CITY OF LUDINGTON
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES – 04/10/01

The regular meeting of the Ludington Planning Commission was held on April 10, 2001. The meeting was held at the Ludington Senior Citizen Center, 308 S. Rowe St., Ludington, MI and was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Tom Coleman, Chairperson.

ROLL CALL: The roll call showed the following results:

Present: Commissioners: Tom Coleman, Ron Sarto, Jerry Ponko, Kaye Holman, Robert Garrett, Jack Ereon and Joyce Usiak.

Absent: Commissioner Clay Olmstead and Paul Peterson

Also Present: Recording Secretaries Carol Ann Foote and Annette Dougherty.

AGENDA APPROVAL:
The agenda was unanimously approved, as written.

PUBLIC COMMENTS & COMMUNICATIONS:
Bonnie Vaught, 502 N. Robert, asked the Chairman what the procedure was for public comment regarding the West Shore Bank project. Chairman Coleman said that she could comment during the public hearing.

MINUTES:
Commissioner Holman made a motion to approve the minutes of March 5, 2001, with amendments as follows: Agenda approval: Commissioner Sarto made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Olmstead, and amendments to the Waterfront report. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Usiak. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:
To consider a request from West Shore Bank for a special land use of 1' 1" (one foot, one inch) over the allowed 35' feet in building height in order to construct an entry tower at the following location: BLOCK 55 OF THE ORIGINAL PLAT, CITY OF LUDINGTON, also known as 201 W Loomis

John Fountain, Thompson-Phelan, Inc., explained to the Commission that the entry tower feature, which was 8% of the roof area, would exceed the height restrictions by 1ft, 1inch. He responded to the nine conditions of Section 900 of the Zoning Ordinance. He then presented drawings of the building and pointed out the area in question. He asked the board to not deny this request.

Bonnie Vaught, 502 N. Robert, told the Commission that she felt that the building and business was a very positive thing.

Commissioner Sarto reported that the sub committee met and felt that the project was a very good one. It fit right into the transition from CBD to Waterfront. They did not see where 1 ft, 1 inch was a problem and were in favor.

Commissioner Sarto made a motion to grant the special land use for one foot, one inch over the allowed thirty-five feet of height, seconded by Commissioner Holman. Motion carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Waterfront Report: Commissioner Coleman reported that there were two drafts for the Waterfront Central Business District. This takes three blocks, two being developed. We had a meeting with our planner, Larry Nix, whom looked at the language and sent possible changes. Chairman Coleman then read the March 23, 2001 draft and proposed changes. (Copy on file)

Commissioner Garrett asked about Section 400.18.4 that prohibits the outdoor display of merchandise or advertising devices for retail stores or establishments. What about outdoor restaurants? They have tables, which display merchandise. Outdoor restaurants are unique and this says you cannot do that. Chairman Coleman pointed out that except in public parks, or other publicly owned facility, you can have outdoor food or beverage service by special land use only.

Chairman Coleman explained that the 45 ft. height was by BOCA definition and not by the ridge. In addition, the Planning Commission could increase the setbacks by ½ ft. for every 1-ft. increase in building height. Commissioner Ponko stated that he had a problem with that part of it. We have given density and 45 ft., anything in access by special land use. There are setbacks for all four sides. Then to further encumber the potential development by shrinking that as they go higher, I do not think it should be a part of this. I think that is too restrictive. Taking ½ ft. of open space is not significant, but taking away ½ or 1 ft. away of living area is very significant. Commissioner Ereon stated that he agreed with Commissioner Ponko.

Commissioner Sarto explained that they have given 10 ft. in height right from the start. This will give us the opportunity to give more height. Commissioner Ponko stated that he still stands, he does not like the language in there.

Chairman Coleman went on to explain the different roof pitches, etc. Commissioner Sarto noted that they were considering including sketches and examples. Density was discussed. Commissioner Garrett asked for a definition of unit. Chairman Coleman said that it could be a studio, or three bedrooms. They have moved away from so many square feet per unit.

Chairman Coleman said that there would be a public hearing set for the May Planning Commission meeting.

Chairman Coleman then opened the meeting for public comment.

Bonnie Vaught, 502 N. Robert, said that she used to be on the Planning Commission and had spent many hours on the current ordinance. She told the Commission that they were laying the groundwork now. Be very cautious.

Cal Prins, Ludington West LLC, thanked the Planning Commission for all their work. He stated that they had come a long way and it looks very good. His only question would be the same as Commissioner Ponko.

Tom Vanburen, West Shore Bank, stated that he feels the lifeblood is people. He is a fan of density. He is concerned about what is going to be happening on the Avenue. The more people you can put closer to CBD, the better it is.

John Fountain, Thomas-Phelan, Inc. said that there should be consideration for restricting building length. That would mean that it would be more restrictive in the amount of square footage allowed. We would not have been able to build on this site, if it was more restrictive.

NEW BUSINESS:
None

SITE PLAN REVIEW REPORT:
None

PUBLIC COMMENTS:
Chairman Coleman appointed Commissioner Garret to the Special Land Use Committee.

ADJOURNMENT:
A motion was made by Commissioner Ponko to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Sarto. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol A Foote, Recording Secretary

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Tom Coleman, Chairperson