

CITY OF IONIA
Planning Commission
August 14, 2024
Regular Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Lee called the Regular Meeting of the City of Ionia Planning Commission for August 14, 2024, to order at 4:30 PM.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Commissioners Logan Bailey and Keturah Kelley.

Also Present: City Manager Precia Garland, Assistant City Manager Jonathan Bowman, Planning Consultant Bradley Kotrba, and DDA Director Linda Curtis.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the regular meeting of July 10, 2024, were reviewed. It was moved by Swartz, seconded by Perry to approve the minutes from July 10. MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

Final Site Plan Review for Enwork Building Expansion at 510 Apple Tree Drive

Assistant City Manager Bowman noted that the public hearing for the site plan was held at the last Planning Commission meeting. Planning Consultant Kotrba updated the Commission on the changes made to the site plan since the last meeting which include additional landscaping, designation of future parking expansion, and the locations for the fire department connection and water shut off valve.

The Planning Commission reviewed the following standards.

Chapter 1276 – Site Plan Approval Standards

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 reasonable visual and sound privacy for all dwelling units. Fences, walls, barriers, and landscaping shall be used, as appropriate, 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.

It was moved by Donaldson and seconded by Gregory to approve the site plan review for a building expansion at 510 Apple Tree Drive. This decision is based on the findings that the proposed plan complies with the Site Plan Approval Standards of Chapter 1276 as detailed above, subject to the approval by staff of the resolution of the remaining site plan issues as noted in the staff conditions listed below.

1. No demolition or earthwork shall be undertaken on the site until a building permit has been issued consistent with this site plan approval.
2. The applicant must have paid all application, permit, and other fees related to this request before any permits are issued.

3. The Planning Commission will reduce the amount of required off-street parking as permitted under Section 1282.04 if the applicant supplies a written explanation for the reasoning for lowering the total amount of required parking spaces along with providing the referenced plan for future parking expansion.
4. Building materials shall be compatible with the existing buildings on the site.
5. The City's Departments of Public Safety and Utilities shall administratively approve the locations for the fire department connection and water shut off valve.
6. The applicant shall meet the requirements of all other applicable ordinances, codes, and requirements of the City of Ionia.

MOTION CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS

None.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Assistant City Manager Bowman gave a reminder that the last Master Plan community engagement event will be an open house at City Hall on Thursday, August 15 from 4:00-7:00 PM. He thanked the Commission for their involvement throughout the robust period of public engagement.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner Perry and seconded by Commissioner Swartz to adjourn the meeting at 4:45 PM. MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully Submitted,

Jonathan Bowman, Recording Secretary,
for Judy Swartz, Secretary