chambers at City Hall.

**ROLL CALL**

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

PC Members absent: J. Fitkin

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**

The minutes of January 6, 2026, were approved by consensus as presented.

**CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION ON AGENDA ITEMS**

Nobody wished to comment.

**CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Nobody wished to comment.

**TRAINING**

**A. Planning and Zoning Essentials training information**

D. Stensaas said that he thinks there might be a few people who haven't had this or similar training, or that it has been a long time since they had it, and asked if any of the commission members are interested and available for it. He also said that his office will handle payment and registration.

N. Vermaat and J. Guter said they would like to be registered for the March training.

**WORK SESSION ON REPORTS/PLANS/ORDINANCES**

**A. Land Development Code Amendments**

A. Landers showed the draft amendments on the monitors in the room and said that she worked with the City Attorney to clean up the final approval of the Planned Unit Development (PUD) section, to clarify for our staff, but more for developers, how it works when someone wants to terminate a PUD. She also said that the phrasing is either termination prior to any development or termination after development commences. She asked if there were any questions.

J. Guter asked a question about the need to submit for rezoning when a PUD is being terminated before development begins.

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A. Landers explained that the approval of a PUD Agreement is the approval of a zoning district change to PUD from whatever the zoning district was. She said the applicant has two years to submit final site plans and approval terminates after that.

M. Rayner asked if the PUD applicants have to pay for rezoning when their PUD is terminated.

A. Landers said that when the PUD applicant or property owner requests the termination, then they must pay for the rezoning, but when the City requires the rezoning after expiration, it will absorb the cost associated with the process. She also said that how fees are handled is a policy issue and can't be stated in the LDC, in reply to a question about placing such information in the code text.

D. Stensaas said that *food trucks/mobile food vending units* are not dealt with in the LDC, and we need to do that, as we've realized in the past year that there are at least three food trucks that became accessory uses – meaning they are there overnight and throughout the season - where they were vending. He said that long-term use situation wasn't contemplated adequately in either the LDC or the City Code, and so we are taking the definition for mobile food vending. D. Stensaas continued, saying that he began working in this section knowing that an amendment to address food trucks, or mobile vending units, was needed, because during the past two summers, we've seen food trucks become a 24/7 presence at a few different properties. He related that when a food truck is on a property for more than a day, it becomes an accessory to the property's main uses, and that may require a different approach to the property's use requirements than when a vendor makes sales and moves on. He said that he recommends adding to the LDC the definition of *mobile food vending unit* from the City Code, and that a definition for *motor vehicle* should also be added to the LDC, to clarify which motorized vehicles require traditional parking spaces.

D. Stensaas also said that the draft amendment document in the agenda was a starting point for working on changes to parking standards, and that he continued working on ideas and has a new version of the Figure 53 chart from Article 9 for the commission, and he handed out paper copies to the members and for the meeting observers. He said that what is shown in the handout is not what he specifically suggests, but instead is the start of a conversation about removing minimum parking space requirements. He said he started in the retail section because that is where we would locate mobile vending units, and then began thinking about the other use standards in that section. He said that since many of the standards based on square footage may have been selected arbitrarily, it bears thinking about changing them by either eliminating minimum parking space standards altogether for some uses, or reducing them to easily achievable levels to let developers and property owners determine their parking needs. He said that was done with the "all other retail uses" category in recent years, as shown in the last row of Figure 53, by creating a minimum of two parking spaces and flipping the former minimum requirement to a maximum number of spaces that can be paved. He said that he is encouraged to do reduce more of the parking space requirements, as many bigger cities, including Buffalo and Toronto, have eliminated minimum parking standards, and that Ann Arbor removed minimum space requirements in the last few years. He continued, saying that two general approaches are 1) to use data from the International Traffic Engineers' *Parking Generation* application to draft new standards, and 2) to simply remove minimum requirements for many of the uses, but not residential, and we can also establish a maximum standard for those. He said that he and Andrea also wanted to talk a bit about the front-yard parking ban and check the Planning Commission's temperature on allowing front-yard parking.

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He said they would like to hear the Planning Commission's thoughts on allowing front-yard parking, after addressing the options we've discussed for revising the parking space requirements. He also said that there are currently no minimum standards for parking spaces for any uses aside from residential and some assembly uses, in the N. Third St. Corridor district, or for any uses but residential in the Central Business District (CBD).

K. Clegg asked if these sample standards for accessory uses for mobile would apply to parking areas in the Third St. Corridor and the CBD, requiring that space is available for take out.

A. Landers said that it would apply to those, because they we review their application with the Clerk's office, and this just cleans it up. She said that staff verifies that they have a hard parking surface and their pick-up window isn't in the right-of-way, and so forth.

D. Stensaas said that for an accessory use, I would be glad if they just had a space for the truck, if they also have a suitable area for people to order and pick up their orders that isn't a parking space or in the right of way.

S. Lawry said that he isn't ready to eliminate minimum parking yet, and that before doing that, he would like to see somebody do a survey of Marquette businesses to find out how many employee and customer vehicles they have at a time and to try to have some hard data to help determine how critical the spaces really are. He said that there will be well-meaning businesses that try to accommodate their customers by building enough parking, but not everybody will. He said that there are already businesses that do loading and off-loading in the travel lanes of the street because they don't have room in parking lots for delivery trucks to get off the street, and it creates hazards and blocks traffic. He said that there are certainly good reasons to require some off-street space, and one big one is for loading and unloading, and that space can double as parking for their customers. He said that unless we collect a lot of data that shows the parking lots aren't being used, I'm not ready to remove all minimums.

D. Fetter said that she agrees with Mr. Lawry and is a little concerned about completely removing the minimums. She said she could give a couple examples, but in general, a lot of parking for the N. Third St. corridor ends up in the residential areas, and so a study would be great to see if this is something we could go forward with.

N. Vermaat said that one concern of flipping the minimums to maximums is, is that if the numbers have uncertain origins and quality, we would keep relying on unsupported numbers.

D. Fetter also said that another point about removing minimum parking is that (inaudible) taking something away from residents and the public without giving something back, like improving our public transportation. She said that if that were to happen before removing minimum standards, I would be a bit more comfortable with it.

D. Stensaas said that he thinks many of the cities that have removed minimum standards have more alternatives to driving that we can provide here.

K. Clegg said that is one of the challenges that we have.

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D. Stensaas said that if we don't touch any of the requirements, then what we have to consider is the proposed space for mobile food vending units and an adjacent space for customers to order and pick up food unless another suitable location is available. He asked what the members think about that.

K. Clegg asked what adjacent means.

D. Stensaas described the City Code requirements for mobile food vending units to have their order and pick-up areas facing into a property or sidewalk and not into a street, saying that if a parking space is the only available, suitable option to meet that requirement, then we are proposing that it be stated as a requirement for accessory or permanent food truck use on private property.

S. Lawry stated that Drifa Brewing has at times had a sprawling and chaotic parking situation, with parking for the site being scattered along Lake St. and on the BLP property, and he asked how what is proposed would address the situation.

D. Stensaas discussed the fact that Drifa Brewing is currently working on a new site plan due to issues related to on-site parking and other changes that have been made since their Special Land Use Permit and site plan were approved in 2021, and explained some of the details related to the parking issues on the site and pointed out how the food truck at the site used two spaces near the front entrance during the summer and into the fall. He also said that the parking in the Lake St. right-of-way has evidently not been a violation of city codes, as the Police have not stepped in to change anything.

D. Fetter asked about what the LDC allows for shared parking arrangements based on different operating times.

D. Stensaas said that the LDC allows for shared parking agreements and off-site parking for non-residential land uses, and said that Drifa is probably going to need a shared-parking agreement with their neighbors, because they are almost certainly going to need more parking than they have available on their site.

K. Clegg said that he thinks the proposal will make it harder for Drifa to meet their parking requirements.

A. Landers said that the mobile food vending license wasn't intended to allow for food trucks to park at a place indefinitely, and to become like a brick-and-mortar restaurant, but that is happening.

S. Lawry asked if the food truck that has been located at 505 Lakeshore Blvd. during the last couple of summers was meeting standards.

Ms. Landers said it meets the City Code standards for parking on a hard surface but is exempt from the zoning approval requirements for a temporary sales area due to an amendment to the LDC made in recent years that exempts uses that require business license approval.

D. Stensaas said that an on-site food truck can be a legitimate business, and that staff has worked with one property owner on site development requirements for one that did not go forward. It was also

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discussed that there were spaces approved, on the site plan, for the food truck that was vending at 1034 N. Third St. when the building was being remodeled and briefly afterwards.

S. Lawry said that most of these seem to be locating where there is adequate parking available, but if there aren't, problems do develop, and so we need to specify that they do have a minimal number of parking spaces available for it, and if that is one space for the vendors vehicle and one for the customer it is a small minimum, but is a place to start. He said that he wouldn't go less than that, and again, the property owner can already use 25 percent of their required parking for other things.

K. Clegg said that it seems fair to him.

J. Guter said that he thinks this makes sense, if they are going to be there on a more permanent basis there needs to be some kind of regulation for that.

D. Fetter asked what is meant by long-term temporary. D. Stensaas said more than a day for land uses.

S. Lawry suggested using the definition of motor vehicle from the State Vehicle Code.

D. Stensaas said that should be fine, and he will check that out.

S. Lawry said that in the section 54.903 preamble paragraph, it also mentions parking lots approved by special assessment, and there may no longer be any of those. He also said that he noticed a new parking lot on N. Third Street. There was more discussion on that and about the parking situation in that area.

D. Stensaas related that he sent the members an email message with links to articles about cities that have eliminated minimum parking requirements, and he said that they can talk more about that later.

Some discussion was held about the desire to conduct studies on parking usage in town, and some members said they would also like to see some of the ITE data from the *Parking Generation* app.

D. Stensaas said that he hopes that staff can find someone to help with such a study.

A. Landers said that we also need to discuss front-yard parking. D. Stensaas said that he is not sure, but his understanding is that public works concerns drove the prohibition of front-yard parking due to concerns with damage to service laterals and sidewalks.

J. Guter said that he was a Planning Commission member when the ban went into effect, in the early 2000s, and said that the main reason for it was that a lot of homes were being converted to rentals and students were parking in all over the yards and trashing them. He said that was what instigated the ban, and there were some carve-outs for special circumstances that came with them, but aesthetics were the main purpose for the ban.

S. Lawry said that he agrees that aesthetics were a major reason for the ban, but there are some utility related issues. He said there are typically a cleanout for the sewer lateral and a shut off valve for the water line that need to be accessed, and they're typically in the right of way near the property line and not where people would be parked in a front yard, so that isn't an issue, but plowing the front yard for

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parking can lead to frozen water lines and sewers. He said those lines are not typically buried as deeply on the private side of the line, and in the winter of 1994-1995, about 1/3 of the water laterals in the city froze up, and the first ones to freeze and last to thaw were ones under a plowed yard, and those were also the only areas where we had frozen sewer laterals.

A. Landers said with consideration of that information, what do commissioners think about allowing for one front-yard parking space adjacent to a driveway if there were conditions placed on it, such as the vehicle isn't in the right of way and over any utilities. She said that a lot of homeowners want to park in their front yards and ask about it, and that it would provide another option.

There was quite a bit of discussion about the issue, and the consensus of the Planning Commission was to not change the LDC provisions concerning front yard parking, because allowing front yard parking at each home has a high potential for erosion and damage to both private yards and the public right of way, and that the existing front-yard parking waiver provisions of the LDC and the "parking in the right-of-way waivers" managed by the Police Department seems to work adequately to address the majority of the front yard parking that is needed in the community.

**COMMISSION and STAFF COMMENTS**

A. Wilkinson stated that Mr. Lawry touched on taking more action to clear sidewalks at the last meeting, and with the heavy snow we've received recently, I want to reiterate his points about taking more action. He said there are a lot of people walking in the streets and he came uncomfortably close to a person in the street at night that he didn't see until he was very close, and he knows a lot of people that don't attempt to walk outside this time of year. He said that we put a lot of effort into recreation here, but I think we need to put more effort into clearing sidewalks.

D. Fetter said that since we are working on the LDC, it may be good to address data centers. She said we should be proactive and plan for it, as there are a couple of local places with potential for their development. She also said she is wondering about the laws regarding snowmobiles in the city and whether there has been discussion about them in recent years.

S. Lawry said that something we might want to look into before we get a development proposal for the former hospital site, is to possibly apply an allowance for staggered building heights like those that were provided in the former hospital overlay district. He also said that there is a block of about four residential lots that are listed for sale on Bluff St., behind the Ramada Inn, and that may be an excellent place to develop a block of multi-family housing. He said that we should do what we can to encourage it to be built at a higher density.

A. Landers said that the next meeting is February 3<sup>rd</sup>, and there are no cases.

D. Stensaas said that we will meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> to work on LDC amendments, since there is a lot more to go through. He also said that the location of a couple of meetings is being changed, but those are months away, and we will update everyone later. He also said he wants everyone to join him in wishing Andrea a happy birthday. There was wild applause.

K. Clegg said he wanted to echo the comments about looking into data centers this winter, and on snow removal, he said he was glad to see the "snow munchers" out cutting snow banks because they were taller than him.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair K. Clegg adjourned the meeting at 7:30 pm

David Stensaas

Prepared by D. Stensaas, City Planner and Zoning Administrator, Planning Commission Staff Liaison