

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting
LANSING PLANNING BOARD
6:30 p.m., Main Level
Fire Station #1, Community Room
120 E. Shiawassee Street
Tuesday, March 16, 2010**

1. OPENING SESSION

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman Frederick

- A. Roll call: Present: Frederick, Williams, Graham & Cox
- B. Staff Attending: Stachowiak
- C. Excused Absences: Tobe & Ruge

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Williams made a motion, seconded by Ms. Graham to approve the agenda with the addition of "Ronda Oberlin, Hazard Mitigation Plan" under New Business. On a voice vote (4-0), the motion carried.

3. COMMUNICATIONS - None

4. HEARINGS

- A. **SLU-1-2010**, 5750 S. Cedar Street, Special Land Use Permit - Church

This is a request by Abundant Grace Faith Church to utilize the building at 5750 S. Cedar Street (former Builder's Square/Farmer Jack) for a church. The subject property is zoned "J" Parking, "G-2" Wholesale, "F" Commercial and "H" Light Industrial districts. Churches with associated parking are permitted in these districts, if a Special Land Use permit is approved by the Lansing City Council, after review and a recommendation by the Planning Board.

Bruce Morton, 409 Taylor Street, Grand Ledge, MI 48837, Associate Pastor, Abundant Grace Faith Church, spoke in support of the request. Pastor Morton stated that the auditorium/sanctuary will be initially designed for 500 seats but will be capable of being expanded to seat up to 1,200. He introduced Pastor Louis Dixon Sr. and his wife Pamela and stated that they are all very excited about the proposed location in south Lansing.

Louis Dixon, 235 Green Meadows Drive, Pastor of Abundant Grace Faith Church, spoke in support of the request. He stated that they are looking forward to making an impact in Lansing. Pastor Dixon said that have a mixed and growing congregation that reaches out to persons from all walks of life.

John Bulos, 5812 S. Cedar Street, stated that he owns "Best Video" which carries both family and adult videos. The store is located right next to the building at 5750 S. Cedar and he has heard that the church intends to shut his business down. Mr. Bulos said that he has been in business at this location for 12 years and if the church has any objection to his business he would like to hear about it. He also said that vehicles are constantly cutting through his property to get to the church's property.

Pastor Dixon said that he would discuss these matters with Mr. Bulos.

Ms. Graham asked where the church meets right now and how the new location will affect liquor licenses in the area.

Pastor Dixon said that they currently meet at Logan Center in the suite next to Sav-a-Lot.

Ms. Stachowiak said that churches and schools have an opportunity to object to new liquor licenses within 500 feet of their property. She said that if an objection is made, the Liquor Control Commission may deny the license. If that happens, the applicant would have the ability to appeal the decision and a hearing would be held to determine if the license should be issued, despite the objections.

Pamela Dixon, 235 Green Meadows Drive, stated that there is already a school in the area.

Seeing no one else wishing to address the Board, Chairman Frederick closed the public hearing.

5. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Jen Hudon, 232 Kedzie Street, stated that she is an MSU student. Ms. Hudson asked the Board about the ethical and political issues that they encounter as Planning Board members.

Mr. Williams stated that the most controversial issue that the Planning Board has dealt with in recent memory is the sale of the City Market to a private developer. He said that there were many people who wanted to keep the old market.

Mr. Frederick said that the Planning Board makes recommendations to the City Council and is therefore, insulated from a lot of the political issues. He said that the Planning Board has approval authority over nonconforming uses and has the authority to interpret the master plan and the zoning ordinance.

Mr. Frederick said that the Planning Board is governed by the City Charter and the State Planning Statute. He said that it is important to be consistent when making decisions. He also said that the Planning Board members are expected to recuse themselves when they have a conflict of interest with a particular issue.

Evan Gross, 319 Williams (MSU Campus), asked about the process for the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Ms. Oberlin said that current plan expires March, 2011 and the new plan needs to be approved before the current one expires. She said that it goes to the State and then to FEMA. Ms. Oberlin stated that it is a 6-8 week approval process if there are no problems along the way. She also said that without the plan, the city would not be eligible for certain grant programs.

Seeing no one else wishing to address the Board, Chairman Frederick closed the public comment period.

6. **RECESS** was not taken by the Board.

7. **BUSINESS SESSION**

A. **Consent Items**

1. **Minutes for Approval:** March 2, 2010

The minutes of March 2, 2010 were approved without objection.

B. **Committee Reports** -None

1. ZONING AND ORDINANCE COMMITTEE
2. URBAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
3. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
4. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

C. **Old Business**

D. Pending Items: Future action required

1. Zoning and Ordinance Committee
2. Urban Development Committee
 - a. Master Plan Project
3. Committee of the Whole
4. Planning Board

8. NEW BUSINESS**A. Ronda Oberlin, Hazard Mitigation Plan**

Ms. Oberlin stated that the city is in the process of updating its Hazard Mitigation Plan. She said that it has to be completed by March, 2011 when the current plan expires. Ms. Oberlin said that the purpose for coming to the Planning Board is to get input on the plan from the Board members and the public. She distributed a description of the plan and a list of the potential mitigation strategies and explained that a meeting has been held to rank the 18 hazards that are most threatening to Lansing.

Ms. Oberlin said that extreme cold has been ranked as the number one threat because it would affect so many people and would have a particularly hard impact on certain groups such as the elderly and the poor. She said that tornados were ranked second because they are quite prevalent in this area (5 in the past 5 years in this area) and can cause widespread destruction. They are also more difficult to spot in this area. Ms. Oberlin said that the city has been replacing the old sirens with new ones in an effort to provide a better warning system for the public.

Ms. Oberlin said that burying utility lines has been suggested as a method of minimizing the affects of and the damage caused by infrastructure failure. Mr. Frederick said that this could have been done on Grand Avenue during the CSO project.

Ms. Oberlin said that while there hasn't been a 100 year flood event in Lansing for many years, it is still a serious threat. She said that a number of mitigation strategies have been proposed such as elevating buildings in the floodplain, acquiring and demolishing buildings in the floodplain and putting a cap on the number of permits that can be issued for properties in the floodplain. Ms. Oberlin said that there is a house on Willard Street that has been elevated. She also said that the City has been acquiring floodplain properties, primarily in the Urbandale and Baker-Donora areas. Ms. Oberlin said that the city may be looking at acquiring floodplain properties in the Comstock Park area as well. She explained that the FEMA grants require that the City save \$4.00 for every \$1.00 spent.

Mr. Frederick suggested that the city consider the area off of S. Washington Avenue, south of the river, in the area that is zoned industrial.

He said that with regard to public health, the flu vaccine is only 70% effective and therefore, 3 out of 10 people will contract the flu. Mr. Frederick stated that the only way to deal with this is through public education.

Ms. Oberlin said that the mitigation strategies for dealing with wild fires include cutting back brush and ensuring that the Fire Department has sufficient access to at-risk areas. She said that the focus is on the Fenner Park area and possibly the Crego Park area, depending on the amount of human activity occurring in these two areas.

Mr. Cox suggested that Ms. Oberlin present the proposed plan to the neighborhood associations. He said that educating people and making them aware of what to do during emergencies can make a major difference.

Ms. Oberlin said that they are working with the schools and are developing a standardized county wide emergency warning system. She said that she has also attended some of the neighborhood association meetings.

Mr. Frederick thanked Ms. Oberlin for her presentation.

9. REPORT FROM PLANNING MANAGER - None

10. COMMENTS FROM CHAIRPERSON - None

11. COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS - None

12. BOARD MEMBER CODE ENFORCEMENT NOTIFICATION REPORTS

- a. W. Willow Street - Grace Tabernacle Church - no landscaping (May 4, 2004)
- b. 2702 S. Cedar Street - no landscaping (May 18, 2004)
- c. The Firm – review requirements for fenced outdoor patio (December 5, 2006 & February 20, 2007)
- d. Washington Square Tavern – permanent outdoor patio & not adequate room on sidewalk (November 20, 2007)
- e. Clayborn & Waverly - Junk, trash, junk vehicles (September 15, 2009)
- f. E. Michigan & Lathrop - Shaggin Wagon Taxi Service - Screening & Buffering (September 15, 2009)

Mr. Frederick stated that 342 E. St. Joseph Street contains abandoned vehicles (with flat tires) and a great deal of trash. He also said that there is a car battery sitting on the ground and the people who live there have been throwing things over the fence.

13. ADJOURNMENT - Meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

William C. Rieske
Secretary, Planning Board