



CITY OF IONIA

PLANNING COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

4:30 PM, Wednesday, October 8, 2025

IONIA CITY HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBERS

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairperson Kelley 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 Ryan Gregory, Keturah Kelley, Tim Lee, and Jason Perry present. Commissioners Logan Bailey, Michael Donaldson, and Judy Swartz were absent.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vice Chairperson Kelley introduced the agenda and asked if there were any requested changes. Planning Commissioner Lee 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.) September 11, 2025 – Regular Meeting

Minutes from the regular meeting of September 11, were reviewed. Planning Commissioner Perry made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Lee, to approve the September 11, 2025, meeting minutes as presented.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

VI. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ASSOCIATED ACTION

(VI.1.) City of Ionia 2025-2030 Master Plan

Assistant City Manager Bowman provided background information on the efforts by the Planning Commission and staff to prepare the City of Ionia 2025-2030 Master Plan. Bowman highlighted the robust public engagement throughout the process and several key focus areas of the Plan.

Vice Chairperson Kelley opened the public hearing for comments on the City of Ionia 2025-2030 Master Plan at 4:37 PM and subsequently closed the hearing following no comments from the public at 4:38 PM.

Planning Commissioner Lee made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Gregory, to

approve Planning Commission Resolution 2025-01, which recommends City Council approval and adoption of the City of Ionia 2025-2030 Master Plan.

MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.



**CITY OF IONIA
PLANNING COMMISSION
COUNTY OF IONIA, MICHIGAN
RESOLUTION 2025-01**

A RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING ADOPTION OF THE PROPOSED CITY OF IONIA MASTER PLAN TO THE CITY COUNCIL AND CONSTITUTING PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVAL OF SUCH MASTER PLAN

At a regular meeting of the City of Ionia Planning Commission held on October 8, 2025, at 4:30 PM, in the Council Chambers at Ionia City Hall, 114 N. Kidd Street, Ionia, Michigan, there were:

PRESENT: Ryan Gregory, Keturah Kelley, Tim Lee, and Jason Perry

ABSENT: Logan Bailey, Michael Donaldson, and Judy Swartz

The following resolution was offered for adoption by Planning Commissioner Lee and seconded by Planning Commissioner Gregory:

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, MCL 125.3801 et seq. (“MPEA”) authorizes the Planning Commission to prepare a Master Plan for the use, development, and preservation of all lands in the City; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission prepared a Master Plan and submitted such plan to the City Council for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, on Wednesday, August 6, 2025, the Ionia City Council received and reviewed the proposed Master Plan prepared by the Planning Commission and authorized distribution of the Master Plan to the Notice Group entities identified in the MPEA; and

WHEREAS, notice was provided to the Notice Group entities as provided in the MPEA; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on today’s date to consider public comment on the proposed Master Plan, and to further review and comment on the proposed Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds that the proposed Master Plan is desirable, proper, and reasonable and furthers the use, preservation, and development goals and strategies of the City;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

1. ***Approval of Proposed Master Plan.*** The Planning Commission approves the proposed Master Plan, including all of the chapters, figures, descriptive matters, maps, and tables

contained therein.

2. ***Distribution to City Council.*** Pursuant to MCL 125.3843, the City Council has asserted by resolution its right to approve or reject the proposed Master Plan and therefore, the approval granted herein is not the final step for adoption of the plan as provided in MCL 125.3843. In addition, the Planning Commission hereby approves distribution of the proposed Master Plan to the City Council. The Planning Commission respectfully recommends that the City Council give final approval and adoption of the proposed Master Plan.
3. ***Findings of Fact.*** The Planning Commission has made the foregoing determination based on a review of existing land uses in the City, a review of the existing Master Plan provisions and maps, and input received from the City Council and at the public hearing, as well as the assistance of a professional planning group. The Planning Commission also finds that the proposed Master Plan will accurately reflect and implement the City's goals and strategies for the use, preservation, and development of lands within the City of Ionia.
4. ***Effective Date.*** The Master Plan will be effective upon adoption by the Ionia City Council.

PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION 2025-01 DECLARED ADOPTED.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

None.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

(VIII.1.) Final Site Plan Review for 283 S. Steele Street - Little Learners Child Care Center Assistant City Manager Bowman introduced the site plan review application submitted by Ms. Karie Robbins to convert 283 S. Steele Street into a child care facility. He provided feedback from Public Safety that the plan would need to be approved by the Michigan Bureau of Fire Service because of the intended use. Bowman also reported that the Department of Public Utilities did not have any concerns with the site plans besides informing the property owner that a stormwater sewer main crosses the southeast corner of the property.

Planning Consultant Kotrba reviewed the site plan review standards found in Section 1276.07 with the Commission. Kotrba noted questions related to landscaping, lighting, and dumpster screening for the Commission to address with the applicant. He indicated that remaining standards were met or could be addressed through conditions.

Vice Chairperson Kelley invited Karie Robbins and Kayla Hull to address the Planning Commission on their proposal. Robbins indicated that they would meet all landscaping requirements from the City. She also explained that she has been in communication with the Michigan Bureau of Fire Service and submitted plans for approval. Robbins noted that preliminary approval has already been received, and a final approval would be issued upon inspection by the Bureau after the renovations are completed. She responded to the question on waste management by indicating that if a dumpster is needed, it will be properly screened and placed at the back of the property, otherwise the typical carts will be used. Robbins mentioned that existing lighting locations would be utilized with upgraded fixtures.

Bowman requested further explanation of the intended business plan for operations.

Robbins responded with details on the improvements being made, which included HVAC, siding, fencing, playground, and striping of the parking lot. She indicated that 26–30 children would be enrolled dependent on licensing with the potential for more with a building expansion in the next few years.

Commissioner Lee asked about the hours of operation and the busy drop-off and pick-up time periods. He indicated that Matcor operates a third shift and creates the most traffic at 7:00 AM and 3:00 PM.

Ms. Hull explained that operations would be between 6:00 AM and 6:00 PM with drop-off between 6:00 and 9:00 AM and pick-up between 3:30 and 6:00 PM. Robbins added that each parent would have a set time frame for drop-off and pick-up to keep it manageable for staff. Hull shared that in her experience there are not more than 3 or 4 children being dropped off at one time.

Commissioner Lee asked when the applicant plans on opening.

Robbins said they are targeting a January 2026 opening.

Planning Commissioner Lee made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Perry, to approve the site plan review for a child care center at 283 S. Steele Street, based on the findings that the proposed plan complies with the Site Plan Approval Standards of Chapter 1276 as discussed and 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. The appropriate landscaping is installed within three months of the site work and construction completion per the requirements of Section 1286.02, which include:
 - a. Two canopy trees, two ornamental trees, and two evergreen trees are installed along the Steele Street road frontage.
 - b. The perimeter of the parking lot area has at least two canopy trees installed.
2. That any existing or proposed lighting be installed and maintained in accordance with Section 1286.03.
3. The outdoor dumpster location is adequately sized and screened in order to maintain a neat and orderly site and prevent vermin from entering the dumpster.
4. That any proposed signage receives a review and approval under Chapter 1284 as required per the City of Ionia Zoning Ordinance.
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 for the health, safety, and welfare of the motorists, pedestrians, and neighboring property owners.

Planning Commission Conditions

1. Documentation must be provided to the City indicating approval from the Michigan Bureau of Fire Services.

(VIII.2.) Ordinance Amendment - Special Land Uses

Assistant City Manager Bowman introduced an ordinance amendment to allow parking as an accessory use to an adjacent lot through the Special Land Use process in the B-3, General Business District. The ordinance would create Section 1274.10 and amend Section 1260.03. He explained that this change was drafted by the City Attorney following an inquiry to allow parking as an accessory use to a primary use on an adjacent property located in Ionia Township.

The Commission had several questions on the proposed ordinance and expressed concerns about unintended consequences caused by this change for other properties in the B-3 District. Commissioners also requested that the City Attorney evaluate a maximum threshold on the permitted accessory use.

Planning Commissioner Perry made a motion, seconded by Planning Commissioner Lee, to assign an ordinance number and schedule a public hearing for the next Planning Commission meeting at Ionia City Hall on Wednesday, November 12 at 4:30 PM.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

IX. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

None.

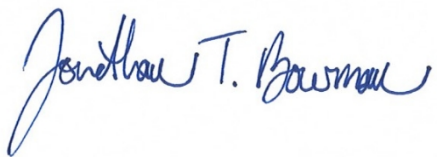
X. ADJOURNMENT

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

MOTION Carried BY VOICE VOTE.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:22 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



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