MINUTES - Approved

1. OPENING SESSION

Mr. Ruge called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

a. Present: John Ruge, Katie Alexander, Marta Cerna, Farhan Bhatti, Monte Jackson, Josh Hovey
b. Absent: Gary Manns, Tony Cox
c. Staff: Brian McGrain, Sue Stachowiak, Bill Rieske, Andy Fedewa & Doris Witherspoon

On a voice vote the Planning Board granted an excused absence to Mr. Manns.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Board approved the agenda by unanimous consent.

3. COMMUNICATIONS

- Letter and church service attendance data from unity Spiritual Church (applicant) in response to the issues brought up at the January 7, 2020 public hearing
- Petition containing 109 signatures in support of the NCU-1-2019 request
- Letters/emails in opposition to the NCU-1-2019 request:
  - Two from Lora Bruder, Williamston, church member
  - Chris Hershberger, 1216 Prospect St.
  - Janet Hershberger, 1216 Prospect St.
  - Linda Garza, 216 S. Holmes St.
  - Four from Belinda Fitzpatrick, 224 S Holmes St., adjacent property owner to the north
- Letters/emails in support of the NCU-1-2019 request:
  - Joan Nelson, Executive Director, Allen Neighborhood Center on behalf of the ANC Board of Directors, 1611 E Kalamazoo St.
  - Jennie Grau on behalf of the Prospect PLACE Neighborhood Association
  - Christ Janson, Church board member and area resident
  - Kay Batterson
  - Pamela Riley Miklavcic, Executive Director, The Davis Project, 230 Bingham
  - James Hagan, Hagan Realty
  - Naomi Snyder
  - Winalee Zeeb, 1808 E Michigan Ave., church member
  - Susan Winklestern, Mulliken, MI, church member
  - Barbara Starling, 1419 Prospect, church member
  - Connie Cogswell-Samohovetz, 1215 Prospect St.
  - Two from Christine Clements, 1219 Prospect St., adjacent property owner to the west
4. **COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE**

Dan Maynard, president of Unity Spiritual Center board spoke in favor of approving NCU-1-2019.

Sharon Ketchum, 1531 Osborn Rd., Lansing, reverend for Unity Spiritual Center spoke in favor of approving NCU-1-2019.

Debra Otis, 3821 Dobie Rd. Okemos, thanked Ms. Stachowiak for her work.

Morris, Prospect St. spoke in favor of approving NCU-1-2019.

Lora Bruder, 5400 Zimmer Rd. Williamston, spoke in opposition to NCU-1-2019.

Linda Garza, 216 S. Holmes St. spoke about her concerns in regards to a light detailed on site plans she had seen for the 230 S Holmes St. church.

Belinda Fitzpatrick, 224 S. Holmes St., spoke in opposition to NCU-1-2019.

5. **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

a. **FY 2020/2021 Proposed Funding Allocations – CDBG, HOME, and ESG Resources**

Ms. Witherspoon stated that a public hearing before the Planning Board on the proposed funding allocations for the Annual Action Plan 2020 (7/1/20-6/30/21) is the next step in the process in accordance with the Citizen Participation Plan and Schedule of Activities. Ms. Witherspoon stated that Congressional appropriations for fiscal year 2020 are not available at this time, however, as with previous years, the City of Lansing will proceed with the Action Plan process/schedule and plan based on the previous year’s allocations and adjust accordingly once the actual allocations are received. She said that the budget projections are subject to pro rata adjustments based on the actual amounts awarded to the City of Lansing by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. This is the last year of the current Five-Year Consolidated Plan.

Ms. Witherspoon said that the primary objective of Lansing’s Housing and Community Development Program is the development of a viable community which will provide standard housing in a suitable living environment, principally to benefit low and moderate income persons, preserve and expand existing businesses and industries, and create an atmosphere conducive to stability in neighborhoods. She said that the CDBG funds are used to provide programs for low to moderate income households through activities such as housing rehabilitation, weatherization, and promoting economic development/opportunities in eligible areas of the City. HOME funds are used for activities such as promoting home ownership through down-payment assistance and new housing construction. ESG funds are eligible for six components including homeless prevention assistance, supporting emergency shelter facilities, etc.
Sharon Dade, New Hope Community Center, 420 N Larch St. spoke about her organization and spoke in favor of CDBG, HOME, and ESG Resources funding.

Angela Pruitt of Closing the Digital Gap, spoke about her organization and the need for more funding to be allocated to technological training programs.

Sharon Courtland of Closing the Digital Gap, spoke about her organization and the need for more funding to be allocated to technological training programs.

Jim Heinowski of Capital Area Housing Partnership, spoke about his organization and spoke in favor of CDBG, HOME, and ESG Resources funding.

Ms. Alexander questioned if specific requests for funding are handled by the Economic Development and Planning Department. Ms. Witherspoon answered that they are in the Development Division.

Ms. Cerna asked if the Department would detail funding numbers to the Board when they became available. Ms. Witherspoon explained how money is allocated for different projects based on prior years and they will adjust accordingly with federal numbers.

Mr. Ruge stated that he found the details of the work done by Closing the Digital Gap to be compelling.

Brian McGrain, Director of the Economic Development and Planning Department, spoke on his meeting with Closing the Digital Gap last year and welcomed any proposals for funding. Mr. McGrain echoed Ms. Witherspoon’s prior statement that this is the last year of the current Five-Year Plan and the City could be rethinking its strategy for the 2021-2025 Five-Year Consolidated Plan.

Ms. Cerna asked if the 20% administration funds could be used for training for Closing the Digital Gap resources. Ms. Witherspoon stated that CDBG general administration includes City staff costs associated with the preparation of the Consolidated Plan, Action Plan, environmental review, and implementation of community development resources.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Chairperson Ruge closed the public hearing.

Dr. Bhatti made a motion, seconded by Ms. Alexander, to approve the CDBG, HOME and ESG Resources - FY 2020 (7/1/20-6/30/21) Proposed Funding Allocations with the understanding that pro rata adjustments may need to be made to the budget based on actual grant award funding amounts from HUD. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Stachowiak reviewed the details of the fire at the church, the need of the applicant for Class A nonconforming status, and the need for the request going to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Ms. Stachowiak acknowledged the parking situation and detailed the occupancy limit for the church, the potential parking spaces in the gravel lot, the purpose of on-street parking, and that the peak time for parking is limited to about one hour on one day a week. Ms. Stachowiak reiterated that in her time with the City she has not fielded a complaint about the parking situation at this church.

Because the Public Hearing portion of this case was conducted during the January 7, 2020 meeting, the Planning Board did not take comments from the public.

Mr. Jackson questioned if the occupancy limit number would take into account future growth of the church’s congregation. Ms. Stachowiak answered that services are limited by that occupancy limit of 85 persons. Mr. Jackson stated that if the congregation exceeded that limit they could hold additional services to accommodate everyone and Ms. Stachowiak confirmed.

Mr. Jackson asked if on-street parking could accommodate the peak hour. Ms. Stachowiak answered that the church is the only non-residential use in the area and that there is only one peak time, limited to one day a week.

Ms. Cerna stated that parking would be needed for other activities held at the church. Ms. Stachowiak answered that there is adequate on-street parking throughout the area.

Mr. Ruge stated that even a funeral would be limited by the occupancy capacity and there are options to block off curbside parking if needed. Ms. Stachowiak stated that Holmes and Eureka streets already do not allow parking on one side of the street so that there is enough space for vehicle maneuvering.

Ms. Alexander asked what would happen if the Planning Board denied the request. Ms. Stachowiak answered that the building would have to be demolished because it is fire damaged.

Mr. Ruge said that he still has concerns with the undefined parking area and would like to see some kind of plantings or trees to demarcate the area.

Mr. Hovey made a motion, seconded by Dr. Bhatti to approve NCU-1-2019, 230 S Holmes Street (PID # 33-01-01-15-331-132), request for Class A Nonconforming Status with the condition that vegetation be planted to screen and buffer the parking area. Motion carried unanimously.

c. SLU-1-2020, N Homer Street (PID # 33-01-01-11-251-281), Special Land Use permit for a telecommunications tower in the “A” Residential zoning district.
Ms. Stachowiak detailed the request by Metro Fibernet, LLC for a Special Land Use Permit to construct a telecommunications tower and equipment shelters at the southeast corner of the Board of Water & Light property between 1220 and 1306 N. Homer Street. The purpose of the tower/shelters is to provide fiber optic internet and streaming television services to business and residential customers in the City of Lansing and surrounding communities. Telecommunication towers with related structures/equipment are permitted in the “A” Residential district, which is the zoning designation of the subject property, if a Special Land Use permit is approved by the Lansing City Council. Because the tower will be 80’ in height the applicant will also have to go to the Board of Zoning Appeals to exceed the height limit of the “A” Residential zoning district. Additionally, the applicant will go to the City Council for a setback waiver.

Ms. Stachowiak detailed that the applicant will install a gravel driveway and evergreen plants at the property border to the south. Ms. Stachowiak requested that there be a condition for staff to mandate more plant screening if it is deemed necessary in the future.

Jim Rood, Metro Fibernet emphasized that his company wants to be a good neighbor and detailed the request. Metro Fibernet will build this tower as close to US-127 as possible and they are open to additional plant/tree species as screening elements. Mr. Rood said that limited staff would access the site but there will be a generator on site that will run for approximately 20 minutes once a week and for longer once a year to test power capacity.

Mr. Ruge disused the 100’ isolation zone of the pump station in the middle of the property and asked if the driveway could be moved further north away from the adjacent house at the south property line.

Seeing no one wishing to speak, Chairperson Ruge closed the public hearing.

Dr. Bhatti made a motion, seconded by Ms. Alexander, to approve SLU-1-2020, N Homer Street (PID # 33-01-01-11-251-281), Special Land Use permit for a telecommunications tower in the “A” Residential zoning district with the request that the driveway be moved further north if feasible and the condition that the Zoning Administrator is given the authority to require additional landscaping and/or an opaque fence along the south property line if deemed necessary. Motion carried unanimously.

d. Form-Based Code

Bill Rieske reviewed the first Public Hearing of the new Draft Form-Based Code (FBC) that was held during the January 7, 2020 Planning Board meeting. Board members were sent internet links and documents about form-based zoning codes and specific resources for Lansing’s new FBC. Mr. Rieske explained minor edits that have been conducted and that the Planning Office has incorporated public feedback given during recent presentations to the Saginaw St. and Michigan Ave.
Corridor Improvement Authorities. Mr. Rieske stated that this has been a long process and has gone through eight public hearings and over 25 meetings and the next step after the Planning Board is City Council review.

Rikki Reynolds, Hickory St. spoke in favor of the Form-Based Code, but stated that public materials should better detail the benefits of the Code for Lansing residents.

Mr. Hovey thanked the City staff for their work and stated that the major corridors are zoned to improve the built environment along them and that residential districts are zoned to preserve their current characters.

Ms. Alexander thanked City staff for their work.

Dr. Bhatti made a motion, seconded by Ms. Alexander to recommend the new Form-Based Code for City Council approval. Motion carried unanimously.

6. RECESS – Not taken

7. BUSINESS

A. Consent Items
   (1) Minutes for approval: January 7, 2020
      Without objection, January 7, 2020 minutes were approved.

B. Old Business – None

C. New Business – None

8. REPORT FROM PLANNING MANAGER

   Mr. Rieske said that an evaluation matrix of the Master Plan will be back before the board at next month’s regularly scheduled meeting, March 3, 2020.

   Planning Staff requested that the agenda format be reinterpreted so that action on cases are taken immediately after the case is heard rather than under the Consent Items section of the agenda for clarity and respect for everyone’s time.

   Mr. Rieske informed the Planning Board that he will be retiring from the City of Lansing toward the end of March 2020.

   Mr. McGrain thanked the Planning Board for their work and service to the City as volunteer Board members.

9. COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON – None

10. COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

   Mr. Hovey requested that Ms. Stachowiak update the Board in regards to the driveway and landscaping for SLU-1-2020.

11. PENDING ITEMS: FUTURE ACTION REQUIRED - None
12. **ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.