

**EMPIRE VILLAGE PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2024**

The Village of Empire Planning Commission held a regular meeting on Tuesday, October 1, 2024, in the Empire Township Hall.

ROLL CALL – Bacon, Collins, Ford, Deering and Schous were present. Zoning Administrator Hall was absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Motion by Chase, supported by Ford to approve the September 3, 2024, regular meeting minutes as presented. AYES: 6, NO: 0. MOTION PASSED.

TREASURERS REPORT – Chase reported that as of August 31, 2024, 32% of the planning commission budget has been.

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA – None.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST – None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS & CORRESPONDENCE – None.

ZONING ADMINISTRATORS REPORT – Schous read a communication from Hall regarding the RRC Public Participation Plan.

APPOINTMENT TO MASTER PLAN UPDATE WORKING GROUP – Margaret Ellibee moved and left a vacancy on this committee. **Motion by Ford, supported by Bacon to appoint Bob Chase to the Master Plan Update Working Group. AYES: 6, NO: 0. MOTION PASSED.**

MASTER PLAN UPDATE REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS – Bacon summarized core discussions held by the working group regarding the development of the draft plan and outlined the general steps required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act to adopt the new plan.

- 1) Planning commission to review, update and finalize the draft plan originally prepared by the Master Plan Working Group.
- 2) The proposed plan must be forwarded to Village Council for review and comment. Council must also approve the distribution of the proposed master plan to the necessary entities.
- 3) The planning commission secretary distributes the proposed plan for comment for a period of 63 days.
- 4) The planning commission must hold at least one public hearing after the comment period.
- 5) Planning commission votes to forward the proposed plan to council for adoption.

Commissioners also discussed the process of the Recreation Plan update. Acton will provide a summary of necessary steps required by the MDNR.

REDEVELOPMENT READY COMMUNITIES (RRC) TASKS

1.4 Public Participation Plan - Commissioners reviewed the letter from Zoning Administrator Hall on the draft Public Participation Plan. The draft plan was sent to the MEDC community planner for comment and was returned with feedback. The next step is to finalize and adopt to meet the RRC Essentials requirement.

2.3 Concentrated Development and 2.4 Housing Diversity

To align with best practice, reference where in the zoning ordinance mixed use development is allowed by right. Schous referenced two places where this exists. Section 4.05.3 and 4.09.4 (Allowable Building Types, Mixed use commercial buildings, i.e., possessing commercial and residential uses).

3.4 Internal Review Process

Clearly documenting the internal review process provides predictability and consistency in the development review process, especially in the event of staff turnover (SOPs). The ZA process should be documented.

3.8 Access to Information

A guide to development and forms shall be available online. Roger City was offered as a strong example.

4.1 Recruitment Process

Having clear and accessible recruitment and appointment procedures attracts candidates. Board and commission applications are available online. Current application should be evaluated and updated to meet RRC requirements.

4.2 Expectations and Interests

The community sets expectations for board and commission positions. City of Escanaba was offered as a recommended example.

4.4 Bylaws

The ZBA needs to hold a meet to adopt bylaws.

4.6 Training Plan

Create a training plan that identifies training goals and expectations, funding sources, how training participants share outcomes with other officials/staff, how the community consistently encourages training, and is reviewed every 2 years.

COMMITTEE REPORTS – Bacon relayed that Village Council adopted the Zoning Ordinance amendment for signs. Schous mentioned the possibility of having a moratorium on temporary signs during election years.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS AND CHAIRPERSON COMMENTS – Ford commented on an article written by Nora Kenney titled The Uglification of Michigan Lake Towns, dated September 5, 2024.

ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:31 pm.

Alacia Acton, Recording Secretary

These draft minutes will be considered for approval at the November 7, 2024, Village of Empire Planning Commission meeting.