

**Mt. Pleasant Planning Commission
Work Session Minutes
May 3, 2012**

Chairman Orlik called the work session to order at 7:55 pm.

Present: Brockman, Hoenig, Kostrzewa, Lux, Orlik (Chair), Quast, Smith (Vice-Chair).

Absent: Holtgreive, Shellady.

Staff: Gray, Ridley, Murphy.

Staff addressed the Commission regarding questions asked during the last meeting regarding whether or not we would be looking at zoning north of High Street. Staff indicated that it was not within the scope of the Master Plan update; however offered to pull together some data at the Commission's request.

Staff provided some history, commenting that in June of 2010 a work session was held to discuss M-2 zoning within the City, including north of High Street. At the time, staff was receiving some interest in new M-2 projects from the development community. At that time the Commission indicated they would like to focus on code enforcement issues prior to considering extending the M-2 boundaries.

Staff shared some data in regards to the number of owner-occupied properties, single-family rental units, duplexes and rooming dwellings along Main, Washington and University Streets. Focusing on the Main Street corridor, from High Street to Wisconsin, it was noted that approximately 1/3 of the properties are permitted, conforming uses, made up of single family homes, single family rentals and duplexes. Approximately 67% of the properties are non-conforming. Staff also commented that many of the non-conforming rooming dwellings exceed the density standards as they were in existence prior to today's zoning laws. Staff shared data pulled from 1984, which shows relatively similar numbers. Staff also reported that when the rezoning of Main Street occurred in April of 1984, property owners were given until the end of that year to convert their properties to rooming dwellings if they wished to do so.

Staff commented that if the Commission wants to look at extending the M-2 zoning north of High Street, there are some considerations. He shared video footage of the Main Street corridor during St. Patrick's Day earlier this year, and commented that the Police Department has plans in place on how to handle these big "event" weekends. If the Commission wishes to pursue extending the M-2 area, staff encouraged input from the Police Department on the impacts that may have on their operations. Staff also commented that the Commission needs to be aware of the impacts and unexpected consequences that rezoning of the area along Main Street may have on the adjoining streets (Washington and University). Staff also suggested giving some consideration to the future land use map.

Staff shared data from the Owner Occupied Residential Incentive program, noting that since 2008, seven properties have converted back to owner occupied. He also shared photos of properties that were converted to owner occupied properties in the area that were not eligible for the program.

Staff commented that the city does not restrict the number of rental units and there is no rental prohibition on Main Street, again commenting that single family rentals and duplexes are allowed uses. In addition, staff commented that both the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals have supported redevelopment of M-2 properties within the existing M-2 area, and opportunities do exist for developers.

Staff commented that the Commission could still consider conditional rezoning on a case by case basis. Vice-Chairman Smith questioned whether there was any leeway for considering these requests without updating the Master Plan to allow M-2 zoning.

Staff stated that it may be possible for a developer to craft a proposal that meets the intent of the Master Plan, with an M-2 development whose density and character are consistent with the properties in the neighborhood. Staff questioned whether the Commission was interested in entertaining conditional rezoning requests such as this. If not, staff will not encourage property owners to request it.

Commissioner Brockman commented that it would depend on the developer's willingness to work with the city.

Vice-Chairman Smith commented that any such request should include exterior improvements to the property.

Commissioner Quast commented that the requests for North of High Street should look different than the ones south of High Street, and the proposal would need to show how the adjoining properties would be protected from any potential impacts.

Commissioner Brockman commented on the projection that CMU enrollment would be declining as the population in Michigan declines and questioned whether there was a need to extend student housing.

Chairman Orlik commented that he feels there is a significant difference in the areas north and south of High Street. He further commented that the fact that there has not been a significant change in the percentage of rentals over the years is a good thing.

Commissioner Quast commented that prior to the data staff provided, she felt that Washington, Main and University were very similar; however, now she feels differently. She also asked if there was any update on the code enforcement issue.

Staff reported that the attorney's are working on putting together a standardized checklist for the Fire Department on rental properties and would like to parallel the code enforcement piece with

that. Staff also reported that both code enforcement groups recently have updated their databases with new software and are going through a period of training. The new software should make the process a lot more efficient. Commissioner Quast asked if something would be in place by the time the students returned in the fall. Staff indicated he felt that was a reasonable possibility.

Chairman Orlik requested that the discussion on Code Enforcement include an update on activities since adoption of the Tribal Agreement.

Motion by Brockman, support by Smith to adjourn work session.

Work session adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

bam