CITY OF LUDINGTON
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES 03/07/05

A meeting of the Ludington Planning Commission was held on March 7, 2005. 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, Kaye Holman, Joyce Usiak, Clay Olmstead, Robert Garrett, Gary Castonia, Joe Moloney and Mike Nekola

Absent: Val Gorzynski, excused.

Also Present: Recording Secretary, Carol Ann Foote, City Manager, John Shay and City Attorney, Roger Anderson

AGENDA APPROVAL:
Chairman Coleman asked that the public hearing for Article 400.14, M1, Minimum required setbacks, be postponed until April. Chairman Coleman also removed the public hearing for Section 200.2:4, Family. Commissioner Castonia made a motion to approve the agenda, as amended, seconded by Commissioner Olmstead. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:
None
Close Public Comment

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
Commissioner Olmstead made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 7, 2005 meeting, with corrections (attached), seconded by Commissioner Usiak. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. To consider a request from William and Donna Drablowski for a special land use for residential use above the first floor in the Maritime Commercial District (MC) at the following described property: ORIGINAL PLAT N 46 FT 1 1/2 INCHES OF LOTS 9 & 10 BLOCK 42, also known as 316 S JAMES ST.

William Drablowski, 316 S. James St. and Mary Beutell, 129 W. Ludington Ave., were present to answer questions about the proposal. Mary Beutell told the commission that Mr. Drablowski had applied for a rental rehab grant through the City of Ludington. There were already units above the first floor that had been occupied in the 80's. The plan was to gut all four units and remodel using the same layout. Ms. Beutell stated that the goal of the rental rehab program was to increase density in the downtown area.

Gerry Genter, 804 Diana St., told the commission that there had been apartments over the Reliable Distributing building for years. In his opinion, apartments in the downtown area is a good idea and the intention of City planners. He stated that he was for this project 100% and feels it will be a great asset to downtown.

Close public hearing.

The recording secretary reported that seventy-seven notices had been sent out with no response.

Commissioner Nekola reported that the committee met by telephone. He asked if there were parking requirements that still had to be met. Attorney Anderson said that according to Section 700.2:6 of the Zoning Ordinance, no additional parking was required unless the Planning Commission required them. Commissioner Castonia asked if any of the parking spaces were reserved for the apartments. Mr. Drablowski said that there was a 40 X 42 lot behind the restaurant that would be reserved for tenants. Commissioner Garrett asked what level of rents would be involved. Mr. Drablowski stated that they would be $450 per month, including utilities. Ms. Beutell told the commission that because Mr. Drablowski was going through the program, the rent would be capped at fair market rates. He would have to charge low to moderate rates for the first five years, then any amount that he chooses after that.

Commissioner Nekola made a motion to approve the special land use for residential above the first floor of the MC (Maritime Commercial District) with the condition that the west parking lot be dedicated to the apartments, seconded by Commissioner Castonia. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Nekola stated that this opens up all the areas that allow motels/hotels. If they come in and apply for a special land use, we are bound to approve it, if they meet all the standards. Attorney Anderson said that the only thing this changes is for condominiums. Commissioner Nekola said that when they originally talked about the waterfront, they were trying to get more permanent residents in the downtown area. Now this is opening up a wider area, not just Central Business District. It sounds like we are trying to get more transients. Attorney Anderson said that they were not changing anything, it already exists.

Commissioner Olmstead stated that the language did not let him know exactly what was being prohibited. He said that they need to specify a period. Attorney Anderson said that the word transient was the key. The period is not the significant issue. After discussion of what the period would be, it was decided that transient rentals would be by the day, week or similar periods of less than twenty-eight days.

Commissioner Olmstead made a motion to recommend to City Council to approve the proposed text change to Section 200.2:3, Dwelling and the addition of Article 500.19, Transient Rentals of a Dwelling, seconded by Commissioner Castonia. Motion carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
Comprehensive Plan:
Chairman Coleman appointed the following sub-committees and asked that they each meet and pick a chairman:

a. Neighborhood Association Pilot project for Improvement: Commissioners Nekola, Moloney and Usiak
b. Access Management on East Ludington Ave./East Ludington Ave. Preservation Overlay: Commissioners Holman, Gorzynski and Coleman
c. Parks and Recreation Plan: Commissioners Garrett, Coleman, Castonia and Olmstead

Timberworks, LLC:

Cartier Park:
Mary Beutell, City of Ludington Community Development Director, reported that $8,100 had been raised towards the $27,500 match for the Cartier Park fishing pier. There had been donations from Great Lakes Energy, Lions Club, Tournament Committee and Kiwanis Club. The Fin and Feather Club has been contacted and seems interested. She said that she felt confident that the money would be raised.

NEW BUSINESS:
None

SITE PLAN REVIEW REPORT:
None

COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:
Chairman Coleman reported that the Text Committee was still working on the manufacturing district language with Attorney Anderson and Larry Nix. It will be on the agenda for next month.

Chairman Coleman announced that there would be a Zoning Board of Appeals training session held on March 17, 2005 at City Hall. This session will be sponsored by Mason County. The $4.00 material fee will be paid for by the City of Ludington.

Commissioner Castonia reported that the Arttrain would be here on May 28, 2005. There will be public access to it on May 29 and 30 and it will be at the schools on May 31 and June 1. Commissioner Holman stated that the paperwork had been sent in and everything was almost finalized.

Commissioner Holman announced that an artist reception would be held on March 9, 2005 at Jamesport Brewery. About sixty area artist would attend.

Commissioner Garrett told the commissioners that they had been given a copy of the Community Recreation Plan that was put together by Mary Beutell. Ms. Beutell said that the plan had been forwarded to Lansing.

ADJOURNMENT:
The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Ann Foote, Recording Secretary

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Tom Coleman, Chairperson