

**Village of Lexington
Planning Commission Regular Meeting
Via Zoom
March 1, 2021
7 PM**

To dial in to Zoom meeting, call: 1 646 558 8656 Passcode: 8631

Call to Order Regular Meeting: Mike Ziegler

Roll Call: Beth Grohman

Members: Ziegler Stencel McCombs Fulton
 Kaatz Picot Macksey Morris Huepenbecker

Approval of Agenda:

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of Regular Meeting February 1, 2021 Page 1-2

Public Comment: (3-minute limit)

Zoning Administrator's Report Page 3

Old Business

1. Continue Discussion of Design Guidelines and Next Steps
 Review Information from Jamie McCombs Page 5-6
2. Development Guide – Mike Fulton/Dave Picot

New Business

Public Comment: (3-minute limit)

Adjournment

VILLAGE OF LEXINGTON
Planning Commission Regular Meeting
Via Zoom
February 1, 2021
7 p.m.

Regular Meeting called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Chairperson Mike Ziegler

Roll Call by Beth Grohman, Clerk

Present- Stencel, Picot, Fulton, McCombs, Macksey, Huepenbecker Ziegler

Absent – Kaatz, Morris

Others Present –Holly Tatman, and 11 citizens

Approval of Agenda: Motion by Huepenbecker, seconded by Macksey, to approve the agenda as presented.

All ayes

Motion carried

Approval of Minutes –

Motion by Huepenbecker, seconded by Fulton, to approve the minutes of January 4, 2021 as presented.

All ayes

Motion carried

Motion by Macksey, seconded by Fulton, to approve the minutes of January 20, 2021 as presented.

All ayes

Motion carried

Public Comment –

None Offered

Kaatz joined meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Zoning Administrator Report – No report

Old Business:

1. Discussion Design Guidelines – Huepenbecker presented a power point on the City of Hudsonville. Discussion on Hudsonville’s architectural guide and developing a design standards for Village. Recommendation for members to pick pieces of the Hudsonville Design Guidelines and Black Diamond Guidelines to work with and start to draft design standards for the Village. Forward ideas to Huepenbecker for discussion next month.

2. Discussion Accessibility on State Roads (M25 -M90) – In the site plan review the questions are lacking consideration for the right of way. State of Michigan should be included in the site plan review to assist in providing satisfactory access. Developers should check with MDOT. Discussion on developing access management standards.

3. Discuss Public and Private Road - Discussion on eliminating private roads in the Village and accepting the current private roads as public roads that may meet the road standards of the Village ordinance. Greenbush Subdivision and Birch Drive has approached the Village about making the roads public. Greenbush Subdivision did a

study and do meet the standards. Tatman suggested the Planning Commission look into guidelines for new developers regarding private road.

4. Approve Revised Meeting Schedule – Motion by Huepenbecker, seconded by McCombs to approve the revised meeting schedules as presented.

All ayes

Motion carried

Public Comment –

Larry Adams – Commented on the design guidelines, think it is a good idea.

Adjournment - Motion by Fulton, seconded b Picot, to adjourn at 8:47 p.m.

All Ayes

Motion Carried

Beth Grohman
Village Clerk

Thoughts Regarding Design Standards Jamie McCombs (February 5, 2021)

Structural Elements: Requirement of building codes for safety purposes. Ex. beam size, ingress, egress openings, etc.) Enforcement by Sanilac County Building Dept.

Air Space, Ground Usage: Usually refers to dimensional characteristics of a structure (square footage, height, width, length, setbacks. (These are included in our Zoning Ordinances.)

Architectural Style: Most likely based on Historical predecessors. Ex. Colonial, Victorian, Contemporary, Traditional, Bavarian, Italianate, etc. (there are subcategories of these also). Some communities use these "styles" to dictate a theme (i.e. Frankenmuth Bavarian) When it comes to style unless it is authentic to the era, most buildings are in "the style of ". The cheaper the materials the less authentic the look. Usage of token design elements (plastic shutters without regard to relevance,) does not make a colonial out of a cookie-cutter box.

I believe Architectural Style is our hang-up. Some feel a "have at it "approach with regard to STYLE is an individual prerogative. In my opinion, that is fine as long as the General Public does not have to deal with the economic consequence of individual taste. Exterior visuals impact everyone. As a Planning Commission member it is our duty to protect the economic stability of our Village. That means protecting "the elusive Small-Town Charm "our Master Plan has deemed so important to our quality of life which in turn attracts both visitors and residents to Lexington. In my opinion, our VILLAGE STYLE is our bread and butter. If we lose this, we will go the way of the stereotypical community, so commonplace in most lethargic towns.

I see each of our Zoning Districts as unique. One size cannot fit all. However, if you understand our historic growth pattern a distinct "style" emerges in each.

Central Business District (CBD): Traditional turn of the century, Midwest Main Street architecture is the predominant characteristic and I believe the most cherished. (B.R. Noble, Town Shop, General Store, Winery, Cadillac Restoration). These buildings give us a "sense of place" using current development lingo. The Smackwater complex incorporates this era by using the best of the downtown's historic designs. It was not cheap on the part of the developer, but would we want to leave the next major project to the whim of the investor? (We got lucky once, next time maybe not!) I see the CBD using a vintage Main Street look as the best practices for downtown retail design both in remodel concepts and infill, and yes, such architecture costs \$\$\$\$. P.C. needs to decide if the preservation of our traditional downtown is worth it. I do and I think the Master Plan already answers that question. (See attached- document on historic downtown architecture and key components)

As an aside, many years back a Main Street Program was quite popular to rehabilitate and revitalize downtown districts. (Port Huron picked up on this opportunity) It was presented to Lex. but the powers that be, turned away. Dave also has some experience with this program, if looked into again there may be Grant opportunities to offset costs.

Gateway Mixed Use (G-MU): The South End Gateway is comprised of many Gingerbread Victorian Cottage Style residences, some very historic in designation. This trunk line neighborhood was traditionally the original affluent suburb of town living. This is a designated mixed-use area and I think the most

adaptable to design standards with a much softer approach to commercial infill. Stringent criteria are necessary to protect these existing properties. This zone should include examples of Victorian carpentry (Fretwork, Corbels, etc.) and plentiful greenspace. I can't imagine a "BOX" between two stately Victorian Bed and Breakfast establishments. The Hudsonville Cottage Retail has some samples of this style, but I would remove the more commercialized architectural examples and stick to a cottage/residential template. thus, keeping the style of a residence with a low-key commercial usage. (Ex. a cottage turned art gallery or tearoom). There is absolutely no reason a new build infill office space can't look like a transitioned residence. It will take design standards to demand this style! Boxes are just a matter of monetary convenience by the investor. Presenting alternative design standards in pictorial form may lead to a less adversarial approach and a better understanding of our Village's vision for quality growth.

Corridor Mixed Use (C-MU): (South) I see this location as currently a mixed bag. It is already infiltrated with dense Commercial Zones. (Shopping Plaza etc.). As a transitional zone from GMU, perhaps incorporating the more expansive version of the Hudsonville Cottage Retail District using an example of infill new builds that do not overpower the core downtown architecture is a good mix. This zone does contain historic churches and small residential cottages. If not protected, more over-commercialized structures will swallow up the ambiance that is precarious at best. I would continue with a blending of the Post Civil War/World War 1 design standards. (Victorian to Craftsman).

CMU: (North) This is the hardest of all. There is no current established "style." During Lexington's early years, I would think, the uglies were banished. Stables, tanneries, lumber mills, and perhaps squatters. What is the architectural gem to emulate now? The Post Office? Void of any character! Gielow's barn look? Maybe not so bad after all if we wish to follow the North Ends architectural heritage, which is characteristic of a more rustic design standard, simpler in concept, less expensive than GMU and CBD criteria but still maintaining vintage style. Examples might be: Cedar siding, (shake and barn) raised metal roofs, natural stone. The important thing is authentic materials and a simpler approach. (Oh, did I say a rectangle?... never a box!!) The North End concept could integrate nature (walking trails) with complementary building styles and greenspace all proportioned to Village life and a pull up a rocking chair atmosphere.

So, I guess I am saying look to the past for guidance, especially if we want to protect that elusive Historic Charm!!! Even if one size doesn't fit all, I think we can still have it all with hard work and determination!