



Andy Schor
Mayor

LANSING PLANNING BOARD

Regular Meeting

December 7, 2021

6:30 p.m.

Neighborhood Empowerment Center 600 W Maple St.

MINUTES – *Approved 2/1/22*

1. OPENING SESSION

Mr. Hovey called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

- a. Present: Dr. Farhan Bhatti, Marta Cerna, Tony Cox, Josh Hovey, Thomas Morgan, John Ruge
- b. Absent: Katie Alexander (excused), Monte Jackson (excused)
- c. Staff: Sue Stachowiak, Andy Fedewa, Barb Kimmel, Doris Witherspoon
- d. Consultants: Amanda Warner, Carly Keough – Wade Trim

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA –

Planning & Zoning staff requested that Act-9-2021 be referred to and voted on as Act-1-2020 to conform to City Council records.

Ms. Witherspoon stated that the FY 2022-26 Consolidated Plan is just on the agenda for a public hearing and should be removed from the consent items.

The revised Agenda was approved without objection.

3. COMMUNICATIONS –

- Letter of support for Act-1-2020 from Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Email regarding Act-1-2020, noise and the condition of Sparrow Hospital properties from the Eastfield Neighborhood Association
- Email regarding Act-1-2020, noise and the condition of Sparrow Hospital properties from Shannon and Todd Branstner
- Email regarding Act-1-2020, noise and the condition of Sparrow Hospital properties from Amy Arguello and Fidel Maureira

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS –

A. FY 2022-26, Consolidated Plan Public Hearing – CDBG, HOME, and ESG Resources

Ms. Witherspoon introduced the FY 2022-2026 Consolidated Plan. The five year plan assess affordable housing, market conditions, and community development needs within the City. The City's Development Office conducts numerous public meetings to gather feedback and will hold two public hearings at the Planning Board. Ms. Witherspoon introduced Amanda Warner, Wade Trim, as one of the consultants assisting the City.

[\[The Five-Year Consolidated Plan introductory presentation slides are available upon request\]](#)

Ms. Warner gave a presentation about the Five-Year Plan and detailed the funds the City receives from the Federal government through the Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnerships, and Emergency Solutions Grant programs. The Five-Year Plan strategizes how to utilize this funding for community development goals.

Ms. Warner detailed the programs the funds are used for in the City, such as homebuyer assistance, affordable home construction, supportive services, houseless outreach and

prevention, and emergency shelter operations. Ms. Warner shared various ways for the public to submit feedback.

Chairperson Ruge opened the Public Hearing.

Seeing no one wishing to speak, Chairperson Ruge closed the Public Hearing.

B. SLU-2-2021, Special Land Use Permit for Electrical Substation, 5411 Wise Rd.

Ms. Stachowiak stated this is a request from the Lansing Board of Water and Light (BWL) to construct a new electric power substation, to replace the existing substation on the subject property.

The subject property is owned by BWL but zoned R-2 Residential so a Special Land Use Permit is necessary to build a new electrical power substation. Construction work will require that numerous trees be removed, there will be mature trees surrounding the substation compound area to provide proper screening. Additional evergreen trees will be planted to fill in any gaps. No residential properties are adjacent to the subject property. Ms. Stachowiak referred Planning Board members to the renderings of the project in their packet. The project will go through the standard site plan review process.

Tony Heriford, Lansing Board of Water & Light, thanked Ms. Stachowiak for her introduction of the request and the Planning Board for their consideration of the new substation.

Chairperson Ruge opened the Public Hearing.

Seeing no one wishing to speak, Chairperson Ruge closed the Public Hearing.

5. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE –

Jennie Gies, Ferguson Street, spoke about the noise from the mechanical equipment on the Sparrow Hospital property that affects the neighborhoods in the area. She also spoke about Sparrow owning multiple residential houses along Ferguson and Jerome Streets that are left vacant and not being maintained which is having negative impacts on the neighborhood. Ms. Gies shared an audio recording of the mechanical equipment.

Michael Caine, Jerome Street, spoke about his involvement in the Lansing Intentional Community and requested information about the Consolidated Plan from the Development Office.

Chris Thompson, Jerome St. spoke on the amount of trash that blows over from Sparrow Hospital into the Eastfield neighborhood and the noise from the mechanical equipment that affects the neighborhoods around it. Mr. Thompson recommended that Board Members visit a website for more evidence and information.

Xiaoyu Yin, Jerome Street, President of the Eastfield Neighborhood Association, spoke about the noise of mechanical equipment from Sparrow Hospital and the amount of residential houses along Ferguson and Jerome streets that are being left vacant and not maintained after Sparrow purchased them.

Margaret Tassaro, Horton Avenue, spoke about the noise of mechanical equipment from Sparrow Hospital that effects the neighborhoods around it and suggested Sparrow be more mindful and install green infrastructure to mitigate the noise pollution.

Rebecca Anthony, Jerome Street. spoke about the level of noise pollution coming from the mechanical equipment on the Sparrow Hospital property and reiterated her neighbor's previous comments.

Amy Argueilo, Jerome Street spoke about the noise from the mechanical equipment on the Sparrow Hospital property and the amount of residential houses along Ferguson and Jerome streets that are being left vacant

and not being maintained after Sparrow purchased them. Ms. Argueilo shared a video recording of the noise from the mechanical equipment.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Chairperson Ruge closed the Public Comment portion.

6. **RECESS** – Not taken

7. **BUSINESS**

Mr. Hovey requested that SLU-2-2021 be removed from the consent agenda. **Mr. Morgan moved, seconded by Dr. Bhatti, to remove SLU-2-2021 from the consent agenda. On a voice vote, the motion carried.**

A. Consent Items

(1) Minutes for approval: November 3, 2021

The minutes from the November 3, 2021 Planning Board meeting were approved without objection.

B. Old Business – None

C. New Business –

(1) SLU-2-2021, Special Land Use Permit for an Electrical Substation, 5411 Wise Road.

Dr. Bhatti made a motion, seconded by Mr. Morgan to approve SLU-2-2021, Special Land Use Permit for an Electrical Substation at 5411 Wise Road.

Mr. Hovey declared a potential conflict of interest and his desire to abstain from the vote.

On a roll call vote the motion carried (5-0). Mr. Hovey abstained based upon a conflict of interest. Mr. Hovey explained that the Board of Water & Light is a client of the firm that he works for.

(2) Act-1-2020, Jerome Street. N. Holmes Street Vacations

Mr. Fedewa reminded the Planning Board that at the July 2020 regular meeting they heard a request from Sparrow Health Systems to vacate that portion of Jerome Street between N. Holmes Street and N. Pennsylvania Avenue and vacate that portion of N. Holmes Street between Jerome Street and E. Michigan Avenue. He said that Sparrow Hospital owns all of the properties on both sides of these stretches of road and would like control of the rights-of-way for redevelopment purposes. The Board found that the request could be granted since these streets only serve the hospital and thus, the vacation would not have a detrimental impact on the transportation circulation network in the area. Mr. Fedewa explained that while the Planning Board's previous Act-1-2020 recommendation still stands, City Council had requested that the entire process be repeated since the resolution for the vacation has expired.

Mr. Fedewa noted that this has provided an opportunity to refine the staff's recommended conditions in consultation with the Public Service Department as follows:

- Sparrow Health Systems shall enter into maintenance agreements for the traffic signals at Jerome Street & N. Pennsylvania Avenue and at Holmes Street and E. Michigan Avenue,

- The street light agreement (for Jerome Street) with the Board of Water and Light shall be transferred to Sparrow Health Systems,
- The public sanitary sewers and public storm sewers that provide service to the vacated areas only shall be transferred to Sparrow Health Systems for perpetual ownership, operation, maintenance, and replacement,
- The non-motorized transportation access along Jerome Street, between N. Pennsylvania Avenue and N. Holmes Street will be preserved,
- Easements for other existing utilities (water, electric, street lighting, communications) shall be reserved,
- The agreement with ACD for their cell network antenna will need to be transferred to or renegotiated with Sparrow.

Staci Bakkegard, Executive Director of Facilities, Sparrow Health Systems, stated that there was just a timeframe issue with finalizing the resolution, but all aspects of the request are the same as last summer. Sparrow Health Systems agrees with City staff's recommended conditions and has already finalized or is in the process of wrapping up all of them.

Chairperson Ruge asked if Sparrow has any plans for the residential block and houses that have been referenced by the public. Ms. Bakkegard replied that currently Sparrow does not have final plans for them.

Mr. Morgan asked for details about a noise mitigation plan. Ms. Bakkegard stated that the equipment that Sparrow is installing is quieter and more efficient. She spoke briefly about the temporary unit at the professional building during summer 2021. The pandemic-induced supply chain issue delayed equipment installation far longer than they had anticipated. The Central Utility building will also see upgrades during future redevelopment. Mr. Morgan asked if the updated equipment will be within the allowable City decibel level. Ms. Bakkegard replied that Sparrow can provide equipment specifications to the Board.

Mr. Morgan requested that Sparrow provide the results of any noise level tests that the Hospital has conducted during the last four years, if available. Ms. Bakkegard answered that she will provide any results that they can find.

Mr. Morgan asked when Sparrow Hospital first became aware of noise complaints. Ms. Bakkegard answered that to her knowledge they do not have any records of complaints made to the Hospital. Mr. Morgan stated that he remembers making a complaint himself four years ago.

Mr. Morgan made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cox, to recommend approval of Act-1-2020 - Jerome St., N Holmes St. Street Vacations, with the following conditions:

- Sparrow Health Systems shall enter into maintenance agreements for the traffic signals at Jerome St. & Pennsylvania Ave. and at Holmes St. & E Michigan Ave.,
- The street light agreement (for Jerome St.) with the Board of Water and Light shall be transferred to Sparrow Health Systems,
- The public sanitary sewers and public storm sewers that provide service to only the vacated area shall be transferred to Sparrow Health Systems for perpetual ownership, operation, maintenance and replacement,
- The non-motorized access along Jerome, from Pennsylvania to Holmes will be preserved,

- Easements for other existing utilities (water, electric, street lighting, communications) shall be reserved, and
- The agreement with ACD for their cell network antenna be transferred to/renegotiated with Sparrow Health Systems.

And with Planning Board Member Morgan's recommended conditions:

- Keep current and future Sparrow Hospital building operations at or below 55 decibels per the City's noise ordinance, Ordinance 654.07,
- Maintain the current road diverter at Jerome St. and N Holmes St.,
- Invest in green infrastructure along Sparrow Hospital's borders with residential neighborhoods, in accordance of City staff's input, as described by USDA's Forrest Service publication No. 1146: "Urban Forest Systems and Green Stormwater Infrastructure" February 2020. Trees should have a root ball of at least 36 inches and should be at least 20 feet tall.

On a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously (6-0).

8. **REPORT FROM PLANNING OFFICE** – None

9. **COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON** –

Mr. Ruge commented that the number of residential houses that Sparrow Health Systems is leaving vacant is alarming, especially the ones outside of the block bordered by E. Michigan Avenue, N. Holmes Street, Jerome Street and Ferguson Street.

10. **COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS** –

11. **PENDING ITEMS: FUTURE ACTION REQUIRED** – None

12. **ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.