

**CITY OF IONIA**  
**Planning Commission**  
**March 13, 2024**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Bailey called the Regular Meeting of the City of Ionia Planning Commission for March 13, 2024, to order at 4:31 PM.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Logan Bailey, Mike Donaldson, Ryan Gregory, Keturah Kelley, Tim Lee, Jason Perry, and Judy Swartz.

Absent: None.

Also Present: City Manager Precia Garland, Assistant to the City Manager Jonathan Bowman, Planning Consultant Bradley Kotrba, Tim McAllister of the Daily News, applicant Greg Cook, applicant Rodney Hensley, and several community members.

**OATH OF OFFICE**

Assistant to the City Manager Jonathan Bowman administered the oath of office to Commissioner Keturah Kelley for a reappointed term on the Planning Commission.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chairperson Bailey introduced the agenda and asked if there were any requested changes. No changes were requested. It was moved by Commissioner Donaldson and seconded by Commissioner Lee to approve the agenda as presented. MOTION CARRIED.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the regular meeting of February 14, 2024, were reviewed. It was moved by Gregory, seconded by Perry to approve the minutes from February 14. MOTION CARRIED.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Public Hearing to receive comments on the site condominium plan and Ordinance No. 584 to amend Chapter 1285: AC Development Planned Unit Development (PUD) District located at 533 East Washington Street

Consultant Kotrba provided a summary of the request and reviewed the City requirements found in Chapter 1272 Site Condominiums Section 1272.05 – Review of Preliminary Plans by the Planning Commission and Section 1224.02 – Preliminary Plat; Required Information. Kotrba also reviewed Section 66 of Act 59 of 1978 – Submittal Requirements from the Michigan Condominium Act. Based on the review, Consultant Kotrba provided the following recommendations for the request if approval was to be considered.

1. The applicant shall meet the requirements of all other applicable ordinances, codes, and requirements of the City of Ionia.
2. Payment is submitted to City Hall for the site condominium application.
3. All previously approved AC PUD elements and conditions will remain in effect.
4. All approvals from any other local, state, or federal approving agencies must be received before the finalization of the condominium.
5. Approval from the City of Ionia Department of Public Utilities with regard to water and sanitary sewer connection as outlined and planned in the attached utility plans.
6. Recording of the Condominium and PUD with the County Register of Deeds.

Chairperson Bailey opened the floor for public comments at 4:38 PM. Following no comments Chairperson Bailey closed the public hearing at 4:39 PM.

Moved by Lee and seconded by Donaldson to recommend that City Council approve the final site condominium plan and Ordinance Number 584 to amend Chapter 1285: AC Development Planned Unit Development (PUD) District located at 533 East Washington Street. This decision is based on the findings that the proposed use and plan comply with Chapter 1272 Site Condominiums and Chapter 1224 Preliminary Plat Application and Review Procedures of the City of Ionia Code of Ordinances, as detailed and discussed above, subject to the staff listed conditions noted above, the approval by staff of all outstanding items, and the following additional conditions created by the Planning Commission based on the recommendation from the City Attorney.

1. Master Deed, Article III- Definitions

Definition r, PUD approval will need to insert, “as well as any subsequent amendments to the PUD or ordinances pertaining to it approved by the City Council” added at the end since you are planning to amend the Ordinance.

2. Master Deed, Article XIII- Section 8.4 (b)

Small insertion of “legal proceedings or” between the current “any litigation” to match the subtitle.

3. Master Deed, Article IX – Easements (for consistency and ease of use for the document)

Move the title/header of “Easements for Maintenance and Repair” from 9.1 back to 9.1(a), add the title/header of “Easements for Emergencies & Installation of Public Utilities” at 9.1, and add the subtitle/header of “Easements for Governmental Entities” at 9.1 (b).

MOTION CARRIED.

Public Hearing to receive comments on rezoning 310 Cleveland Street from B-1 Neighborhood Business District to I-1 Light Industrial District. The aforementioned rezoning would be enacted through proposed Ordinance No. 585.

Consultant Kotrba provided a summary of the request and reviewed the following analysis with the Planning Commission.

A. Can the property be reasonably used under its present zoning classification?

The existing parcel contains large commercial buildings that have been used as an auto glass shop for decades. The Zoning Board of Appeals determined that this property is unlikely to ever receive a reasonable permitted land use in the present B-1 Neighborhood Business District. Also, that the proposed use would create no greater negative impact on the surrounding neighborhood and that the variance was reasonable.

B. Is the proposed use compatible with other zoning and land uses?

The primary use of the property will remain commercial in nature and the land bordering the south of this property is presently zoned light industrial and therefore will not create a spot zoning issue.

C. Is the location proposed appropriate for the range of industrial uses permitted?

Some industrial uses will have little or no impact on the surrounding area and heavier industrial land uses are permitted only through special use approval. However, the Planning Commission must take into consideration that a rezoning will open the property up to all permitted and special use land uses in the industrial district in the future, even after the applicant may have moved on to another location.

D. Is the proposed use and rezoning consistent with development trends in the area?

The land zoned to the south is zoned light industrial, however, the likelihood of that land developing into usable property is slim. The majority of that land is agricultural land in the floodplain and the remains of the old City landfill.

E. Is the proposed rezoning consistent with both policies and the uses offered for that area in the City of Ionia Master Plan?

The 2019 Master Plan plans to use this site and some nearby property for commercial uses and some nearby property used as industrial. However, also mentioned was the fact that the Zoning Board of Appeals took this use into consideration and recognized that this parcel was in a unique situation, because it has been an established commercial/industrial property for many years and was principally located nearby a residential district. Therefore, this property wouldn't be reasonable to zone it residential and the Planning Commission at the time felt that zoning it industrial (as the nearby property is zoned) may be too intensive.

Chairperson Bailey opened the floor for public comments at 4:48 PM.

Gordon Kelley of 931 W. Main Street commented that the proposed use would be a great use of the property and would allow the Sozo Coffee business to grow. As a former Planning Commissioner and Councilmember, he sees no disadvantage to the rezoning.

The applicant, Rodney Hensley, of 924 Hackett Street commented that he is preparing for the future and wants to remove the nonconforming status through the proper process. The rezoning would allow for future growth.

Following the comments, Chairperson Bailey closed the public hearing at 4:51 PM.

It was moved by Kelley and seconded by Swartz to recommend City Council approves the rezoning of 310 Cleveland Street from the B-1, Neighborhood Business District to the I-1, Light Industrial District through Ordinance No. 585. MOTION CARRIED.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### Zoning Map Discussion

Assistant to the City Manager Bowman and Consultant Kotrba presented several maps to the Commission indicating the existing number of residentially zoned nonconforming parcels in the City based on lot width, lot size, and use. Additional maps indicated how many nonconformities would continue to exist if the proposed residential zoning updates under consideration of the Commission were to be approved.

The Commission discussed the maps. A consensus was reached that the maps provide a helpful visual that can be discussed further following the workshop session on the proposed residential zoning updates.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

None.

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Chairperson Bailey welcomed Commissioner Kelley back to the Planning Commission.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Commissioner Kelley and seconded by Commissioner Gregory to adjourn the meeting at 5:16 PM. MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully Submitted,

Precia Garland, Recording Secretary,  
for Judy Swartz, Secretary