

- AGENDA -

REGULAR MEETING OF THE WEST BRANCH PLANNING COMMISSION TO BE HELD AT THE WEST BRANCH CITY HALL, 121 N. FOURTH ST. ON TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 2022, BEGINNING AT 6:00 PM

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Pledge of Allegiance.
- IV. Public Hearing
- V. Additions to the Agenda
- VI. Public Comment – Agenda Items Only – 3 Minute Limit (general rule)
- VII. Approval of Minutes from March 22, 2022
- VIII. Site Plan review
 - A. Riegle Exteriors
- IX. Sign Permit
- X. Unfinished Business
- XI. New Business
 - A. Masterplan review
- XII. Communications
- XIII. Reports and/or comments
 - A. Chairperson Report
 - B. Member reports
- XIV. Public Comment – Any Topic – 3 Minute Limit (general rule)
- XV. Adjournment

Call to Order

Roll Call

**Pledge of
Allegiance**

Public Hearings

Additions to the Agenda

Public Comment -Agenda Items

Approval of Minutes

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE WEST BRANCH PLANNING COMMISSION HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS
OF CITY HALL, 121 NORTH FOURTH STREET, ON TUESDAY, MARCH 22, 2022.

Chairperson Cori Lucynski called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Bob David, Yvonne DeRoso, Josh Erickson, Kara Fachting, Cori Lucynski, Mike Jackson, and
Rusty Showalter

Absent: None

Others officers in attendance: None

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All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Chairperson Lucynski opened the public hearing on changes to the zoning code at 6:02 pm.

Beth Peszko addressed the Commission and asked why they were relooking at changes at this time.

Chairperson Lucynski noted they had several questions and concerns at the time the State came out
with the Marijuana Act and the City had to opt in or out but they now felt many of their questions and
concerns were answered and were more prepared to make decisions.

Member Showalter noted the City originally opted out but always had the intention to relook at it once
the State laws became more evident.

Member Fachting noted that many of the what ifs had been answered since the law was passed.

Member Jackson noted a lot of the legal questions and concerns have been answered since the original
date when the City was required to opt in or out and they now felt more comfortable that the law could
allow for community revitalization, job creation, and economic improvement. He further noted the
Planning Commission was only voting on changes to the zoning ordinance and not on the decision to
allow or not allow the facilities with that decision falling on City Council.

Chairperson Lucynski furthered the statement by Member Jackson noting the Commission is only
approving the areas that each facility would be allowed to operate in if the City did vote it into effect.

The Commission went over the areas each facility would be allowed and the number of each type.

Ms. Peszko noted she was not in favor of it and expressed her concern with the large amounts of
marijuana advertisement associated with the businesses. The Commission did note they had some
requirements in place to help try and control the advertisement and make them more tasteful.

Member DeRoso noted West Branch Township has two sales centers approved already and they will be
bringing beautiful new buildings to the area.

Member Showalter spoke on his tours of sales centers noting how nice and professional they were. He also noted he had the same concern with signage expressed by Ms. Peszko and the City, while not being able to control the content of signs, did have points in the scoring rubrics for signage that does not display or feature marijuana defying logos.

The Commission discussed if there were any changes or addendums that needed to be considered. Member Fachting discussed churches not being included in the distance requirements and the possibility of not allowing business on Sundays.

Ed Peszko expressed his concern that by opening these centers could lead to more drug problems because marijuana is a gateway drug that can lead to stronger drugs.

Carol Adair spoke and noted in her years of working for 911, they had far less issues with marijuana than drinking alcohol.

Member Fachting noted marijuana has some medical value and isn't always used just a recreational drug.

No one else wished to speak on the subject.

MOTION BY DEROSO, SECOND BY ERICKSON, TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:34 PM.

Yes — David, DeRoso, Erickson, Fachting, Lucynski, Jackson, and Showalter

No – None Absent – None Motion carried

Chairperson Lucynski called for a five-minute recess. The Commission resumed the meeting at 6:39 pm with all members still in attendance.

MOTION BY DEROSO, SECOND BY DAVID, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE MEETINGS HELD JANUARY 11, 2021 AND FEBRUARY 7, 2022 AS PRESENTED.

Yes — David, DeRoso, Erickson, Fachting, Lucynski, Jackson, and Showalter

No – None Absent – None Motion carried

MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY DAVID, TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 22-01 OF 2022, CHANGES TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE.

Yes — David, DeRoso, Erickson, Fachting, Lucynski, Jackson, and Showalter

No – None

Absent – None

Motion carried

Chairperson Lucynski noted business in the area seems to be picking up.

Member David spoke on the Optimist Camel Race, noting it was a big success. Member David also noted the new Kits store downtown is fantastic.

Member Showalter and Chairperson Lucynski noted the Chamber Ball was also a big success.

Member DeRoso updated the Commission on her tour of the new Meijer's and noted real estate is still busy but the stock of houses for sales is low.

Member Fachting stressed the housing problem in our community and noted many of the people moving to jobs in this area are required to live outside of the County. Member DeRoso noted the City is continuing to work on their housing property in an effort to increase housing stock.

Member Fachting also noted an upcoming event downtown with a band asking that anyone who attends to bring canned goods for donation for the needy.

Member Jackson gave an update on the Meijer's construction.

Member Erickson noted the original survey that was sent out by the City was about 50/50 and he believed by not allowing businesses in the mixed use or downtown districts was a good compromise for both sides.

Member Showalter notified the Commission he was nominated to serve on a focal group through the MML to bring items of needs to the legislature on things communities are lacking.

Jocelyn Garza of the Ogemaw Herald asked about the process of the ordinance amendment. The Commission noted they were just in charge of putting the zoning requirements in place so it was ready if the City Council did decide to opt in. Member DeRoso went over the education processes involved in the decisions.

Chairperson Lucynski noted the concern that if the City did not put requirements in place and the State ever changed and said marijuana facilities have to be allowed, then they could lose some of their control.

Member Showalter updated the legislature of House Bill 531 which was on the floor and had potential changes to the Marijuana Act.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:05 pm

Site Plan Review

Zoning Administrator review

LOT/BUILDING RESTRICTIONS

This building and new addition is an addition to the current site plan at 2431 Refinery Rd where Riegle Exteriors is located. The property is zoned industrial.

USE

- The building and addition will be used as additional office and warehouse area which is allowed by right in the industrial district.

LOT AND STRUCTURE STANDARDS

- The building plans show for a 30' high building which is lower than the 45' max height
- The building lot size is 200'X300' for a total square footage of 60,000sf. Maximum lot coverage is 60% or 36,000sf. The existing building total sf is 5,600 and the new building and addition will add 8,768 which is still way under the maximum allowed.

SETBACKS

- The industrial setback requirements are 25' front, 25' rear, and 25' side setbacks
- The front set back is based on the road side which is actually the side of the new building and is noted as 50'. The setback minimum is 25' from the road right of way. The road right of way for Refinery road is 66' which puts the front minimum setback at 58' (33+25) from the center of the road. I am assuming the 50' noted is from their property line which would meet the requirements
- The left-side setback was not labeled but scaling it out did come out to 25'. I have added the hand written 25' so it is part of the plans and so the owner knows they must maintain that setback distance. The right-side property line is much larger than the minimum 25' requirement.
- The rear setback is again not noted but is much larger than the minimum 25' requirement.

PARKING REQUIREMENTS

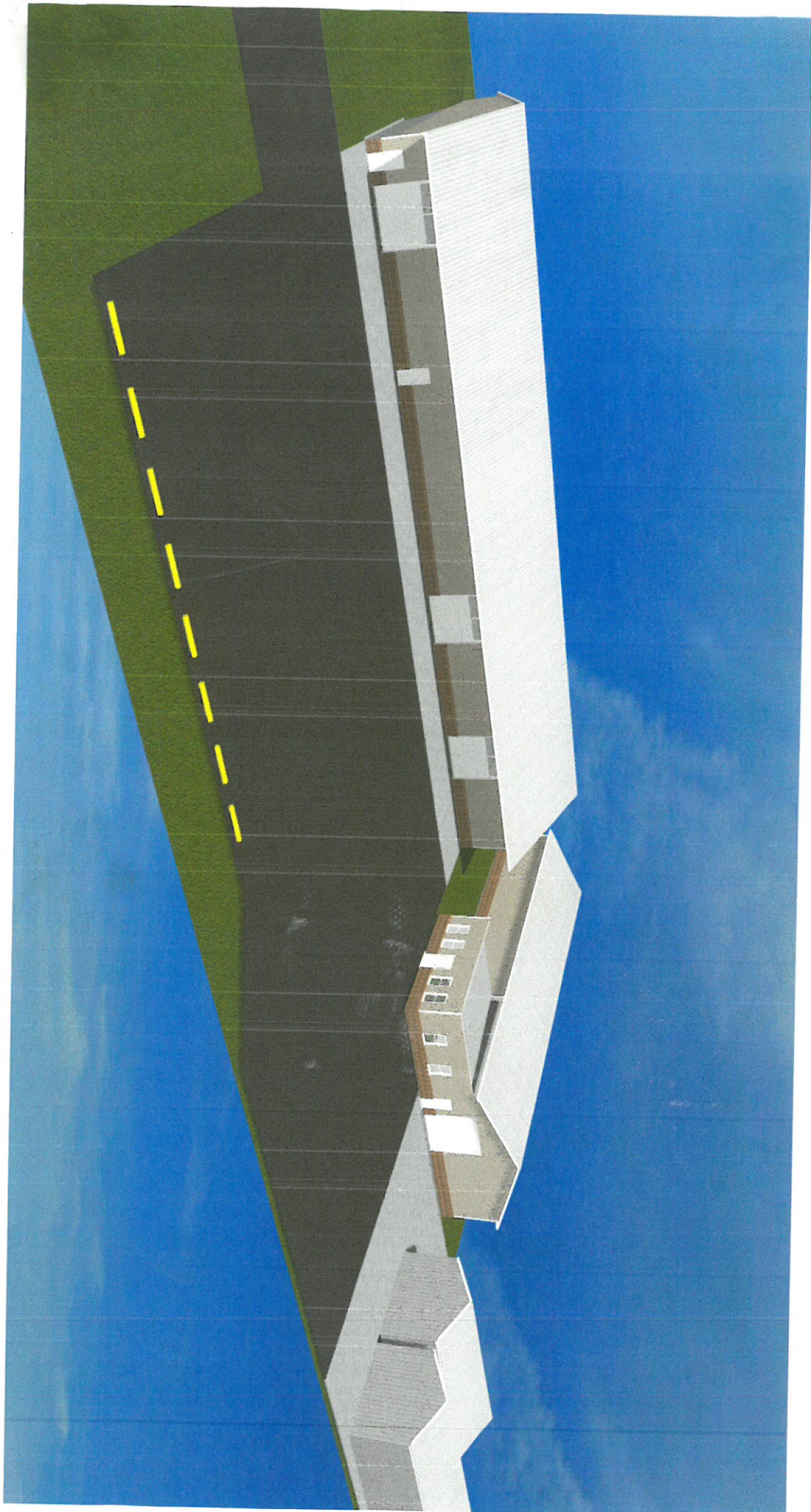
- Parking requirements are two spaces per employee. The plans call for a very large gravel parking area which exceeds the minimum requirements.

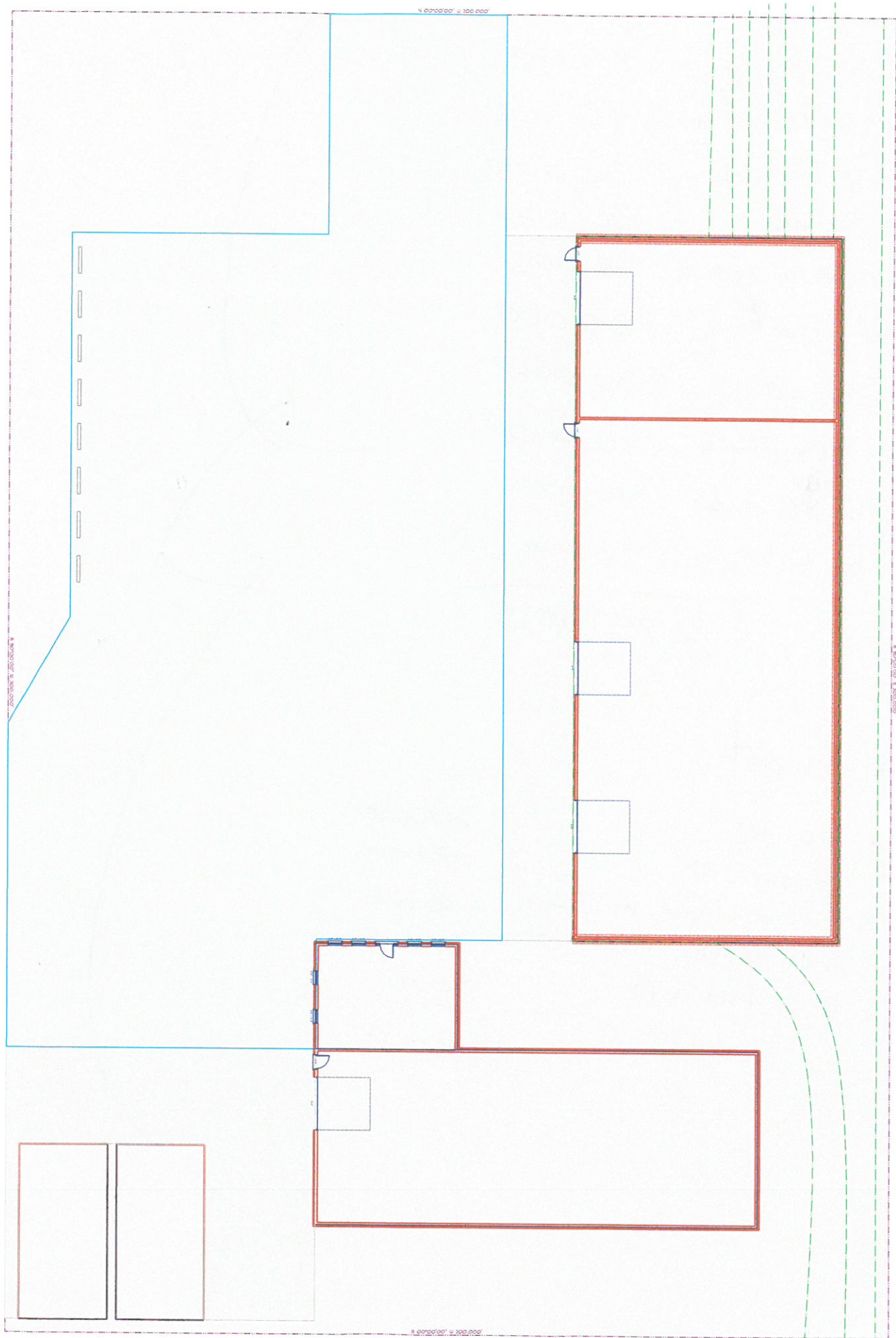
CONCERNS

The plan does note a gas line that looks like it runs under the building. Based on the location of it, I am assuming it is his private line but we should get confirmation from the owner that the line is his private line and not a DTE owned line. If it is a DTE line, then it is very possible there is an easement and we should not allow it to be built on that easement without written permission from DTE.

CONCLUSION

Based on the plans provided, this is an ideal building for the industrial park. I don't see anything in violation of our ordinance and am recommending approval of the plans as submitted as long as a gas line easement doesn't exist but recommend the approval include the wording that the left side set back line be 25' from the property line and the front setback be a minimum of 58' from the center of the road.





Sign Permit

Unfinished Business

New Business

As a requirement of the Redevelopment Ready community certification, in February, we must annually review the progress on the masterplan. The minutes just need to show that it was discussed and if anything on the plan was finalized. If anything is needed to be added and adopted, the approval process must be gone through again and noted in the progress remarks.



City of West Branch Master Plan 2019

West Branch, Michigan

Ogemaw County

www.westbranch.com

Adopted: March 4, 2019





WEST BRANCH CITY COUNCIL

Paul Frechette	Mayor
John Dantzer	Clerk/Treasurer
Dan Weiler	City Manager (2021)
Chris Powley	Council Member
Michael Jackson	Council Member (2021)
Joanne Bennett	Council Member
Cathy Zimmerman	Council Member
Ellen Pugh	Council Member
Bill Ehinger	Council Member
Tiffany Schmieder-Kups	Council Member (2021)

CITY OF WEST BRANCH PLANNING COMMISSION

Robert David	Chairman
Michael Jackson	Member
Kara Fachting	Member
Jan Hasty	Member
Yvonne DeRoso	Member
Corine Lucynski	Member
Lisa Jensen	Member
Rusty Showalter	Member (2021)
Evelyn Schenk	Member
Tiffany Schmieder-Kups	Member (2021)

CONSULTANTS

2014 Master Plan: Lapham Associates

2019 Master Plan Update: NEMCOG (Northeast Michigan Council of Governments)



Action Items

The following table contains strategies for implementing the primary goal and objectives found in the six focus areas listed above. It is important to note that, while responsible parties are listed, the City will make every effort to collaborate with partner organizations, other local units of government, and members of the public in order to ensure that the correct mix of stakeholders are involved in each item.

TIMEFRAMES

SHORT: Low cost, easy implementation, directly addressing top priorities, or critical to the advancement of other strategies, and to be implemented within the next 1-5 years.

MEDIUM: Important actions that have some level of significant cost and can be implemented within the next 5-10 years.

LONG: Actions that often require significant amounts of funding that must be planned for over time or require other strategies to be completed prior to their implementation.

ON-GOING: Actions that have no beginning and end period but which are continuously on-going in the City.

MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES			
OBJECTIVE	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
1 Citizen Involvement	Involve West Branch citizens in activities of the City that will advance the primary goal of this plan.		
	1. Use the City website to provide meeting agenda and minutes of all council, committee, commission, and other bodies as well as to explicate issues and matters of importance before these boards.	ON-GOING	City Staff
	2. Include as many interested citizens as possible on committees on other boards. Encourage members of various boards to participate with other boards to increase communication among all the City government divisions. These boards may also include county and regional groups.	ON-GOING	City Staff City Council Planning Commission
	3. Follow the West Branch Public Participation Plan to maximize citizen involvement.	ON-GOING	City Staff City Council Planning Commission
2 Housing	Maintain the City's high-quality residential neighborhoods and encourage new appropriate development.		
	1. Ensure that the City zoning ordinance provides for sufficient areas for the construction of high-quality dwellings, multi-family, townhouse, single family, and two-family, of varying densities and types including tiny homes and accessory dwelling units.	SHORT ON-GOING 21	Planning Commission
	2. Enforce the blight ordinances to eliminate conditions that discourage the upkeep of existing housing and the construction of new high-quality developments.	ON-GOING	City Staff
	3. Continue and promote the housing rehabilitation program for improving existing housing stock. Identify funding sources available for residential improvements and make property owners aware of such rehabilitation programs.	SHORT ON-GOING 21	City Staff County Housing Dept
	4. Partner with realtors/builders to attract developers that can construct desired housing developments.	MEDIUM SHORT 21	City Staff and Planning Commission
	5. Ensure the zoning ordinance allows for areas of mixed-use development, where appropriate.	SHORT COMPLETE 21	Planning Commission
	6. Consider the necessity of a rental inspection program.	MEDIUM	City Council

MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES			
OBJECTIVE	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
3 City Services & Infrastructure	Maintain and improve City services and infrastructure.		
	1. Continue to provide quality police and fire protection service to residents.	ON-GOING	City Council City Staff
	2. Continue to maintain, improve and plan expansion of water, sewage, and stormwater facilities, if needed.		
	3. Provide for adequate streets, and the maintenance thereof, that ensure safety while facilitating orderly growth.		
	4. Continue sound budgeting by departments with a goal toward fiscal responsibility to the residents.		
	5. Ensure infrastructure is in place for desired development.		
	6. Maintain the sidewalk repair/replacement program.		
	7. Explore options (i.e. tax abatements) that would further assist with business recruitment. Encourage City Staff to participate in programs, seminars, and conferences which educate on available opportunities.		
	8. Incorporate Complete Streets design concepts into the City's planning efforts and into the zoning ordinance to ensure all forms of transportation are adequately provided for.	SHORT ONGOING 21	Planning Commission
	9. Revise zoning to require sidewalks and standards for pedestrian connections to all new developments, and work to connect all existing developments along the corridor with sidewalks.	SHORT ONGOING 21	Planning Commission
	10. Designate neighborhood areas and create a neighborhood betterment plan pursuant to the Neighborhood Area Improvements Act (PA 208 or 1949).	LONG	City Council Planning Commission City Staff

	11. Continue to make the downtown area “pedestrian friendly” and attractive by continuing to install streetscaping features including street lights, trees where appropriate, benches, wayfinding signage, parks, and well-maintained sidewalks/paths.	ON-GOING	City Council/DDA/Planning Commission
	12. Ensure pedestrian connections existing throughout the City to connect residential neighborhoods to commercial and recreational areas.		
	13. Review and revise zoning to ensure that development of property within the City is not unnecessarily burdensome.	SHORT COMPLETE 21	Planning Commission
	14. Continue to negotiate with the Michigan Department of Transportation to re- surface Houghton Avenue and at the same time to replace aged sewer and water infrastructure in the right-of-way.	LONG SHORT 21	
	15. Continue to investigate, with MDOT, an alternative parking strategy in the downtown area. Work with MDOT to determine if a road diet is applicable.	LONG SHORT 21	
	16. Have installed traffic controls along the I75 Business Loop (Family Fare and Brian’s area). Include signage for the service drive in this area.	LONG	City Council City Staff Planning Commission MDOT
	17. Fill the gap between the City and the West Branch Township pedestrian and bicycle trails at the former Kmart property.	LONG SHORT 21	
	18. Consider developing access management standards for M-55 and other high-traffic city streets.	LONG SHORT 21	
	19. Participate in the Community Development Board.	ON-GOING	Community Development Board
4 Economic 1 (Sustainability)	20. Incorporate “green” zoning into the Zoning Ordinance, as appropriate.	SHORT COMPLETE 21	Planning Commission
	Promote and support existing businesses in the City and region to thrive and grow.		
	1. Continue to support tax incentives for industrial expansions.	ON-GOING	City Council
	2. Establish guidelines for landscaping, including screening standards.	SHORT COMPLETE 21	Planning Commission
	3. Develop downtown design standards to achieve a collective identity of the downtown.	SHORT	Planning Commission DDA

	4. Work with the DDA to implement strategies contained within the current downtown plan.	ON-GOING	Planning Comm, DDA City Council City Staff Surrounding Twps
	5. Continue programs to enhance façades and rear entrances of buildings, including potentially the MEDC/CDBG grant program.	MEDIUM	Planning Commission DDA
	6. Make changes to zoning ordinance and signage regulations to allow for greater flexibility in downtown area – mixed-use CBD district.	SHORT COMPLETE 21	Planning Commission DDA

MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
5 Economic 2 (Attraction)	Market the City and the region to attract additional commercial and industrial enterprises.		
	1. Work toward development of the priority redevelopment and infill development areas.	LONG	Planning Commission City Staff
	2. Inventory with local realtor's available buildings and properties and their conditions for sale or lease (utilize City and other websites to portray). Develop a database that contains specific information pertaining to each commercial/industrial property that can be used as a marketing tool for redevelopment.	MEDIUM SHORT 21	City Staff Local Realtors Planning Commission
	3. Market redevelopment ready properties through the RRC program with assistance from the State.	MEDIUM ONGOING 21	Planning Commission City Staff
	4. Determine the best mix of businesses needed in the downtown and identify needs and market to them.	MEDIUM	City Staff DDA
	5. In the Zoning Ordinance, include allowances for all types of mixed land uses in appropriate areas. Implement buffering and lighting standards where residential abuts non-residential.	SHORT COMPLETE 21	Planning Commission
	6. Support and monitor programs for rehabilitation by the DDA and Ogemaw County (Façade Improvements Program, Brownfields, etc.).	MEDIUM	City Staff DDA Ogemaw County
	7. Support and monitor marketing of the downtown with regional partners.	SHORT	City Staff, DDA Planning Commission City Council
	8. Ensure a strong marketing message is		

	created and displayed on the City's website and on other local websites.	SHORT	Surrounding Townships Ogemaw EDC
	9. Create a marketing pamphlet.	SHORT	Chamber of Commerce Tourism Bureau Other Partners
	10. Consider the expansion of the industrial park or a second industrial park, if needed.	LONG	City Council
	11. Ensure development approval processes are easy to follow, seamless, and predictable.	SHORT	Planning Commission City Staff
	12. Implement and maintain the practices outlined by the MEDC Redevelopment Ready Communities Program.	ON-GOING	City Council Planning Commission City Staff

MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
6 Tourism	Market the City and its environs to draw visitors and tourists to support local businesses and the local economy.		
	1. Continue special events that entertain residents and bring visitors to the City.	ON-GOING	City Council DDA Chamber of Commerce City Staff
	2. Continue to work with neighboring townships to market the downtown and adjoining commercial areas with the current brand of the community.	ON-GOING	West Branch Chamber of Commerce West Branch Tourism Bureau DDA
	3. Develop and install wayfinding signage that will direct visitors to the West Branch Downtown and to other special sites in the City and elsewhere.	MEDIUM	City Staff City Council MDOT DDA
	4. Continue to cooperate with the Chamber of Commerce, the Economic Development Corp., and neighboring DDA's to promote the City and its attractions	ON-GOING	City Staff Chamber of Commerce Tourism Bureau Ogemaw County EDC Surrounding Townships
	5. Maintain and improve City recreational facilities and expand where needed.	ON-GOING	City Staff City Council Planning Commission



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MASTERPLAN REVIEW ZONING ADMINISTRATOR NOTES

- Names of current members will have to be updated.

ACTION ITEMS

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| • 1.1 stay as ongoing | 4.4 stay as ongoing |
| • 1.2 stay as ongoing | 4.5 change to complete or ongoing |
| • 1.3 stay as ongoing | 4.6 stay as complete |
| • 2.1 stay as ongoing | 5.1 stay as long |
| • 2.2 stay as ongoing | 5.2 stay as short |
| • 2.3 stay as ongoing | 5.3 stay as ongoing |
| • 2.4 change to ongoing | 5.4 stay as medium |
| • 2.5 stay as complete | 5.5 stay as complete |
| • 2.6 stay as medium | 5.6 change to complete or ongoing |
| • 3.1-3.7 stay as ongoing | 5.7 stay as short or change to ongoing |
| • 3.8 stay as ongoing | 5.8 stay as short |
| • 3.9 stay as ongoing | 5.9 stay as short |
| • 3.10 stay as long | 5.10 change to ongoing or complete? |
| • 3.11-3.12 stay as ongoing | 5.11 change to ongoing |
| • 3.13 stay as complete | 5.12 stay as ongoing |
| • 3.14-3.15 change to complete | 6.1 stay as ongoing |
| • 3.16 stay as long | 6.2 stay as ongoing |
| • 3.17-3.18 stay as short | 6.3 stay as medium |
| • 3.19 stay as ongoing | 6.4 stay as ongoing |
| • 3.20 stay as complete | 6.5 stay as ongoing |
| • 4.1 stay as ongoing | |
| • 4.2 stay as complete | |
| • 4.3 stay as short | |

Communications

Reports

Chairman

Members

**Public
Comment
-Any
Topic**

Adjournment