LANSING PLANNING COMMISSION
Special Meeting
January 17, 2024 – 6:30 p.m.
Neighborhood Empowerment Center
600 W Maple Street, Lansing, MI

Andy Schor
Mayor

MINUTES – *Approved 3/5/2024*

1. **OPENING SESSION**

   Ms. Alexander called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

   a. Present: Katie Alexander, Tony Cox, Monte Jackson, Shane Muchmore, Ted O'Dell, John Ruge
   b. Absent: Josh Hovey
   c. Staff: Gregory Venker, Deputy City Attorney; Rawley Van Fossen, Director of the Economic Development and Planning Department; Andy Fedewa, Principal Planner

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

3. **COMMUNICATIONS** – None

4. **PUBLIC HEARINGS –** None

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

6. **RECESS** – Not taken.

7. **BUSINESS**

   A. **Consent Items**

   (1) **Minutes for approval:** November 8, 2023

   Mr. Ruge noted that Ms. Alexander called the meeting to order not Mr. Hovey. **The minutes for November 8, 2023 were approved as revised.**

   B. **Old Business** – None

   C. **New Business**

   (1) **Act-1-2024, Purchase of Property, 217 S Capitol Avenue**.

   Mr. Fedewa introduced the request by the City of Lansing government to purchase real property at 217 S Capitol Ave., to facilitate the relocation of City Hall. The building commonly known as the Lansing Masonic Temple, would undergo renovations into offices and the disposition of the current City Hall would be reviewed under a separate application.

   The relocation of City Hall offices is expected to save the City $575,000 - $600,000 per year of annual maintenance and a full cost of $60 – 80 million to rectify deferred maintenance according to a 2022 estimate. Mr. Fedewa briefly spoke on the 2017 effort to relocate City operations to a new City Hall while selling or leasing the current building at 124 W Michigan Ave. under the former administration that was put on hold while a millage proposal was put in front of city voters to first, relocate 54-A District Court, Lansing Police Department Headquarters, and a Lansing Fire Department station to a new public safety complex. The millage and relocation of those operations was ultimately approved and ended up centrally-located at the 2500 block of S Washington Ave.

A visibility easement on the parcel directly north of the subject property, also owned by the seller, is being sought by the City to limit redevelopment of the adjacent parking lot so that new windows may be installed along the north façade of the subject building. Planning and Zoning Office staff recommended approval of the request based on the relocation of City Hall remaining in the Downtown core.

Mr. O'Dell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cox, to recommend approval of Act-1-2024, Purchase of Property, 217 S Capitol Avenue.

Mr. Muchmore asked about the difference in square footage between the two buildings. Mr. Fedewa answered that although 217 S Capitol Ave. has 20,000 square feet less space, with the court, police, and lockup operations being relocated to a different facility there is no concern about fitting city operations into the new building.

Mr. Cox asked what the construction cost of a new building for city hall would be. Mr. Fedewa replied that he was not sure if hard numbers on a new building proposal were released but that he believed a new building with today's construction costs would dwarf what was necessary to renovate the subject building. Mr. Fedewa stated he would research to see if numbers about such construction costs existed.

Mr. O'Dell asked what city departments would be making the move to the subject building. Mr. Venker answered that city administration is still meeting with the design professional to discuss the building layout and the process is ongoing. Mr. O'Dell asked what would happen to the current City Hall at 124 W Michigan Ave. Mr. Fedewa stated that there is a proposal for the sale and redevelopment of the building from one of the developers from 2017 that is being revisited and discussed. That sale of property would also be reviewed by the Planning Commission.

Mr. Ruge questioned if the Economic Development and Planning Department would move from the parking ramps they occupy. Mr. Van Fossen replied that discussions about his department are ongoing as well and they are still working with the design professional about details.

Mr. Venker asked to address comments made by Public Service in the staff report and stated that the seller did agree to the visibility easement.

Ms. Alexander asked what sort of construction timeline the City envisions. Mr. Van Fossen replied that with the purchase process and planning process for each individual department still ongoing there is not a definite timeline to release yet but the City hopes to start this year with the understanding it is a multi-year project.

On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

(2) Selection of Board of Zoning Appeals Representative.

Mr. Muchmore made a motion, seconded by Mr. O'Dell, to nominate Mr. Jackson to serve as the Planning Commission Representative on the Board of Zoning Appeals. Mr. Jackson consented to the nomination.

On a voice vote Mr. Jackson was approved unanimously (6-0).

8. **REPORT FROM PLANNING & ZONING OFFICE** – None
9. **COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON** – None
10. **COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS** – None
11. **PENDING ITEMS: FUTURE ACTION REQUIRED** – None
12. **ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 p.m.