



**CITY OF IONIA
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

4:30 PM, Wednesday, July 9, 2025

IONIA CITY HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBERS

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Bailey called the meeting of the Ionia Planning Commission to order at 4:31 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Roll call revealed a Quorum with Planning Commissioners Logan Bailey, Ryan Gregory, Keturah Kelley, Tim Lee, Jason Perry, and Judy Swartz present. Commissioner Michael Donaldson 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 Perry, to approve the agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(IV.1.) June 11, 2025 – Regular Meeting

Minutes from the regular meeting of June 11 were reviewed. Planning Commissioner Swartz made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Kelley, to approve the June 11, 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 final preliminary site condominium and final site plan review for 520 E. Washington Street.

Chairperson Bailey invited the applicant to speak to the Commission on the proposed site condominium for 520 E. Washington Street.

Patrick Kapenga addressed the Commission, thanking the City for its guidance throughout the development process. He indicated that a solution for the existing water main located on the site had been determined by the City.

Assistant City Manager Bowman highlighted the Master Deed and Bylaws provided by the

applicant for the preliminary review. He noted that the City Attorney had reviewed these documents and requested minor revisions. It was mentioned that the project had been named the Homes of Heritage Row Condominiums. Bowman explained that the City's Department of Public Utilities determined that the water main on the property could be cut and capped at each valve, then abandoned. He told the Commission that the only outstanding item to be corrected by the applicant was the setback discrepancy.

Chairperson Bailey opened the public hearing on the request at 4:38 PM and subsequently closed the public hearing at 4:39 PM after no public comments were made.

A staff report from the City's Planning Consultant was provided to the Commission reviewing all applicable state law and City Code regarding the requested site condominium application, including the Michigan Condominium Act: Section 66 of Act 59 of 1978 – Submittal Requirements as well as Chapter 1272 Site Condominiums Section 1272.05 – Review of Preliminary Plans by the Planning Commission, Section 1224.02 – Preliminary Plat; Require Information, and Chapter 1232 - Improvements from the City of Ionia Codified Ordinances.

Planning Commissioner Lee made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Swartz, to recommend that City Council approve the final site condominium plan for the Homes of Heritage Row Condominiums located at 520 E. Washington Street. The decision was based on the findings that the proposed use and plan complied with Chapter 1272 Site Condominiums and Chapter 1224 Preliminary Plat Application and Review Procedures of the City of Ionia Code of Ordinances, subject to the approval by staff of the outstanding items noted below as staff conditions.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

Staff Listed Conditions

1. The final site plan indicates the direction of storm water flow after finished grade is established, or at least that it is required at the time each new home building application is submitted, to be reviewed by City staff and approved during application for construction.
2. The owner shall install one deciduous street tree in the parkway in front of each unit along E. Washington Street and shall do the same or preserve the existing street trees located along Lafayette Street. The trees must be at least a 2-inch caliper in trunk diameter at the time of planting and be maintained to ensure that any dead or dying trees are promptly replaced, as appropriate.
3. All damaged City sidewalks will be replaced to City specifications and approved by the City.
4. The applicant must finalize the Master Deed with the City Attorney after final site condominium approval by the City Council. The City Attorney must approve the Master Deed before the applicant files it with the Ionia County Register of Deeds. It shall include the updated final site plan as Exhibit B in the Master Deed Document.
5. All approvals from any other local, state, or federal approving agencies must be received before the finalization of the condominium.
6. Coordination with the City of Ionia Department of Public Utilities regarding the abandonment of the water main crossing the western portion of the property.
7. Recording of the Condominium with the County Register of Deeds.

(VI.2.) Public hearing to receive comments on the final site plan review for 421 and 431 W. Lincoln Avenue.

Chairperson Bailey invited the applicant to speak to the Commission on the proposed site plan for 421 and 431 W. Lincoln Avenue.

Aly Bazzi of Bazco Holding LLC addressed the Commission, providing information on the planned redevelopment of 421 and 431 W. Lincoln Avenue into a gas station, convenience store, coffee shop drive-thru, and car wash.

Chairperson Bailey asked Mr. Bazzi if he had contacted the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to review the proposed redevelopment plans.

Mr. Bazzi responded that he had not contacted MDOT yet. He noted that he did not expect major concerns from MDOT, as the redevelopment intends to use the current driveways, but he indicated that his team would contact MDOT after the meeting.

Assistant City Manager Bowman summarized the site plan review conducted by staff on the project. He provided an update from MDOT that the project will be required to conduct a traffic impact study and receive driveway permits, as the project will result in a change of use. MDOT indicated that the site will be a high-volume traffic generator and needs to work harmoniously with both state highways. Bowman highlighted recent changes made to the site plan, which included relocating the underground storage tank, adjusting traffic flow onsite to accommodate more vehicle staking for the car wash, adding pedestrian walkways, and improving the buffering for neighboring residential properties.

Chairperson Bailey opened the public hearing on the request at 5:01 PM.

A letter was provided to all Commissioners from Anoop Development, LLC (428 W. Lincoln Avenue) objecting to the proposed site plan. The letter listed concerns over traffic flow at the intersection of M-21 and M-66 and how the site plan will impact the surrounding area. Anoop Development requested a formal MDOT review of the site plan to evaluate if the increased traffic volume is appropriate for the area.

Jim McKeith (121 N. Dexter Street) of USPP Products expressed concerns about potential car accidents resulting from the proposed site use.

Mark Purkey (703 W. Lincoln Avenue), the owner of a local gas station chain, asked the Planning Commissioners what was needed for the Commission to disapprove of the plan.

Chairperson Bailey closed the public hearing at 5:04 PM.

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 the necessary County, State, and Federal permits before final site plan approval or any occupancy permits are granted.

The Commission discussed the buffering between the adjacent residential uses as an important component of the redevelopment. Consensus was reached that all landscaping requirements outlined in the ordinance should be required. The possibility of tabling the request until a completed MDOT review could be provided was discussed. However, it was determined that there was no need for the plans to be reviewed again by the Commission unless changes to the site plan are made.

Planning Commissioner Swartz made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Kelley, to approve the site plan review for a convenience store, gas station, car wash, and drive-thru establishment at 421 and 431 W. Lincoln Avenue. This decision is based on the findings that the proposed plan complies with the Site Plan Approval Standards of Chapter 1276 as detailed and discussed above, subject to the approval by staff of the conditions and outstanding site plan items, as noted in the staff conditions and additional conditions created by the Planning Commission listed below.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

Staff Listed Conditions

1. A land division application shall be submitted to combine the two separate parcels prior to beginning construction.
2. An easement shall be provided to the City related to the existing storm sewer main located on the property.
3. The applicant shall install 24 additional trees, unless altered or waived by the Commissioners.
4. All landscaping must be installed within three months of the site work and construction completion.
5. Receive any other permits or approvals necessary by any local, state, or federal permitting authority.
6. Best management practices for construction site management shall be maintained at all times because of the volume of traffic that uses this intersection and for the health, safety, and welfare of the motorists, pedestrians, and neighboring property owners.

Additional Planning Commission Conditions

1. If any changes are made to the site plan during MDOT's review, the site plan must be brought back to the Planning Commission.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

None.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

(VIII.1.) Deerfield Business Park Zoning

Assistant City Manager Bowman introduced Ordinance No. 597 to assign the T Technology Innovation Business District zoning classification to 80-acres of property recently purchased by the City of Ionia from the State Land Bank Authority. Bowman explained that the property will be used to develop a future high-tech business park.

Planning Commissioner Kelley made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Perry, to schedule a public hearing regarding Ordinance No. 597 for 4:30 PM, Wednesday, August 13, 2025, at Ionia City Hall.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

(VIII.2.) City of Ionia Master Plan

Planning Consultant Kotrba presented a final draft of the Master Plan to the Planning Commission.

Planning Commissioner Kelley made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Gregory, to recommend that City Council release the Master Plan for the required 63-day public review period.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

IX. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

None.

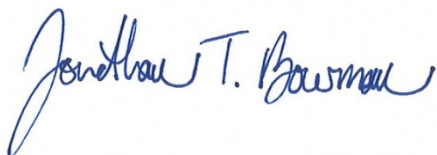
X. ADJOURNMENT

Planning Commissioner Kelley made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Perry, to adjourn.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



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

