



CITY OF IONIA
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
4:30 PM, Wednesday, April 2, 2025
IONIA CITY HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBERS

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Bailey called the meeting of the Ionia Planning Commission to order at 4:30 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Roll call revealed a Quorum with Planning Commissioners Logan Bailey, Michael Donaldson, Keturah Kelley, Tim Lee, Jason Perry, and Judy Swartz present. Commissioner Ryan Gregory was absent.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairperson Bailey introduced the agenda and asked if there were any requested changes. Planning Commissioner Kelley made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Lee, to approve the agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(IV.1.) March 12, 2025 – Regular Meeting

Minutes from the regular meeting of March 12, 2025, were reviewed. Planning Commissioner Swartz made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Donaldson, to approve the March 12, 2025, meeting minutes as presented.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

VI. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ASSOCIATED ACTION

(VI.1.) Public Hearing to receive comments on the Site Plan and Special Land Use Application submitted by RAVE for 848 and 850 E. Lincoln Avenue

Assistant City Manager Bowman summarized the requested site plan and special land use permit application submitted by Relief After Violent Encounter (RAVE) for 848 and 850 E. Lincoln Avenue.

Chairperson Bailey opened the public hearing on the request at 4:43 PM and subsequently closed the public hearing at 4:43 PM after no public comments were made.

The following standards were reviewed.

Chapter 1276 – Site Plan Standards of Approval

1. The Planning Commission shall have the authority to limit the number of driveways for a site, to require parking lots on contiguous parcels to be connected, that driveways for contiguous parcels be shared, and that opposite driveways be directly aligned.
2. Landscaping shall be provided and designed in accordance with the City's landscape provisions.
3. All elements of the site plan shall be designed to take into account the site's topography, the size and shape of the lot, the character of adjoining property, and the type and size of buildings. The site shall be developed not to impede the normal and orderly development or improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in the Zoning Code.
4. The landscape shall be preserved in its natural state, insofar as practical, by removing only those areas of vegetation or making those alterations to the topography that are reasonably necessary to develop the site according to the requirements of the Zoning Code.
5. Areas of natural drainages, such as swales, wetlands, ponds, or swamps, shall be protected and preserved insofar as practical in their natural state to provide areas for natural habitat, preserve drainage patterns and maintain the natural characteristics of the land.
6. The site plan shall provide all dwelling units with reasonable visual and sound privacy. As appropriate, fences, walls, barriers, and landscaping shall be used to accomplish these purposes.
7. All buildings or groups of buildings shall be arranged to permit necessary emergency vehicle access as requested by the Fire Department.
8. In recognition that a sidewalk system along City streets would enhance pedestrian safety and conserve energy through non-motorized transportation opportunities, sidewalks shall be required as determined by the Planning Commission during the site plan review process. Sidewalks, if required, shall be constructed in accordance with the City of Ionia sidewalk standards. Additions or renovations of buildings existing as of the effective date of this Chapter, which require a site plan review, shall be subject to the requirements herein. In determining the need for sidewalks, the following shall be considered:
 - a. The amount of current and future pedestrian traffic by the site.
 - b. Whether a sidewalk would enhance the safety of pedestrians currently walking by the site and the safety of future pedestrians.
 - c. The existing and future volume of traffic on the street abutting the site.
 - d. The existence or probability of sidewalks being constructed on adjacent properties in order to create or complete a usable sidewalk system.
 - e. The location of the proposed use.
 - f. The location of pedestrian attractors such as schools, churches, public buildings, and shopping opportunities
9. The arrangement of public or common ways for vehicular traffic and pedestrian circulation shall be connected to existing or planned streets and pedestrian or bicycle pathways in the area. Roads and drives which are part of a current or planned street pattern serving adjacent development shall

be of a condition appropriate to the traffic volume and the type of traffic they will carry.

10. Appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure that the removal of all surface waters will not adversely affect neighboring properties or the public stormwater drainage system. Provisions shall be made to accommodate stormwater, prevent erosion, particularly during construction, and prevent dust formation. The use of detention/retention ponds may be required. Surface water on all paved areas shall be collected at intervals so that it will not obstruct the flow of vehicular or pedestrian traffic or create puddles in paved areas. The Planning Commission may, at its discretion, require catch basins to contain oil filters or traps to prevent contaminants from being discharged into the natural drainage system.

11. Exterior lighting shall be arranged so that illumination is deflected away from adjacent properties and so that it does not interfere with the vision of the motorist along adjacent streets. Flashing or intermittent lights shall not be permitted. Excessive lighting of buildings or structures shall be minimized to reduce light pollution. Street lights that conform to the City of Ionia specifications for street lighting shall be installed within the right-of-way along the streets abutting the parcel. The Planning Commission may, at its discretion, require these same street lights to be installed on the parcel at locations that are close to the street in order to maintain a consistent lighting theme along the City streets.

12. Outside storage areas, including areas for trash storage, shall conform to the regulations contained in Chapter 1060 of these Codified Ordinances.

13. Maneuvering space for trucks using on-site loading areas shall be provided on-premises and shall not necessitate the use of public rights of way.

14. Site Plans shall conform with all applicable requirements of County, State, and Federal statutes, and approval may be conditioned on the applicant receiving necessary County, State, and Federal permits before final site plan approval or any occupancy permits are granted.

Chapter 1274 – Special Land Use Standards

1. Be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained so it will be harmonious and appropriate in appearance with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity and that such use will not significantly change the essential character of the area in which it is proposed.

2. Be adequately served by essential public facilities and services such as highways, streets, police, fire protection, drainage structures, refuse disposal, water and sewage, and schools.

3. Not create excessive additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services.

4. Not involve uses, activities, processes, materials, and equipment or conditions of operation that will be detrimental to any persons, property, or the general welfare because of excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare, or odors.

5. Be consistent with the intent and purpose of the zoning district in which such use will be located.

Planning Commissioner Lee made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Kelley, to approve the site plan and special land use permit for transitional housing located at 848 and 850 E.

Lincoln Avenue. This decision is based on the findings that the proposed use and plan comply with the Site Plan Standards of Chapter 1276 and the Special Land Use Standards of Chapter 1274 of the Code of Ordinances, as detailed and discussed above, subject to the approval by staff of the outstanding items noted below as staff conditions.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

Staff Listed Conditions

1. Approval is conditional on the rezoning of the property by City Council from the B-1, Neighborhood Business District to the HDR, High-Density Residential District.
2. Approval is conditional on the successful application by the applicant to combine 848 and 850 E. Lincoln Avenue into one parcel through the City's Land Division Application.
3. A total of 59 parking spaces are required on the combined parcel. The parking spaces should be striped appropriately to meet the minimum design standards (10' x 18').
4. The applicant shall install a dumpster enclosure for proper screening.
5. The applicant shall meet the requirements of all other applicable ordinances, codes, and requirements of the City of Ionia.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

None.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

(VIII.1.) Selection of Vice-Chairperson

Assistant City Manager Bowman informed the Commission that Mayor Milewski had discovered that Councilmembers are not eligible to serve as Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson after reviewing Section 1202.04 of the City of Ionia Codified Ordinances. Following this discovery, Councilmember Lee, who was elected Vice-Chairperson of the Planning Commission for 2025, stepped down from the role.

Chairperson Bailey indicated that he had spoken to Commissioner Kelley, and she was willing to serve as Vice-Chairperson. Chairperson Bailey opened the floor for nominations.

Planning Commissioner Donaldson made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Swartz, to nominate and elect Commissioner Keturah Kelley as Vice-Chairperson of the Planning Commission.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

(VIII.2.) Draft Amendment to Chapter 1276 - Site Plan Review

Assistant City Manager Bowman introduced a draft ordinance to amend Chapter 1276 "Site Plan Review" of the Zoning Code to align with best practices provided by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) through the Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) program. The changes included removing the requirement for a formal public hearing for uses permitted by right in the Code as well as other minor changes.

Planning Commissioner Donaldson made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Perry, to assign an ordinance number and schedule a public hearing for the next scheduled meeting on Wednesday, May 14 at 4:30 PM at City Hall.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

IX. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Judy Swartz: Commented on the visible progress of the Hale Park improvements.

Jason Perry: Suggested the idea of utilizing community service hours required by court-mandated sentencing for parks clean-up activities.

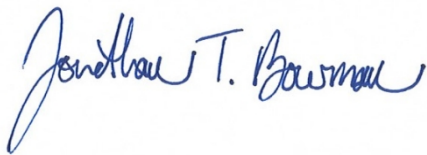
X. ADJOURNMENT

Planning Commissioner Donaldson made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Swartz, to adjourn.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:08 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jonathan T. Bowman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jonathan T. Bowman, Recording Secretary
for Judy Swartz, Secretary