



LANSING PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
March 4, 2025 - 6:30 p.m.
Neighborhood Empowerment Center
600 W Maple Street, Lansing, MI

MINUTES – *Approved 6/3/2025*

1. OPENING SESSION

Mr. Hovey called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

- a. Present: Katie Alexander, Josh Hovey, Monte Jackson, Tim Klont, Shane Muchmore, Ted O'Dell, John Ruge
- b. Absent: Tony Cox (excused)
- c. Staff: Erin Buitendorp, Development Division Manager; Doris Witherspoon, Senior Planner; Andy Fedewa, Planner

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – The agenda was approved by unanimous consent

3. COMMUNICATIONS –

An email from Eastside Community Action Center on support for the downpayment assistance funding amount in the Annual Action Plan and a suggestion to reduce the property tax burden for non-profit property developers and to make them exempt from municipal permitting fees.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS & ITEMS FOR ACTION

A. City of Lansing Annual Action Plan, Proposed Funding Allocations FY 2025-2026

Ms. Witherspoon spoke on the City's funding strategy with the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership (HOME), and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) programs through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) each year.

Ms. Witherspoon reviewed the estimated funding amounts for various projects under each program such as, but not limited to, homeowner housing rehabilitation, rental unit rehabilitation, down payment assistance, housing construction, homelessness prevention, and shelter operations. As in previous years, the presented numbers are based on an expectation that they will follow last year's amounts so the final funding amounts may differ slightly.

Mr. O'Dell spoke on his support to increase the amount for blight removal from \$1,000. Ms. Witherspoon stated that the amount last year was greater than \$1,000 and that should have been reflected with the numbers presented. The Development Office will forward corrected amounts to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Jackson asked for the record, who was the point of contact for these programs. Ms. Buitendorp introduced herself as the new Manager of the Development Office in the Economic Development and Planning Department and stated that any call for information or applications would be handled through their office.

Ms. Witherspoon mentioned that there is an odd amount under the Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) heading. They believe that there was extra money from HUD that was distributed to all entitlement grantees.

Mr. Hovey opened the public hearing.

Clinton Mireles, spoke on his support to include neighborhood cleanups under Blight funding, especially in lower-income neighborhoods.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Mr. Hovey closed the public hearing.

Mr. Ruge made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to recommend approval of City of Lansing Annual Action Plan, Proposed Funding Allocation FY 2025-2026.

On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

B. Form-Based Zoning, Code, Second Amendment, Zoning Map revision

Mr. Fedewa stated that during on-going discussions with the City Council Committee on Development and Planning, it was brought to the attention of Planning and Zoning Office staff that most of the neighborhood bounded by S Holmes St. (west), E Kalamazoo St. (north), Mifflin Ave. (east), and I-496 (south), that had been zoned R-6a Residential, was marked as R-3 (renamed from R-6b).

The main difference between R-6a and R-6b is the total allowable number of dwelling units. R-6a allows for one detached house while R-6b allows for six dwelling units in one principal structure.

Staff only intended to combine the number of zoning districts with few or no differences between them and to not to “upzone” any area without a change to the future land use map and more input from residents and stakeholders.

To make the map easier to understand and administer, the second amendment to the zoning ordinance proposes to combine R-1, R-2, and R-3 into one district (R-1). R-4, R-5, and R-6a would be condensed (R-2). And R-6b would be separate and renamed (R-3)

Due to this mapping error staff has resubmitted the proposed zoning map for public hearing and Planning Commission recommendation.

Mr. Jackson asked why R-6 was split into two subcategories. Mr. Fedewa answered that under the old code there was only “A”, “A-1” and “B” districts for single-family. “C” allowed for two-family dwellings (duplexes). The original developers of the form-based zoning code created unnecessary distinctions that resulted in six single-family districts. “C” districts became “R-6b” and the allowable number of units was increased from two to six to correspond with the contemporary concept of ‘missing-middle housing’, that is two-to-six unit dwellings that maintain similar exteriors, massing, and site layouts in denser, urban neighborhoods. Mr. Fedewa stated that having seven districts is confusing, which is the purpose of the change.

Mr. Hovey opened the public hearing.

Joan Nelson, spoke on behalf of the Shared Housing Network and stated the group’s continued support for the second amendment’s changes to allow for more housing choices.

Christopher Greene-Szmadzinski spoke on his support for the second amendment and the ADU amendment.

Mike Dombrowski, spoke on his support for the second amendment and the ADU amendment.

Fred McLaughlin, requested that staff and the Planning Commission remove the requirement for off-street parking minimums from the zoning ordinance.

Clinton Mireles, spoke on the number of vacant parcels in the Urbandale neighborhood and his support for in-fill housing development.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Mr. Hovey closed the public hearing.

Mr. Muchmore asked for an update on the other proposed zoning changes. Mr. Fedewa clarified that this public hearing is only to recommend approval of the revision to the zoning map in Chapter 1242. The boarder set of changes staff has called the ‘second amendment’ was approved by Planning Commission June 2024 and still with the Committee on Development and Planning until the proposed map is reviewed by Planning Commission. The amendment that would allow for ADUs city-wide has been held until the second amendment is ultimately voted on by Council.

Mr. O’Dell made a motion, seconded by Ms. Alexander to recommend approval of Form-Based Zoning, Code, Second Amendment, Zoning Map revision.

On a voice vote the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

5. **COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE** – None

6. **RECESS** – Not taken.

7. **BUSINESS**

A. **Consent Items**

(1) Minutes for approval: January 7, 2025

The minutes from the January 7, 2025 Planning Commission meetings were approved without objection.

B. **Old Business** – None

C. **New Business**

(1) **Act-1-2025, Monticello Drive, Street Vacation**

Mr. Fedewa introduced the request to vacate a section of Monticello Dr. south of Coachlight Common St. This stub was a platted outlot running 112’ and used to connect the subdivision to the north and the apartment complex to the south when they were built 1969 – 1971. The street was closed off with a fence some time between 1986 and 1992. The Planning and Zoning Office does not have a contemporary

account of the reasoning for the closure, but today there are complaints regarding trash, illegal dumping, vandalism, and trespassing connected to this area. Two sidewalks connect the two areas and although the old fence had closed off pedestrian access it is damaged which allows for free passage on foot.

Mr. Fedewa stated that because the outlot has buildable dimensions the City explored the sale of the property for residential development, but there is a sewer drain running through the property which makes it unbuildable. The Public Service Department plans to remove the street surface, close the curb-cut, lay down fill soil, and plant turf grass. As with other street vacations, the resulting land will be split and attached to the adjoining residential properties to the east and west.

Mr. Hovey stated that closing this connection may make the neighborhood less walkable. There is only one street outlet to S Waverly Rd. and one to W Miller Rd. Mr. Fedewa stated that that is a valid concern, but staff is supportive of the vacation request because this point does not lead to a commercial or service use and the access has been a complaint from the neighbors.

Mr. Ruge commented that access probably was not intended for the area due to the fence closing it off.

Mr. Muchmore made a motion, seconded by Mr. O'Dell, to recommend approval of Act-1-2025, Monticello Drive, Street Vacation, as proposed. On a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously (7-0).

8. REPORT FROM PLANNING & ZONING OFFICE – None

9. COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON – None

10. COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS –

Mr. Ruge stated that the demolition of old Eastern High School had started that afternoon and let the commission members know that there was an emergency meeting held by the Committee to Preserve Historic Eastern and Promote Mental Health at Reno's North that night.

11. PENDING ITEMS: FUTURE ACTION REQUIRED – None

12. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.