

**CITY OF MASON
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 15**

Sabbadin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at 201 West Ash Street, Mason MI, via Zoom Teleconference.

Roll Call		Present	Absent	Location
Treasurer	Barna	x		Mason, Michigan
Commissioner	Droscha	x		Mason, Michigan
Commissioner	Howe		x	Notice given
Commissioner	Perrault		x	Notice given
Chairman	Sabbadin	x		Mason, Michigan
Commissioner	Shattuck		x	No notice received
Commissioner	Vercher	x		Mason, Michigan
Vice-Chair	Waxman	x		Mason, Michigan
Commissioner	Wren	x		Mason, Michigan

Also Present: Elizabeth A. Hude, AICP, Community Development Director, Mason, Michigan; Marcia Holmes, Administrative Assistant, Mason.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Waxman second by Vercher, to approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes from the special meeting October 27, 2020.

Yes (6) Barna, Droscha, Sabbadin, Vercher, Waxman, Wren

No (0)

Absent (3) Howe, Perrault, Shattuck

MOTION PASSED BY ROLL CALL VOTE

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Master Plan – staff update

Director Hude is working on a webpage for the Master Plan that will have the basic information presented. There will be a joint meeting in late January or early February with City Council to walk through the RFP. Staff is working on eight questions for the discussion to determine what the focus should be as the Master Plan will inform decisions regarding budget, zoning updates, and the permits that come out of that. Hude would also like to promote the concept of 100 conversations where all of the Commissioners are encouraged to reach out and talk to people to see what their concerns, thoughts, and ideas are and bring those to the January meeting.

B. Subdivisions, condominiums and long-term maintenance of common areas – see memo

Sabbadin noted this is an action request from the City Council meeting of November 23, 2020. Director Hude stated there were concerns regarding the areas of common ownership with the Esquire Development subdivision a couple of years ago as well as the detention pond with Franklin Farms. City Council has asked that the Planning Commission look over the ordinances to see if any changes need to be made. Staff shared a previous memo from the City Attorney that referenced Enclave at Rayner Ponds where questions were raised and the ordinances that are currently in the law give the Planning Commission the authority to allow for conditions to be placed relative to requiring homeowners' associations to maintain common areas.

Waxman asked if there is a way to strengthen the requirements for the homeowners association or a way to regulate them to ensure they are doing their job and if they aren't is there recourse for the City to assess special assessments or other actions to have those areas maintained. Sabbadin replied that Franklin Farms is an example with their detention pond and that because the homeowners association dissolved the homeowners will be paying more now for the Drain Commission to maintain than their yearly dues would have cost. Sabbadin believes the current laws are strong enough but the Planning Commission and staff needs to do a better job to make everyone aware of the consequences. Director Hude recommended the Commissioners review the State and local laws so they are familiar with the language requirements so that they are prepared to add conditions when necessary. Waxman requested a workshop to go over situations hypothetically or from the past where they can learn what to look for and how to respond. Hude mentioned MSU having training resources and that as they work through the Master Plan process there will be a conversation on subdivisions. Waxman added to report back to City Council that there will be no current action taken but they will actively research what is required. Hude will make subdivision land use and infrastructure one of the questions to discuss at the joint meeting. Barna mentioned living in the older part of Mason with no HOA's and suggested they think about whether or not HOA's are the way to continue in the future. Director Hude will prepare a memo to send to City Council with an outline of their discussion on the topic.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Youth Advisor Position - discussion

Director Hude noted that in some communities they have a Junior Planning Commissioner position that allows student participation as a non-voting position. The experience benefits the student by offering civic and leadership experience; it provides a youthful perspective to the Commission which would be beneficial with the Master Plan effort coming up. There is a young man at Mason High School who is interested and Hude mentioned it to City Manager Deb Stuart to see what she thought. She recommended presenting it to the Planning Commission to see what their thoughts would be. Hude did not think anything would have to be changed within the ordinances to allow this Youth Advisor position to be added as the student could participate under the Open Meetings Act, provide public comment and read the packets online. Sabbadin asked for comments. Vercher thought it was a good idea to bring in the younger

members of the community and get them involved in Planning and Government conversations and he did not think there are any negatives to this. Waxman also thought it is a fantastic idea as he attended Boys State in school and thinks this opportunity for forward looking perspective is what is needed in the City. He also noted how it fits in with the joint commitment to the school district and that this one person can lead to five more showing up at a meeting to share feedback. Wren agreed with Waxman and added that the Master Plan will be affecting the younger generations and this is a great opportunity. Barna added they should consider future members and make sure diversity is included and outreach to students who may not have the connections to be nominated for this type of position. Sabbadin noted there should be stipulations placed on this position and the individual should be held to the same standard as the Commissioners in regards to attendance so if 2 or 3 meetings in a row are missed then a conversation is had with them to see if they are engaged or need to step down. He also added that their term should end with high school graduation as the student can become a Planning Commissioner as long as they live in the City and there is an opening. Waxman agreed and added the suggestion that they note a preference for students from Mason High School but they don't have to be a member of Mason given the ordinances allow for one out of district member on each of the City's Boards and Commissions. Director Hude asked how the Commissioners would like her to proceed with the current individual. Waxman commented that he should be at the January meeting but not have to take the oath of office and there should be some sort of recognition. Sabbadin suggested the Director and the Chairperson review the application and then write a Resolution to present to the Commission. Hude will draft a Resolution to present at the January meeting.

LIAISON REPORT

Sabbadin noted the City Manager's report in the packet.

Director Hude had a meeting with the DNR to follow up on Mason not receiving any of the grants for Rayner Park. This will be updated on the City webpage. The City is still planning on moving forward with the Rayner Park master plan along with the City-wide Master plan and several other projects. Hude shared that the DNR was very impressed with the letter that Commissioner Barna wrote in support of the grants and accessibility.

Sabbadin acknowledged Commissioner Vercher's resignation letter as he will be moving on to work for Loyola in Chicago. Vercher hopes to be back in the near future.

Sabbadin wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:15 p.m.


Megan Wren, Secretary