

**Village of Lexington
Planning Commission Regular Meeting
Village Theater, 7318 Huron Avenue
May 3, 2021
7 PM**

Masks covering both face and mouth are required in the theater unless speaking as a member of the Planning Commission, staff, or during public comments.

Call to Order Regular Meeting: Mike Ziegler

Roll Call: Beth Grohman

Members: Ziegler Stencil McCombs Fulton
 Kaatz Picot Macksey Morris Huepenbecker

Introduction of New Zoning Administrator: Jim Pierce

Approval of Agenda:

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of Regular Meeting March 8, 2021 Page 1-2

Public Comment: (3-minute limit)

Zoning Administrator's Report Page 3

Old Business

1. Discuss Design Guidelines Page 4
(Committee: Dave Picot, Jamie McCombs,
 Jim Macksey, Holly Tatman)

2. Discuss RRC Commitment requested of Council Pages 5-14
(Mike Fulton, Dave Picot, Holly Tatman)

New Business

1. Harbor Plan Update

Public Comment: (3-minute limit)

Adjournment

VILLAGE OF LEXINGTON
Planning Commission Regular Meeting
Via Zoom
March 8, 2021
7 p.m.

Regular Meeting called to order at 7:06 p.m. by Co-Chair Will Morris

Roll Call by Beth Grohman, Clerk

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

Absent – Kaatz, Ziegler

Others Present –Holly Tatman, and five citizens

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

All ayes

Motion carried

Approval of Minutes –

Motion by Huepenbecker, seconded by Fulton, to approve the minutes of February 1, 2021 as presented.

All ayes

Motion carried

Public Comment – None Offered

Zoning Administrator Report – Processed land use permits for a patio and home expansion. Opening for Zoning Administrator posted. Motion by Macksey, seconded by Fulton to accept the Zoning Administrator's Report as presented. Motion carried.

Old Business:

1. Continue Discussion of Design Guidelines and Next Steps – Review

Information from Jamie McCombs – Members discussed the Design Guidelines and the information McCombs presented. Also discussed guidelines for protecting the downtown area and big box stores.

Stencel -Concerns about being too restrictive regarding the ability to develop.

McCombs – The zoning ordinance has structural standards, but architectural styles are not dictated by it. Setting some design guidelines for architectural styles is the focus, to fit the character of the Village.

Morris – Maintaining the character but not limiting the business owners. Currently, some businesses do not conform to the architectural styles desired, if renovations are made to the exterior, would they now have to comply with the new standards? Would not force grandfathered buildings to change.

Picot – Enhance the ability to create some compatible and complementary architecture in our community if we were to add some guidelines. Recommendation to do an RFP for some professional help with creating design guidelines for all three mixed-use zones, CMU, GMU, and CBD. Picot also recommended members put together their thoughts on design guidelines and bring them back to the next meeting.

Macksey – Recommended consult with Robert Gibbs and Associates.

Tatman- Will reach out to other managers to see who has worked on the development of guidelines and get some cost estimates, recommendations, and copies of RFP's. Tatman to work with Picot and McCombs and bring back to the next meeting. Huepenbecker requested members to review the guidelines from Hudsonville and Black Diamond and send her their thoughts and highlights to present next meeting.

2. Development Guide – Fulton/Picot – Discussion on Best Practice Three. Having a more active role in assisting potential developers through the land use permit process. Picot drafted a checklist to help new developers. Picot, Fulton, Gail Picot, and Holly put together a draft of the development guide.

Huepenbecker suggested sending the draft to members. The current permit forms are being updated. Also, Chris Germain sent an update on where the Village is with the RRC.

Tatman said Council working on a new website. The RFP for a new website design is almost ready to send out. She reached out to other managers regarding website designers and cost estimates.

Picot asked for an update on the DDA Plan. Tatman said Carmine (CIB Planning) is working with them and a proposal is almost complete. They are waiting for information from the assessor. A draft plan may be available next month for the DDA to review.

New Business: None

Public Comment –

John Buszke – Commended the Commission on the development of the Master Plan which is one reason they chose to invest in the community. Enjoying the discussion of design standards. Design standards will help attract tourism. Appreciate the discussion and how helpful Holly has been.

Adjournment - Motion by Macksey, seconded by Huepenbecker, to adjourn at 7:54 p.m.
All Ayes
Motion Carried

Beth Grohman
Village Clerk

Zoning Administrator Report

Please find outlined below the activities of the Zoning Office during the month of April:

Land Use Permits (issued) –

(A) Residential - 2 (shed and relocation of garage)

(B) Commercial - 1 (office remodeling)

Land Use Permits (in process)

(A) Residential - 1 (backyard fence)

(B) Commercial - 1 ("Lexington Michigan's Super Stand Project - 5481 Main Street)

Complaints and Blight Concerns/Follow-up:

(A) In process - 6

(B) Completed/resolved - 1 I also handled several meetings and phone calls servicing various inquiries and answering a variety of questions.

I hope that this report is helpful and informative and I would be happy to follow-up and respond to any questions you may have.

Thank you very much.

Jim Pierce, Zoning Administrator

Request for Proposal
Architectural Design Guidelines
For Mixed use zones
In the
Village of Lexington.

Introduction:

Lexington just completed a new master plan and zoning ordinance. The process awakened the village to the importance of good architectural design. We hope to convey the importance of good design to new developments, and provide guidance to assure that new buildings and renovations are a good fit.

Lexington's Planning Commission is aware of the exhaustive efforts of other communities to manage architecture with hundreds of pages of detail. We feel the attending costs and scope is not a good fit for Lexington. Yet the majority believe more can be done to clarify and protect our interests.

Project scope and deliverables:

We want a document:

- To convey with imagery what our master plan and zoning ordinance does with text.
- With a strong statement of intent to promote fair interpretations for future challenges
- That communicates village preferences to a building architect that the village may choose for assistance with project planning and the reviewing process.
- To establish with all certainty that design requirements are legally within the villages' right.

Intent statement possibilities:

Through graphic representations primarily, and in support of the Zoning Ordinance, convey the structural possibilities for buildings and surrounds in mixed use zones to be compatible and complementary to permitted uses, and deliver a desired aesthetic and architectural enhancement to the community.

The Mixed use design document has been developed to complement and work in conjunction with the Village zoning ordinance and Master Land Use Plan. This document is intended to be a helpful design-centric resource representing community expectations for new construction, additions and renovations of the mixed use zones of Lexington.

RRC Discussion and Commitment Requested by Council

In order to meet the requirements of RRC the Village of Lexington needs to complete the items listed below. Some of these items require Council support and direction.

1. Council will need to do a resolution stating their desire to commit to “Essential or Certified” status of the RRC program. This classification dictates the services provided to us from MEDC upon certification and the layers of work that must be completed to receive that certification. A commitment needs to be made toward the certification level because there is a cost factor in order to execute some of the certification items as well as a commitment by individuals to follow through with the tasks.
2. Ask Council to require all committees review their committee rules/bylaws, update them annually if needed and have them posted to the website on their committee pages.
3. Ask Council to host 4 annual “informational” meetings prior to council meetings to discuss in a more flexible setting different issues, accomplishments and concerns within the Village. This allows for a back-and-forth discussion with the public verses the restrictions of the public comment portion of a council meeting.
4. Ask Council to invite other committees and boards to attend the 4 informational meetings throughout the year to help engage everyone to be involved and knowledgeable of what’s going on in the Village.
5. Ask council to require all board and committee members to attend at least 1 training throughout the year that pertains to their committee.
6. Ask Council to require a formal orientation strategy for all board and committee members once they are elected or appointed.

RRC and Lexington
A history

State wants to be competitive for business growth in the 21st century.

State identifies the potential in Placemaking as the preferred growth model for our state.

State strategy: Enable coastal communities to attract new business via the Placemaking Model.
(the business / talent / place connection)

State strategy implementation = Redevelopment Ready Communities

Lexington needs a plan for survival and sustainability.

Lexington understands that growth is necessary, but also realizes that not all growth is good.

Lexington chooses to partner with the state to attract locally desirable business.

Lexington resolves to participate in RRC.

State supplies \$120,000 for master planning.

State supplies a 600 page guide to placemaking.

State gives expert training and one on one assistance through the Community Assistance Team (CAT) of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. They help us develop the means to attract development.

State rewards certified Communities with plan implementation funding opportunities and direct assistance with marketing and site specific development.

Village has nearly completed requirements for 4 of the 6 best practices that define the RRC process. The six best practices are: community plans and public outreach, zoning regulations, development review process, recruitment and education, community prosperity, redevelopment ready sites

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the importance of quality places and the role of placemaking in creating and sustaining them. The more quality places in a community (from neighborhood to regional scale); the better! Communities with a large number of quality places provide a wide variety of choices for individuals and families, and that is what makes them attractive places where people want to live, work, play, shop, learn, and visit. These include choices in housing, transportation, recreation, education, and entertainment.

Communities with many quality places are well-positioned to attract new residents and retain existing workers. This is because increasingly people are choosing a metro area to live in first, before searching for a job. Because quality places matter, people tend to choose the highest quality places to live (within a metro area) that they can afford. This is especially true of talented workers who can often live in any region of the world they want. Because of the growing regional and global competition for talented workers, communities are increasingly recognizing the need to “up their game” and are engaging in

placemaking projects and activities to create more quality places attractive to talented workers.

Communities with many quality places are an asset to businesses that are constantly trying to attract and retain the best workers, suppliers, investors, and customers. So, an interdependent triangle exists between businesses, talent, and place. Business needs talent; talent wants quality places; quality places need business as illustrated in Figure 1-1. Placemaking is the means to create quality places that serve businesses, workers, and the community as a whole.

This chapter identifies the characteristics of quality places and how four different types of placemaking can be used to create and sustain them. As with the rest of this guidebook, the focus is on economic development and the role placemaking can fill in attracting and retaining talent and investment. It is rooted in Michigan’s recent economic struggles, which are not unlike that of much of the rest of the Midwest, and other U.S. regions with a predominantly manufacturing legacy. And like Michigan, most of the rest of these similar regions are rich with underutilized assets that can be used

Figure 1-1: Business-Talent-Place Triangle



Source: Content from the Michigan Sense of Place Council. Figure by the Land Policy Institute, Michigan State University, 2014.

Essentials or Certification – Which is right for my community?

Now that RRC has two paths to choose from, you may be wondering which is the right fit for your community. You are never locked in on only one path, but to help the RRC Team provide appropriate guidance and support, it is important that we know your intended goal. To help you determine this, consider the following factors:

- Community goals
- Community capacity
- Community support from local officials
- Community's ability to use benefits from each level

RRC Essentials may be a good fit for your community if....

- Your community's main reason for being in RRC is to be prioritized for MEDC Community Development incentives and you have a traditional downtown.
- Your community prioritizes building a *predictable* investment framework for community development versus a more proactive approach.
- Your community faces significant capacity limitations to complete RRC items and/or maintain the annual items from the Certified level.
 - Certified level annual items: capital improvements plan and PC annual report
 - Additional annual items for the Certified level: master plan progress report, public participation report, fee schedule reviews, annual development process review, annual training strategy update, and economic development strategy progress review.
- Your community is struggling to motivate local officials to support RRC-related updates and investments.
- Your community's ultimate goals do not align with the benefits of the Certified level.
 - i.e., if you have other local resources that could provide support like the Redevelopment Services Team or you do not need addition site marketing assistance.
- Your community does not have an active downtown or corridor TIF and does not intend to create a plan(s) for those specific areas.

RRC Certified may be a good fit for your community if...

- Your community's main reason for being in RRC is to be prioritized for MEDC Community Development incentives and you do not have a traditional downtown.
- Your community has the *desire and the capacity* to take on a more proactive approach to community development and plan implementation.
 - If your community does not have the capacity upfront, but you are willing to reprioritize existing capacity, then this could still fit.
- Your community has been engaged in RRC for some time and has already made *significant* progress toward Certification.
- You have support from local officials to complete RRC items and maintenance.
 - Annual items for the Certified level: capital improvements plan, PC annual report, master plan progress report, public participation report, fee schedule reviews, annual

development process review, annual training strategy update, and economic development strategy progress review.

- The benefits of the Certified level align with your community goals and the community has the capacity to access those benefits.
 - For example, the Redevelopment Services Team provides guidance for redeveloping priority sites, but the community still must be willing to be actively engaged in each project including negotiations, incentives, etc.
 - For example, RRC provides a community-specific site marketing page but the community must take the time to identify such sites and provide all the information needed to package for marketing purposes (RSTeam will do the actual packaging)

The table below outlines the benefits (tangible and intangible) available to your community based on your **current** status:

Benefit/Considerations	Engaged	Essentials	Certified	Notes
Used as prioritization factor for MEDC Community Development Incentive Requests	Yes*	Yes*	Yes	*For communities with a traditional downtown
Ongoing Best Practice Maintenance	Yes	Yes	Yes	Essentials has only 2 annual update components; certified varies depending on how the community incorporates the best practices but expect 6-8 items annually. Engaged varies depending on how far along the community is in the process.
Access to RRC Technical Assistance Match Funding	Yes	Yes	Yes	Amount depends on your declared level of intent: Essentials level maximum: \$20,000 Certified level maximum: \$30,000. Both up to 75% match.
Networking opportunities	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Marketable Asset ¹	No	Yes	Yes	Certified communities receive additional marketing materials.
Access to level-specific opportunities such as free training, discounts on development-related software, and special funding opportunities	No	Yes	Yes	Opportunities will vary by level and are continually evolving based on feedback. In general, certified communities should expect to receive more opportunities in this category.
Access to the Redevelopment Services Team	No	No	Yes	
Dedicated sites marketing page on www.miplace.org/sites	No	No	Yes	

¹ What each level allows the community to market varies: *Essentials* sends the message that the community has a predictable development experience based on a community vision; *Certified* level sends the message that the community is not only a predictable experience, but that it is proactively attracting or growing new development.

Best Practice Five: Community prosperity

5.1—ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Best practice 5.1 assesses what goals and actions a community has identified to assist in strengthening its overall economic health.

Today, economic development means more than business attraction and retention. While business development is a core value, a community needs to include community development and talent in the

overall equation for economic success. The goal of the economic development strategy is to provide initiatives and methods that will encourage diversity of the region's economic base, tap into opportunities for economic expansion and help to create a sustainable, vibrant community.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 5.1.1
The community has an approved economic development strategy.

EXPECTATIONS

- The economic development strategy is part of the master plan, annual budget or a separate document.
- The economic development strategy connects to the master plan and capital improvements plan.
- The economic development strategy identifies the economic opportunities and challenges of the community.
- The economic development strategy incorporates recommendations for implementation, including goals, actions, timelines and responsible parties.
- The economic development strategy coordinates with a regional economic development strategy.
- The economic development strategy is accessible online.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 5.1.2
The community annually reviews the economic development strategy.

EXPECTATIONS

- Progress on the economic development strategy is reported annually to the governing body.

Best Practice Five: Community prosperity

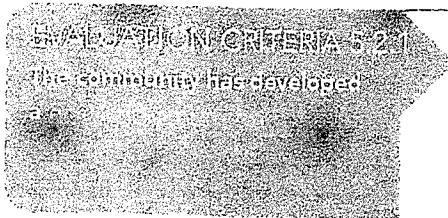
5.2—MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Best practice 5.2 assesses how a community promotes and markets itself to create community pride and increase investor confidence. It also evaluates the ease of locating pertinent planning, zoning and economic development documents on the community's website.

Community marketing and promotion can take many forms. Communities must develop a positive, promotional strategy through marketing campaigns,

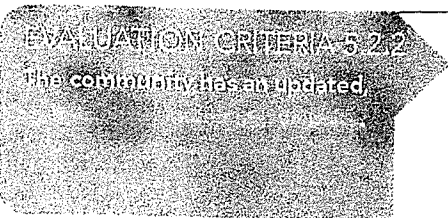
advertising and special events to encourage investment. Marketing campaigns can assist with sharing the established community vision, values and goals.

Developing a brand to promote a consistent identity can position a community for future success. A community's website is an important marketing tool and must be well-designed to provide information to the public and build a positive image.



EXPECTATIONS

- The marketing strategy identifies opportunities and outlines specific steps to attract businesses, consumers and real estate development to the community.
- The marketing strategy strives to create or strengthen an image for the community.
- The marketing strategy identifies approaches to market priority development sites.
- The community coordinates marketing efforts with local, regional and state partners.



EXPECTATIONS

- The community's website is easy to navigate.
- The community's planning, zoning and development information is grouped together with links to the following:
 - Master plan and amendments
 - Downtown plan
 - Corridor plan
 - Capital improvements plan
 - Zoning ordinance
 - Guide to development
 - Online payment option
 - Partner organizations
 - Board and commission applications
 - Property information packages
 - Economic development strategy

Post-certification Appendix

Best Practice Six: Redevelopment Ready Sites®

6.1—REDEVELOPMENT READY SITES®

Best practice 6.1 assesses how a community identifies, visions for and markets priority redevelopment sites. A redevelopment ready site is a site targeted by the community and ready for investment.

Identifying and marketing priority sites can assist a community to stimulate the real estate market for obsolete, vacant and underutilized property. Communities that have engaged the public and determined desired outcomes for priority sites create a predictable environment for development projects. A community which takes steps to reduce the risk of rejected development proposals will entice hesitant developers to spend their time and financial resources pursuing a project in their community. If a development proposal on a priority site is deemed controversial,

additional public participation opportunities should be held to ensure community support. To encourage development, it is essential that communities actively package and market sites prioritized for redevelopment. Developers look to invest in places that have an overall vision for the community and priority sites.

**Note: Once a community has met Best Practices 1–5, the RRC planner will connect the community with the Redevelopment Services Team (RSTeam). The RSTeam includes experienced staff dedicated to providing hands on technical assistance for proactive site redevelopment. The RSTeam will assist your community with RRSite identification, prioritization, visioning, packaging and marketing.*

<p>EVALUATION CRITERIA 6.1.1 The community identifies and prioritizes redevelopment sites.</p>	<p>EXPECTATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The community maintains an updated list of at least three priority sites. 		
<p>EVALUATION CRITERIA 6.1.2 The community gathers basic information for three priority sites.</p>	<p>EXPECTATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Required information to include: <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Photo of the site and/or rendering ➢ Desired development outcomes for the site ➢ Owner contact information ➢ Community contact information ➢ Zoning ➢ Lot size </td> <td style="vertical-align: top; padding-left: 20px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Building size ➢ State equalized value ➢ Utility contact information ➢ Utilities on site: Water, sewer, electricity, natural gas ➢ Wired broadband infrastructure: DSL, cable, fiber </td> </tr> </table> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Photo of the site and/or rendering ➢ Desired development outcomes for the site ➢ Owner contact information ➢ Community contact information ➢ Zoning ➢ Lot size 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Building size ➢ State equalized value ➢ Utility contact information ➢ Utilities on site: Water, sewer, electricity, natural gas ➢ Wired broadband infrastructure: DSL, cable, fiber
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<p>EVALUATION CRITERIA 6.1.3 The community establishes a vision for three priority sites.</p>	<p>EXPECTATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The vision includes desired development outcomes. <input type="checkbox"/> Community champions for redevelopment of the site are identified. <input type="checkbox"/> High controversy redevelopment sites may require additional public engagement as identified in the public engagement strategy. <input type="checkbox"/> The master plan and zoning ordinance have been reviewed for any updates needed to support the site vision. 		

Best Practice Six: Redevelopment Ready Sites®

6.1—REDEVELOPMENT READY SITES® *continued*

EVALUATION CRITERIA 6.1.4
 The community identifies negotiable development tools, financial incentives and/or in-kind support, and identifies any other incentives for future projects.

EXPECTATIONS

- The community identifies negotiable development tools, financial incentives and/or in-kind support, based on the project meeting the community's vision and desired development outcomes. Examples include:
 - Density bonuses
 - Local grants and loans
 - Abatements
 - Expedited approval process
 - Waived fees
 - State incentives

EVALUATION CRITERIA 6.1.5
 The community assembles a property information package for all potential priority sites.

EXPECTATIONS

- The property information package includes all basic information, site vision, financial incentives and the following as applicable:
 - Deed restrictions
 - Property tax assessment information
 - Property survey
 - Previous uses
 - Existing conditions report
 - Known environmental and/or contamination conditions
 - Soil conditions
 - Demographic data
 - Surrounding amenities
 - Planned infrastructure improvements as identified in CIP
 - GIS information including site location and street maps
 - Natural features map
 - Traffic studies
 - Target market analysis
 - Market feasibility studies
 - Special zone/district status
- The property information package is aesthetically pleasing and branded according to standards outlined in the marketing strategy.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 6.1.6
 Priority redevelopment sites are actively marketed in accordance with the marketing strategy.

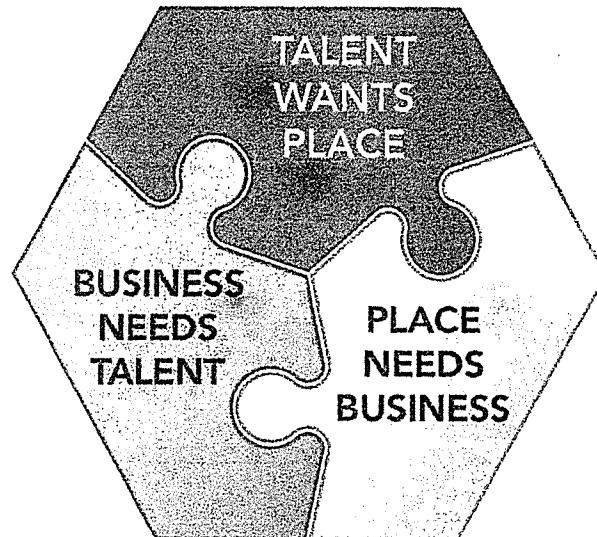
EXPECTATIONS

- The property information package(s) are accessible online.

Conclusion

The Redevelopment Ready Communities® program looks to foster communities that creatively reuse space, embrace economic innovation and proactively plan for the future, making them more attractive for investments that create places where talent wants to

live, work and play. RRC certification signals to business owners, developers and investors that the community has removed barriers by building deliberate, fair and consistent processes.



Communities not formally engaged in the RRC program, but wanting to work toward certification are encouraged to compare their current policies and procedures to the best practice standards by completing RRC self-evaluations. The self-evaluations are available to assist any community interested in being more redevelopment ready. Completion of the self-evaluation documents does not replace the formal evaluation process conducted by the RRC team. In addition to the self-evaluations, guides have been developed to act as resources for communities working on RRC Best Practice components. Each guide is a tool describing recommended processes and sample language. Every community has different needs and capacities, so the process and document can be tailored to fit individual community requirements.

To be vibrant and competitive, Michigan communities must be ready for development. This involves planning for new investment, identifying assets and opportunities and focusing limited resources. Communities must create the types of places where talent and businesses want to locate, invest and expand.

Certified Redevelopment Ready Communities® signal that locating a new business or growing an existing one is straightforward. Certified communities have removed barriers to development including eliminating uncertainties surrounding project timelines and approvals by implementing and executing the RRC Best Practices.

Contact the RRC team at rrc@michigan.org or your CATeam specialist with questions.