

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
MARQUETTE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

**October 07, 2025**

A regular meeting of the Marquette City Planning Commission was duly called and held at 6:00p.m. on Tuesday, October 7, 2025, in the Commission Chambers at City Hall. This meeting is also available to view online at the City's website.

**ROLL CALL**

Planning Commission (PC) members present (7): K. Hunter, J. Fitkin, Chair Kevin Clegg, D. Fetter, S. Lawry, M. Rayner, Vice-Chair A. Wilkinson

PC Members absent (0): none

Staff present: City Planner and Zoning Administrator D. Stensaas.

**AGENDA**

*It was moved by A. Wilkinson, seconded by M. Rayner, and carried 7-0 to approve the agenda with the addition of an item (6.A) to the agenda for the presentation of a pedestrian and bicycle traffic study on Presque Isle Ave. by Mr. Alex Berrones.*

**MINUTES**

D. Stensaas noted that there were problems with the audio and video recording of the September 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, and that even though two different sources recorded the audio, there was difficulty hearing some of the audio content.

It was moved by J. Fitkin, seconded by S. Lawry, and carried 7-0 to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2025, meeting with changes to some portions of the minutes that were reported as "inaudible", as stated by J. Fitkin, K. Hunter, K. Clegg, and S. Lawry.

**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.

**CORRESPONDENCE, REPORTS, MINUTES of OTHER BOARDS/COMMITTEES**

**A. Report - Planning for the Future: A Case Study of Pedestrian and Cyclist Traffic Conditions on Presque Isle Ave. in Marquette, MI – by Alex Barrones, NMU student (capstone project)**

Mr. Alex Berrones, of 522 High St., stated:

Hi, my name is Alex Berrones. I live at 522 High Street. I am a senior at NMU, and I want to share some research that I conducted last semester in Dr. Sarah Mittlefehldt's Human-Environment capstone course. With Sarah's help, I studied traffic safety for pedestrians and cyclists on a section of Presque Isle Avenue near NMU's campus—specifically the area from Waldo Street to Norwood Street (just in front of the Dome). Both the City and NMU have tried to promote walking and biking, and the access to campus

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in this area makes Presque Isle Avenue critical in those efforts. According to NMU's master plan, the university sees the future of Presque Isle Avenue as a "pedestrian-centric" entertainment corridor with new facilities and mixed-use developments, such as the apartments being built right now at the intersection of Fair Avenue. The results of my research demonstrate that traffic and infrastructure conditions on Presque Isle Avenue does not make people walking and biking feel safe—and this is despite the street being reconstructed a few years ago.

I know some of this may be outside the scope of the Planning Commission, but I think it's important for long-term planning of the Presque Isle Avenue area.

Over 2 weeks in late March, I stood out on the street, braving the wind and cold, and talked to over 30 people walking and biking about how comfortable they felt. Overall, people did not feel crossing the street was safe, and had an unusually hard time doing so; mainly because drivers in this area do not pay attention to people waiting to cross—whether they are on the sidewalk or have already stepped into the crosswalk—and ignore basic traffic laws. Drivers regularly run stop signs at Center and Summit Streets, where many students cross to get to the PEIF—many people I talked to felt they have to rush across the street because drivers do not yield to them. Several even recalled times when their friends had been hit by cars while walking or biking in this area. I also surveyed some businesses on the street, and they believe that making Presque Isle Avenue safer would be better for their customers and overall sales.

Again, I don't want to get too into the weeds with technical stuff, but when I talked with local law enforcement and engineers, it was clear that the actual street design may contribute to speeding and unsafe conditions for people walking and biking. Presque Isle Avenue is wider than most streets in Marquette, and the few street signs in this area may alert drivers that people may be out walking and biking—but there is no mechanism telling drivers that they must stop for people crossing the street.

Considering NMU's long-term development plans, the Presque Isle Avenue area could be a bustling, high-traffic corridor in the future. In its current form, the street fails to make pedestrians and cyclists feel safe and is not ready to serve a university entertainment area. I ask that the Planning Commission consider these implications and prioritize non-motorized transportation while planning this corridor. I learned so much just by talking with strangers and making their perceptions feel heard, and I hope the Planning Commission can use this information as well. Thank you.

S. Lawry said that he wants to commend Alex on the report, and as a civil engineer he knows that even though a formal traffic study would use some different procedures, this study captures the issues pretty well. He said that while he didn't get all the way through the report, what he got from it is driver behavior and, to a lesser degree, pedestrian behavior. He continued by saying that he doesn't dispute that there may be some infrastructure improvements that would help with safety there, but the problems are speeding, distracted drivers, failure to stop or yield, and (inaudible) based on the review of traffic accident reports. He related that this is harder to change, but too often the focus is on changing the environment rather than people's behavior, and you don't always accomplish your goal if you don't focus on changing behavior. He also said that he grew up in that area and crossed the street many times on his paper route, and that traffic counts were probably higher then because there were several now-defunct large employers on the north side of the city, namely the power plant, (inaudible), the railroad's maintenance shops, the ore dock, two sawmills on Hawley St., the Dow Chemical company facility, there were two grocery stores and a couple of party stores, and other businesses along that part of Presque Isle Ave., and that generated a lot of traffic. And he said that even going back to the 1960s, that street

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was fairly in disrepair, the sidewalks and curbs, and it took a long time to get it rebuilt (inaudible). He said that some of the changes that were made have actually increased some of the unsafe conditions there. He mentioned that the roundabout may encourage speeding, as people don't have to stop [at Fair Ave.] and can drive faster, making it harder to cross by eliminating gaps in the traffic. He also said that changes in traffic controls have to meet warrants before they are installed, with most of the standards developed by the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials, and because most governments adopt those, they have to meet certain warrants and have that document on file in order to change a yield sign to a stop sign or put a flasher there. He also said the warrants were there to install a red flasher at one point and an enhanced crosswalk at Summit St., but conditions changed to the point that they had to be removed during reconstruction. He also mentioned that NMU's plans for Wildcat Way on Center St. may be better for Summit St. for a variety of reasons, including a wider right-of-way and better direct connectivity to their athletic facilities, and that if we have any influence on the future improvements to Presque Isle (inaudible).

K. Clegg asked if there were other comments. He thanked Mr. Berrones and said that it was very thorough, and it is evident that pedestrian travel has gone up over the years, and we'll need to pay attention to this area with the new buildings being built there.

J. Fitkin asked Mr. Berrones if he had any recommendations for how to improve safety on Presque Isle [Ave.]?

Mr. Berrones said that there should probably be more flashers or a HAWK signal. He said part of the problem is the street is so wide and people standing on the sidewalk have a long crossing and there are only two major crossing points – at Wright St. and the Fair Ave. roundabout. He also said people drive fast on the street and the law doesn't require them to stop for people waiting to cross, and the mentality is not to stop for people waiting, especially if there are a line of cars. So, reducing the crossing distance and time would be helpful, because it is equal to crossing four lanes of traffic with the travel lanes, turning lane, and shoulders. He said with more students going back and forth, the scope of what NMU plans to do with this area is not in line with the street looks like right now. So I think that we need to slow traffic down to help people cross the street (inaudible). He said that he'd love to see speed bumps on the street, but he expressed skepticism about their efficacy in that street. Mr. Berrones also said that every single cyclist that he saw was riding on the sidewalk, and there wasn't any snow on the street, but people didn't seem to want to bike in the street.

There were a few more minutes of discussion, but much of it was hard to decipher and transcribe.

**TRAINING**

**A. Community Green article, Planning magazine (American Planning Assoc.), Fall 2025.**

The Planning Commission briefly discussed the article.

**COMMISSION and STAFF COMMENTS**

J. Fitkin thanked Mr. Berrones for presenting his report.

A. Wilkinson thanked Mr. Berrones and complimented him for his study.

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K. Hunter thanked Mr. Berrones.

D. Fetter thanked Mr. Berrones for his study and report.

S. Lawry thanked Mr. Berrones.

D. Stensaas said that the next scheduled meeting, for 10/21, would be cancelled since no business needs to be conducted.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair K. Clegg adjourned the meeting at 6:35 pm

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