

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
MARQUETTE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
August 27th, 2024**

A special meeting of the Marquette City Planning Commission was duly called and held at 6:00p.m. on Tuesday, August 27th, 2024, in the Commission Chambers at City Hall. A video of this meeting is available on the City's website and may be accessed by clicking [here](#).

ROLL CALL

Planning Commission (PC) members present: W. Premeau, K. Granger, Chair S. Mittlefehldt, D. Kaltsas, Vice Chair K. Clegg, S. Lawry C. Gottlieb.

PC Members absent: M. Rayner, D. Fetter

Staff present: Zoning Official A. Landers, City Planner and Zoning Administrator Dave Stensaas, Planning and Community Development Director Dennis Stachewicz.

AGENDA

It was moved by C. Gottlieb, seconded by K. Clegg, and carried 7-0 to approve the agenda as presented.

MINUTES

The minutes of 08-13-24 were approved as presented, by consent.

CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION ON AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. Barb Kelly, of 430 E. Arch St., stated:

I have lived there for 47 years. A comment about Arch and Ridge St., you probably already know but I'm going to say it anyway. It is a national historic district. It was so designated in the late '80s. I worked on it with many other residents, and it is a source of national historic pride in the United States as designated and locally. It's kind of like an open air museum. People, tourists, residents driving up and down the street looking at the homes, studying the architecture, learning a little bit of our beautiful history as they drive along. The reason I mention that is because two times, well more than two, but two I'll mention, we have faced construction or changes in the area, including a six floor unit behind Pine Ridge apartment, a parking structure, and tearing down the old what is now the Maritime Museum. That is a sandstone building down on the waterfront, was going to be torn down to put in a great big, huge water tank. The reason neither one happened was because there were built-in regulations regarding the National Historic District that precluded certain amounts of monies, especially like HUD monies, going for any projects that were deemed incompatible or destructive of national historic resources. So, both of those things never went through, and it was those valuable legislation, or zoning or whatever, of the National Trust [for Historic Places] that precluded having those things happen. So, I've been trying to understand zoning, my hats off to all of you. I find it is very complicated and occasionally I've been at these meetings, and I try to understand it, but I know it's a tough subject to tackle so I just want to say I appreciate what you do. So, what I wanted to say, I understand that zoning is a process for changing a property zoning to allow for different activities or development and you can tell me later if I'm wrong, for example, a property that was previously only allowed to be a residential house could instead be rezoned to have stores and offices built there. Residential property is the type of real estate specifically designed and constructed for the purpose for people to reside, intended for personal use by the residents, and are not intended for any commercial or industrial activities. They are typically single family homes, apartments, townhouses, offering a range of amenities and features to ensure a comfortable and safe living environment. Commercial property is defined as any property which is used for business purposes. Primary purpose of purchasing a commercial property is to generate a profit either through rental income

or capital gains. This category includes hotels, businesses, retail stores, offices, industries, public facilities, and more. Do I have a time limit? Going as fast as I can, I know City Commission, I try to go really fast. Conventional zoning laws outline the permitted uses, restrictions and develop standards, including density and building heights, parking requirements of designated areas, which might range from residential to commercial to industrial to recreational to scenic. Our new master plan can legally protect our historic and natural resources including Arch and Ridge streets national historic district and our Lakeshore boulevard designated scenic drive, our beach front view and access and the many assets that make Marquette so magical. Constant growth can bring increased noise, traffic, and construction inconveniences. Overdevelopment can detract from what people love about Marquette in the first place making any rezoning decision one that should be considered by the residents to be in the best interest of the whole city. Questions? I really only found out about this recently, but a lot of the questions have been raised by the people to whom I have been speaking with. So, I guess I would like to know at some point, what is the purpose of this proposed rezoning and why would it be in the best interest of our community? In other words, why is it being changed. It must be a benefit, or you wouldn't be changing it. I did go to many of those early master plan meetings and one of those clear things that came out of those meetings seems to me and everybody that was there is how important neighborhoods are. So, will this have a welcome or beneficial effect on our neighborhoods? Are we endorsing a future where we consider the land under a home to be prime real estate property? It appears to me that the goals of neighborhood zoning and commercial zoning are diametrically opposed and incompatible. One is to generate a profit and investment and in a neighborhood zoning, property is designed for the purposes of providing residences for people to reside and for their personal use and safety and sense of neighborhood place.

Mr. Michael Conley, of 500 E. Ridge St., stated:

I won't repeat my comments from two weeks ago. They were well documented in the minutes and thank you for putting them in there. I would like to speak though on a couple other points. Last meeting you were told there was sort of a timeline on this and it has to be done by the end of October. It really doesn't. The only reason that was given is that staff wanted it passed by the current commission. There's no reason for that. Commission is not going in recess; they'll be here after the election. So let's do it right and not do it just fast. Second of all, you're told that we're out of money and we can't amend the plan because we can't afford it. Well, it's better to do it right than to save the money and I think Beckett Raeder made a mistake by combining downtown and east side. Make them redo it. Make them reflect the will of the community. And have them do it at no additional cost. That's what we would do with anything, any consultant that we hired in our own lives. You say, "No, that's not right, do it right" and then bring it back. So the reasons for moving ahead without further changes and leaving the downtown and the east side combined they're not valid. You don't have to rush it through, you can do it in proper time and do it in the public. If you make changes to the language that's in the master plan, publish it and then let the public then look at it, reflect on it and come back to you and give their comments to that. Currently, the only plan, the only draft plan that the public has is the May 1st version. There are no changes since then. So, I think this has to be a transparent public process and we can't shortcut that. Let's not let money get in the way of a good decision. My final point is, if we're going to develop the east side, like we're going to develop the downtown, the target here is Lakeshore Blvd. Nobody is going to put a hotel at Magnetic and Spruce St., that's not going to happen. We're talking about Lakeshore Blvd. Well, if we're talking about that, let's just keep going south along Lake St. Take that all the way out to the highway. It's the lakeshore. It's walkable. It already has commercial development on the north side, it has easy access from 41, let's just extend this downtown eastside district and Lake St. is on east side. Just by the same line of thinking, put that, open that up for commercial development as well. Does that sound like a good idea? I don't think so. Thank you.

Ms. Margaret Brumm, of 404 E. Magnetic St., stated:

I'm sorry I haven't been able to keep up with all the meetings this summer, but it's been kind of busy. First of all, directed to the comment made by that gentleman there, this Planning Commission once had a five and half hour meeting on whether a hotel should be put near the intersection of Magnetic and Spruce. The floors were covered with people. It didn't pass the Special Land Use code because the Planning Commission did a fine job of evaluating it. So, I don't ever put anything past what could come up before the Planning Commission. Number two, I walked out with my dog the other day at 5:15 in the morning and my dog wakes me up and then decides where we were going to so she was in the middle of the sidewalk deciding left, right, whatever and it's 5:15 in the morning, I don't care. And an e-bike comes barreling down the sidewalk going about 45 mph. And I can't move that fast, neither can my dog so I'm like, and at the last minute the e-bike goes out into the street, 5:15 in the morning, and then cuts back up on the next sidewalk to run on the sidewalks. And this reminded me, our biggest risk right now is when we encourage people to come here, which we are because we don't want to die as a community, we want to increase, we have not taken into account the fact that these streets we live on are not designed for the vehicles we now have. My biggest fear is that somebody will convince you to connect the end of Magnetic St. with Lakeshore Blvd. because I wasn't kidding when I said that vehicle was going 45 mph at 5:15 in the morning. I have a ring camera on my front door and there is a steady stream of bikes, e-bikes, people walking, people going back and forth. It's a pedestrian walkway down to the water. But if you open it up, if you connect Lakeshore Blvd. to Magnetic St. (inaudible). I think it's one of the suggestions is to not have dead ends. It really needs to be a dead end because if it's not a dead end, those cars and vehicles will come barreling up the street even faster into residential neighborhoods that aren't big enough. Come the summertime, we have vehicles on both sides of Magnetic St. There isn't room for a vehicle to go past there. I mean, I've circled the block a couple of times.

And my biggest fear is that in our enthusiasm to connect everything and make these arteries and transportation, which I believe our Planning Commission knows more about than I do, you forget that there's sometimes a really good reason not to make it easy for people to get from place to place that fast. And I speak to Fair Ave. which they put speed limit signs on, constantly speeding from Lakeshore all the way up to Fourth, I've seen cars going 65mph there even though it's supposed to be 25mph. So, I'm begging you as you present this to the City Commission, you put a caveat in there that no broken road is to be connected without the consent of the people on that road because there may be some places where people really want that, but if Magnetic St. is connected, I'm going to have to put up a 4' fence in my front yard and keep the dog constantly away because we came this close, it's 5:15 in the morning, and the dirty look I got from the young person, riding the e-bike was like, "What are you doing on the sidewalk?". And I'm like, "What are YOU doing on the sidewalk?". The second thing, I went to the Master Plan meetings and they were well done and I appreciate how well the City worked at getting those things out and I read the books and I actually took some of them home and read about how we're trying to turn people away from vehicles into bicycles and make this a pedestrian bicycle town and I have to tell you that I'm at an age now where I want a parking spot as close to the place I'm going as possible. And if I have to pay for parking, I'll walk a block to not pay for parking. If you take away, like I believe Tadychs was going to be the place where you were going to have four different businesses and cut the parking by one quarter, that's the one place I can go and know I'm going to have a free parking spot. I would encourage you to leave an option open for those parts of Marquette that are historically not designed to have bicycles be the primary transportation. When I was a young person last century, nobody rode their bike in the City of Marquette, there were too many hills. And now there's a planning - I saw the page that said we're going to do everything we can to get rid of parking spots to encourage people to walk and to bike and it just doesn't match with the common sense. Plus, you risk, excuse me, an objection to your plan because if you don't have parking spots, people who need to drive places can't park, and therefore, you have to have reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities. So again, to sum up, you did a very thorough job trying to move us into the next stage. I beg you to slow down the connection of interconnecting the streets, to remind people that people like parking spots, and to remind people as well that it's not always good to make easy to get people from point A to point B.

Sometimes slowing them down with natural barriers is better for everybody involved. And I thank you and my dog thanks you for listening to us because I can't make that story up and I thought I would bring it and share it with you because there's no reason for that vehicle to be on the sidewalk at quarter after five in the morning whereas I and my dog have reason. Okay, thank you very much.

Mr. Jim Kelly, of 340 E. Ridge St. stated:

I am here to talk about the expansion of the zoning district, including the east side and all of downtown. Off the bat I'm going to tell you that I just learned about this yesterday, so I'm not exactly well versed on exactly all the details. But I have been a builder and a contractor in Marquette for 30 years. I have worked on the North side, the East side, the West side, downtown. I've worked all over, and I've followed the rules all along. And they all have specific rules for good reason, they're different areas. They're all beautifully different. And they shouldn't come under a different set of rules as you go along. So, I guess tonight I'd ask that you just kind of explain to me as you go along what's the motivation for including the east side with downtown. They're different areas. My business is downtown, my residence is on the east side. There's no reason that the rules for those two areas should be the same. They're completely different and that's the way Marquette has always been, and I don't see what the forethought is for changing that so I hope you can cover that for me tonight. Thank you.

WORK SESSION ON REPORTS/PLANS/ORDINANCES

A. Draft Community Master Plan

S. Mittlefehldt stated:

We have no old business, no new business. Are there any citizens wishing to address the Commission on non-agenda items? Ok, I see none. We have no correspondence, minutes or other reports, no training so we'll go to the heart of the matter which is our work session tonight on the draft Community Master Plan. To just refresh our collective memory, and for those of you who weren't at our last meeting, we went through the public comment that was received in the public comment period from May to June and we wrestled with how to address all the comments we received and then Commissioners sent comments of our own about the draft. We also have a May 1st draft we've been working off of and so we have compiled a now nine-page document of comments, many of which were things that arose just tonight. The plan tonight was to go through, this is kind of our last shot as a Planning Commission to say what we collectively as the governing body - that is by statute, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008 says - that quote, "The Planning Commission shall make and approve a Master Plan as a guide for development within the planning jurisdiction. So you know, the City hires consultants but we are the members, the volunteer members of the community who are ultimately responsible for making the plan. So just kind of to echo some of the comments we heard tonight, we do I think share a commitment to making this the best plan that we can make it. I'm sure it's not going to be perfect as everything can always use improvement. But we are committed I think to trying to do the best to reflect our communities' values and give this information to the consultant so they can incorporate one more final round of revisions. That's what tonight is, so it might be a long one and I hope you brought your coffee or whatever you need to keep awake because we really do want to kind of finalize some of the comments tonight and make sure that we have one last round of revision that we can send off to the planning consultants that can get incorporated into the draft. That's kind of an overview of the process, I guess. To echo what Mr. Conley and others kind of talking about, the transparent public process, I think as members of this community we are also very committed to that and trying to be open and really address all the comments we have received through the public and then also being involved in this process for now - I think it's been two years coming, making sure that the things that we've seen from the bird's eye level are being incorporated in this plan, so that it is a uniquely Marquette plan.

D. Stensaas stated:

I'd like to address some of the misinformation or misconceptions about what's happening here related to planning and zoning. This is not a zoning hearing. There has been no proposal to change the zoning of the residential portions of east Marquette to be equivalent to that of the central business district. That's not at all what was proposed, is proposed in this plan. The Plan, as we'll get into the details here, has one of the key elements of the Community Master Plan related to zoning is what's called Future Land Use map. We have had one in our Master Plan for many years, for decades. It is a requirement in our Land Development Code that the Future Land Use map is evaluated for compatibility with any proposed zoning changes. So the way the Planning Commission has operated for years, decades, is that if a proposed zoning change comes to them through either an application from a private citizen, a business, or the City itself, that the change is evaluated in relation to what the Future Land Use map proposes. So, the Master Plan has a very valuable relationship to zoning in that way and you can't have a zoning ordinance without a zoning plan, the future land use plan is the heart of that plan. So, what this new Community Master Plan is proposing is that the Future Land Use plan is quite a bit different than what we have now, which is very parcel specific. So, each parcel in the city at present has a future land use designation. What has been proposed by our consultants is that we have a more or less neighborhood-based future land use plan that calls out general characteristics of neighborhoods and assembles these like characteristics or areas with similar geography and characteristics into neighborhoods. Those don't automatically translate to any kind of zoning changes. Zoning changes are made through change in the law, which is a very intensive process that requires at least two public hearings and proposed zoning changes like changing the east side to commercial would - of course that's not being discussed, it's not going to be discussed - what's discussed in here is that these neighborhoods have certain characteristics, and this particular area is being categorized together in this plan because it was a historic core of the city. Dennis will talk more about what we're proposing to do with it. I just want to clear up the fact that zoning changes are not on the table at all. And to Ms. Kelly's comments about the historic district, the current Master Plan has a chapter that was new to that plan when we authored it in 2015, and it was adopted in 2015, that has a very good community heritage chapter that documents the Arch and Ridge St. historical district as well as several other historical sites in the City of Marquette. That's not replicated in the new plan. One of the reasons is this new plan was proposed to be a lot more easy to navigate and people today don't really want to necessarily delve through a lot of historical data and information, and other like-kind of information. They want things to be pithy and easy to navigate on a mobile device. That's the reality, so this plan is more or less divided into two sections, with one being a very kind of magazine-like, this section I was scrolling through here with these neighborhood place types, that's our future land use map explanation of these neighborhood-type areas. With that I'll turn it over to Dennis to continue this conversation about this part of the review.

Dennis Stachewicz stated:

This is a really good job Dave, and I appreciate your clarifying that fact. This is not a zoning change, extremely unlikely it would ever become a zoning change because as we discussed at the last meeting, these are typologies based on neighborhoods and then underneath those, you have all the individual zoning districts for the city that the Planning Commission works of when you do your zoning plan and your Land Development Code to make sure things that are compatible. It would be really really, probably illegal, if somebody we're going to propose a hotel in the middle of E. Ridge St. and the Planning Commission approved it based on the land use typology. That's not a realistic thing that could occur. Although I do appreciate and understand the comments and concerns from the neighborhood and I mean people that have property, everybody in the City of Marquette has property that they have invested time, money. You like a neighborhood because you live in that neighborhood and so on and so forth. So, no disrespect intended. I mean, clearly, we understand that but we're trying to find a way to communicate to folks that this is not zoning, it's not going to be something that turns into the cave of civilization in these neighborhoods. Although I do understand that could potentially be seen as a threat.

We did, Dave and I did make some changes to this that we are prepared to present to the Planning Commission tonight that further, they capsule the intent of the historic core, what the entire plan is formed on, these neighborhoods, so it still encapsulates that intent but there's a few little minor changes there that at least in our thoughts clarified the differences within that district between commercial areas and residential areas, if that would help the Planning Commission. As far as the rest of the comments that you had, thank you Madame Chair for putting that together. It was very helpful. For those in the audience, Dave and I also looked at those from a staff level and kind of put a few comments together on those to help the Planning Commission with your discussion whether, I mean if it was something easy that is a typo or something like that that staff can handle, we wrote it as a staff comment and then there a couple of issues that I believe the Planning Commission still needs to discuss so we put those down as a discussion. Dave and I are here for questions. And we thank you for the opportunity to be able to help you with this. I did also go back and if you can recall we had the summary of the community engagement report because I think we had, I know I had mentioned it to the Planning Commission last time that it's really important being the caretakers of this plan to go back and ensure that the over 4,000 people that did the survey and participated and everything else, that you're encapsulating what they said they wanted. I went and did a safety valve check for you on that as well I'm sure you may have but if not, I'm available for questions on that also so thank you.

S. Mittlefehldt stated:

Great, thank you Dennis. Appreciate that. So just to clarify, I mean for folks who I know planning and zoning is kind of confusing and it kind of seems like it all connects, and it does, but the Community Master Plan is like the community vision right, it's like where we want to be, where do we want to go. It is what informs the zoning, but the zoning is as Dave and Dennis have said is totally sort of a separate process that's informed by the plan. Your zoning changes have to be consistent with the vision of the community, but it is not changing the zoning of any parcel or property. So those are kind of two separate things just to clarify so people don't think this is going to have immediate zoning implications. Just want to clarify the Community Master Plan is different from the zoning plan. Hopefully that's clear. So, should we proceed by going through this, because I think that just might help us walk through these comments, and I think a lot of what we heard today will be touched upon by things that have been raised by members of the Planning Commission as well.

The Planning Commission proceeded to use the document of annotated Planning Commission comments with a numbered key that staff provided to them via email for the meeting, which were the same comments provided on the spreadsheet that was in the agenda, addressing each comment and coming to a resolution for how each would be treated in regard to the Community Master Plan. The process lasted for nearly two hours.

S. Mittlefehldt said:

So again, for the process, the goal of tonight was to amass and go through all the comments and feedback and send this out to the consultants. Will we see another draft then, Dave or Dennis? Will they give us another draft that we will send up to the City Commission for them to approve?

D. Stachewicz said:

We'll have to get back to you on specifics. There has to be at least one public hearing.

COMMISSION AND STAFF COMMENTS

W. Premeau said:

I like some of Steve's (Lawry) comments about what Marquette was and what it's becoming. What I don't understand is what Ms. Kelly said about the historic district designation. And when you use the

phrase "in perpetuity" – I asked Steve Lawry once what that means and he said "perpetuity is as long as someone can remember" – and I think that's a good answer.

K. Granger said:

I'm grateful for everybody's comments, I think that's what this is all about – making this a holistic document. So, thank you all.

K. Clegg stated:

I'd like to thank Dave and Dennis and everyone else on the Planning Commission for their hard work. I'd like to thank the public for their input, it seems like most of their concerns were addressed. I did not know about the national historic district and I'm glad that the area [E. Ridge St. and E. Arch St.] is protected by that overlay. Thank you all and I'm happy to be here.

D. Kaltsas said:

I'm excited to see this Plan come to fruition and see the final edits completed. Thanks to everybody for coming out tonight. It's been a very interesting process and I'm glad to see what's come of it.

S. Lawry said:

I'd like to thank Dave for forwarding my comments that I wasn't around to forward to the Chair so that it would be included in the compilation and I think it really helped to satisfy me with all those points.

C. Gottlieb said:

I echo what Kevin said about thanking Dave and Dennis for their hard work and patience and to the public.

S. Mittlefehldt said:

Well, you stole my thunder with all the expressions of gratitude for how great it is that we have a community where people show up for more than two hours on a Tuesday night to give their input on a document that will help guide us to our shared vision of where we want to be and what our community is, and thank you Dennis and Dave for your time and effort to carefully go through all of our comments and make sure they will be addressed in the next draft, and for all my co-commissioners for spending time on this and getting into the weeds. It does take a lot of time and energy, so thank you everyone for your work on this.

D. Stensaas said:

I'd like to continue the kumbaya – great job everybody, this has been a good process. One thing that may happen on Sept. 17th is a presentation on the Draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan update for what I'd assume would be general comments, and we'll hopefully be able to get you a draft of that well before that date so that you can look it over and when the consultant and staff are here with that you can offer them some thoughtful comments. There's no reason to have a meeting on the 3rd of September, there is no business for the 3rd. And there is no business for the 17th, so that is a good date to have a presentation on the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chair S. Mittlefehldt at 8:15 p.m.



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