

CITY OF IONIA
Planning Commission
November 13, 2024
Regular Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Bailey called the Regular Meeting of the City of Ionia Planning Commission for November 13, 2024, to order at 4:30 PM.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Commissioners Mike Donaldson.

Also Present: City Manager Precia Garland, Assistant City Manager Jonathan Bowman, DDA Director Linda Curtis, Steve Witte (Nederveld), Planning Consultant Bradley Kotrba, Maleah Rakestraw (Williams and Works), Tim McAllister (Daily News), and members of the public.

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 Lee and seconded by Commissioner Kelley to approve the agenda as presented. MOTION CARRIED.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the regular meeting of October 9 and special meeting of October 21 were reviewed. It was moved by Swartz, seconded by Perry to approve the minutes from October 9 and 21. MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public Hearing to receive comments on the Final Site Plan request submitted by Mark Purkey, LLC. for an expansion to the existing gas station at 703 W. Lincoln

Assistant City Manager Bowman and Consultant Kotrba introduced the site plan and reminded the Commission that the site plan was previously approved in 2022 and the approval expired in 2024. Changes from the previously approved plan were highlighted.

Steve Witte represented the applicant as engineer for the project. He addressed Planning Commission and answered questions on the site plan.

The proximity of the northern State Street driveway to the M-21 intersection was the main topic of concern for the Commission. Witte commented that the design intended to utilize the existing driveway location along State Street. He further explained that moving the driveway south would result in an increased slope for the driveway. Commissioners discussed the increased slope as it pertained to winter road conditions as well as the

proximity of the parcel to a nearby school resulting in the need for pedestrian and vehicular safety near the intersection. Potential on-site signage was also discussed.

Chairperson Bailey opened the public hearing to receive comments from the floor at 4:55 PM and closed the public hearing at 4:55 PM following no comments.

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.

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.

Moved by Commissioner Kelley and seconded by Commissioner Gregory to approve the site plan review for an expanded gas station at 703 W. Lincoln Avenue. This decision was based on the findings that the proposed plan complied with the Site Plan Approval Standards of Chapter 1276 as detailed and discussed above. Approval was conditioned on the applicant relocating the northern most driveway on State Street to the south and approval by staff of the conditions listed below.

Staff Listed Conditions

1. All landscaping must be installed according to the Ordinance within three months of the site work and construction completion.
2. The applicant must comply with local, state, and federal laws, and all applicable permits and fees shall be obtained or paid before the work begins.
3. MDOT approval of the site plan, and all new information for an MDOT-approved site plan will be submitted to the City for administrative approval.
4. The applicant must submit a letter of approval from the County Drain Commissioner in regards to the drainage for the site.
5. 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.

MOTION CARRIED

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Master Plan – Housing and Downtown Development Planning Workshop

Consulting firm Williams and Works led Planning Commission in a workshop session focused on Housing and Downtown Development for the Master Plan.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner Swartz and seconded by Commissioner Perry to adjourn the meeting at 6:42 PM. MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully Submitted,

Jonathan Bowman, Recording Secretary,
for Judy Swartz, Secretary