CITY OF LUDINGTON
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES 10/04/04

A meeting of the Ludington Planning Commission was held on October 4, 2004. The meeting was held at the Ludington Municipal Building, 400 S. Harrison 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: Tom Coleman, Robert Garrett, Kaye Holman, Joyce Usiak, Joe Moloney, Gary Castonia, Mike Nekola and Clay Olmstead

Absent: Val Gorzynski, excused

Also Present: Building Inspector, John Healy, Recording Secretary, Carol Ann Foote and City Manager, John Shay

AGENDA APPROVAL:
Chairman Coleman added the following to the agenda:

Comments and Communications:

a. Pere Marquette Township rezoning proposal
b. December meeting date

Commissioner Holman made a motion to approve the agenda, with additions, seconded by Commissioner Castonia. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:
None
Close Public Comment

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
Commissioner Olmstead made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 7, 2004 meeting as written.
Commissioner Moloney wanted the record to show that the comments that he made at the September meeting regarding the City Neighborhood Preservation Grant had been corrected.
Commissioner Olmstead withdrew the motion to approve the minutes as written.
Commissioner Castonia stated that the minutes incorrectly showed that Commissioner Gorzynski made the motion to approve the September agenda. It should be changed to show that Commissioner Castonia made the motion.
Commissioner Olmstead made a motion to accept the minutes, with corrections, seconded by Commissioner Holman. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:
To consider proposed text changes to Ludington Zoning Ordinance #23-00, Article 200.2, Definitions and Article 800.7, Signs Allowed in Specified Zoning Districts

Chairman Coleman explained that the proposed changes would allow monument signs in various districts.

Open Public Hearing

John Shay, City Manager, asked if the definitions of monument signs, in terms of location within property lines and height not exceeding six feet, fit in with what was requested at the new professional building.

Close public hearing.

Commissioner Holman reported that the text committee felt that since there was already some signs up, such as the one at West Shore Bank, that they needed to add monument signs. Chairman Coleman stated that West Shore Bank was really free standing with a space under the electronic sign.

Commissioner Nekola wanted to know, if there have never been monument signs, what triggered it to change. Chairman Coleman stated that it was the right thing today. It was brought to their attention that there was some around town. If it is not in the ordinance, then technically they are illegal. Commissioner Nekola stated that it was a “slippery slope” when things are going on in town that are not in the ordinance and we change the ordinance to make it ok. Chairman Coleman said that he would concur with that, but that was not the case.

Chairman Coleman pointed out that the number sequence for Section 800.7:4 needed to be corrected.

Commissioner Holman made a motion to make the numbering system for Section 800.7:4 sequential, seconded by Commissioner Garrett. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Holman made a motion to approve changes to Section 200.2:4, Definitions, Article 800.2, Definitions and Article 800.7, Signs Allowed in Specified Zoning Districts, as presented, and to forward to City Council seconded by Commissioner Moloney. Motion carried, seven in favor, one opposed.

To consider text changes to the Ludington Zoning Ordinance #23-00, Article 500.10, Front, Rear and Side Yard Exceptions.

Chairman Coleman explained that the Zoning Board of Appeals requested that the setbacks on corner lots be reviewed. The text committee felt that everything looked good, but thought there should be some adjustment for porches. The proposed text would allow covered and uncovered porches on lots that are less than standard.

Open Public Hearing

Close Public Hearing

Commissioner Olmstead questioned the wording in Section 500.10. He felt that the words "not ***less than*** ten feet from a rear lot line" or "***less than*** six feet from an accessory building" should be changed to "***closer than".*** After discussion, the Commissioners decided to change less than to closer than.

Commissioner Holman made a motion to approve changes to Section 200.2:8, Definitions and Article 500.10, Front, Rear, and Side Yard Exceptions the change in Section 500.10 from less than to closer than, and to forward to Council, seconded by Commissioner Olmstead. Motion carried unanimously.

To consider a request from Carol Elenbaas Henke for a special land use in order to construct a 1,200 square feet garage in accordance with Section 500.4:2, Accessory buildings in Residential Districts, of the Ludington Zoning Ordinance #23-00 at the following described property: SIXTH ADDITION LOTS 27 & 28 AND S 1/2 OF LOT 26 BLOCK 4 also known as 1029 Beechwood Drive.

Open public hearing

Jim Henke, 1029 Beechwood Drive, told the commissioners that he was asking for a three-stall garage. His house did not have an attic or a basement and the garage would help put all their stuff away. It would be turned long ways to the alley and not closer than ten feet from the alley. There are 2 ½ lots and the garage would take 13% of the back yard.

Close public hearing.

The recording secretary reported that forty-two notices were sent with one response in favor.

Commissioner Nekola reported that the committee met and would like to commend the Henkes on an excellent application. The committee would recommend the approval as submitted.

Commissioner Nekola made a motion to approve the special land use for a 1,200 sq. ft. garage, seconded by Commissioner Castonia. Motion carried six in favor, two opposed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Recreation and Parks:
Commissioner Garrett reported that the Recreation Plan is good until the end of 2004. The City will work on the plan during the winter and have it to Lansing by July.

Neighborhood Revitalization:
Commissioner Moloney told the Commissioners that right now there are two grants available. One grant for $500,000 is designated for ten homes and four rentals. Approximately $160,000 will be used for infrastructure such as sewer and roads. The Downtown Rental Rehab grant has $150,000 available. Pre-applications have been sent out to downtown rental properties and four people have applied. John Healy and Mary Buetell will inspect the sites in order to determine necessity. The City will also be applying for a Cool Cities Grant in the spring. Up to $100,000 will be available, but one specific project will have to be targeted. Commissioner Moloney said that they have not been successful in getting money for trees from the Arbor Foundation. He said that the City did have a program in place that identified and replaced diseased trees in the right of way. Chairman Coleman said that the tree policy needed to be brought up with City staff. The Arbor Foundation did not give money, but they promote trees and urban forest.

Chairman Coleman asked the commissioners about the structure of the Comprehensive Plan assignments. He asked if they should concentrate on two or three things and work with the City to get them accomplished. Commissioner Holman suggested listing the assignments under unfinished business each month. Chairman Coleman said that he felt that would be too much. Commissioner Olmstead stated that he thought that it would be a good idea to concentrate on a couple of things instead of the assignments just sitting there. Chairman Coleman said that he would work with Commissioner Holman and the City Manager. Commissioner Nekola stated that when he looked at the City Council goals he sees mostly infrastructure and roads. He said that neighborhoods were not only roads. He would like to see a front porch community.

CARTIER PARK:
Chairman Coleman reported that there were some things in the plan for next year. They have been looking at the 1970 and 1986 recommendations for the park for ideas that could be used now.

TIMBERWORKS, LLC:
City Manager, John Shay reported that the Phase I environmental investigation had started.

RESIDENTIAL USE IN THE CBD:
Chairman Coleman said that he has sent this to Larry Nix to look at and should have a report for the November meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

SITE PLAN REVIEW REPORT:
Commissioner Holman said that there was a site plan review held on September 20, 2004 for One Ludington Place, 201 S. William St. The plan was for four, three-story condominiums. Each tower would have up to sixteen units with underground parking below each tower. Total units proposed is 62. Revised plans will be submitted and another site plan has been set for October 7.

COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:
It was requested by Commissioner Holman to change the December 6 meeting date so that it did not coincide with the City Council meeting. Commissioner Nekola suggested backing the meeting up an hour to 6:00 p.m. Everyone agreed and the meeting was set for Monday, December 6, 2004 at 6:00 p.m.

Chairman Coleman read a letter received from Pere Marquette Township regarding rezoning property on Nelson Rd. The letter said the township would welcome the Planning Commission's views. He asked Vice Chairman Olmstead to appoint a sub-committee to review the issue and draft a letter to P.M. Township. The sub-committee members will be Commissioners Olmstead, Holman and Usiak.

ADJOURNMENT:
Chairman Holman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Olmstead. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Ann Foote, Recording Secretary

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Tom Coleman, Chairperson