

MINUTES OF MEETING
CITY OF HOUGHTON PLANNING COMMISSION
MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2021 – 1:00 p.m.
CITY CENTER COUNCIL CHAMBERS

PRESENT: Bill Leder, Michele Jarvie-Eggart, Kristine Bradof, Jennifer Julien

Also present: Clerk Ann Vollrath, City Manager Eric Waara, Alan Kiley and Craig Waddell.

OPPORTUNITY
FOR PUBLIC
TO ADDRESS: No one addressed the Committee.

APPROVAL OF
PREVIOUS
MINUTES: A motion was made by Bradof and seconded by Julien to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2021 meeting as written.

Yes: All

No: None

Motion carried

BUSINESS: The members decided to keep the meeting to one hour in length. Bill Leder will create a google docs drive for the members to add comments and work on drafts.

The committee reviewed Chapter 13. Suggested changes or additions are:

- Possible changes to the incentives in the R-4 district and possibly increasing the size of the district. The R-4 district was created in 2017. At this time, one property owner made changes to their building to increase density. The agenda for the next meeting will include the R-4 district in an attempt to gain input as to if the incentives are working.
- Prepare for diverse housing types by allowing more density and possibly selling City-owned properties for development.
- Consider changes that may help elderly residents stay in their homes by allowing them to rent rooms to students. This may help the elderly resident by providing them with someone to do chores around the house, and provide income to allow them to stay in their homes. It may allow students to find less expensive accommodations. The City does allow owner-occupied rentals and accessory dwelling units.
- A suggestion was made to expand Houghton Housing Commission (corrected 7/19/21) apartments. It was noted that these apartments are for low-income residents and not all elderly residents meet the

criteria. PUD's can provide the potential for increased density and lower cost.

- Possibly allowing short-term rentals and assessing these rentals the room tax. The zoning ordinance subcommittee is already considering how to regulate short-term rentals.
- The zoning ordinance subcommittee is also considering removing density requirements in the R-3 and R-4 districts and adding architectural requirements.
- Add building height regulations downtown as a goal in the master plan. It should be explained why this is important.
- There is an increase nationally in urban farming including both animals and using front yards as vegetable gardens. Restrictions may need to be added to the ordinance. The committee may also want language that promotes native habitat.
- Identify legacy mining sites and recognize acceptable uses for redevelopment. A discussion was held about where this fits in the plan.
- Promote the history of Houghton and the history of historic buildings. The specifics should be kept in a separate document.

Chapter 10- Downtown was discussed. Suggested changes or additions are:

- Utilization of downtown including garbage and recycling collection and deliveries to businesses. Promote side streets for deliveries.
- Parking and traffic flow should be reviewed to see what is and is not working.
- Placemaking.
- Focus on diversity downtown.
- Add an art scene.
- Connect the waterfront and downtown.
- Promote the waterfront trail.
- Connect Montezuma Avenue to downtown.
- Put parking south of Shelden Avenue so that pedestrians can walk through downtown on their way to and from the waterfront.
- Follow-up on the parking deck ideas provided by the Michigan Tech senior design classes that expanded the parking decks on the south side of Shelden Avenue so they connect to Montezuma Avenue and Shelden Avenue. These decks also provide elevators to assist pedestrians with the grade change.
- Designate Huron Street as a pedestrian mall.
- Install rapid ~~red flashing~~ rectangular (corrected 7/19/21) beacons on Montezuma Avenue if MDOT approves to call attention to pedestrians.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 17, 2021 at 1:00 pm.

A motion to adjourn was made by Jarvie-Eggart and seconded by Bradof.

Yes: All

No: None

Motion carried

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Kristine Bradof, Secretary