

**VILLAGE OF PAW PAW PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
THURSDAY, MAY 04, 2023, 7:00 pm**

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The regular monthly meeting of the Paw Paw Planning Commission was held at the Paw Paw Township Hall Chamber located at 114 N. Gremps Street, Paw Paw, Van Buren County, Michigan.

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Larson at 7:00 pm.

2. ROLL CALL:

- MEMBERS PRESENT: KATHLEEN LARSON – CHAIR
 ASHLEY NOTTINGHAM – VILLAGE TRUSTEE
 EMILY HICKMOTT – SECRETARY
 DAVE BOGEN
 TOM PALENICK
 MICHAEL PIOCH
 JEFF BROWN
- NOT PRESENT: NONE
- OTHERS PRESENT: WILLIAM JOSEPH – VILLAGE MANAGER
 BRADLEY KOTRBA – VILLAGE PLANNER, WILLIAMS & WORKS

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: MOTION

Chair Larson inquired from the Commission if any changes to tonight's agenda were required, and after hearing none, Commissioner Pioch motioned to accept the agenda submitted for the May 4, 2023, regular Planning Commission meeting, seconded by Commissioner Nottingham. Motion passed.

4. MINUTES: MOTION

Chair Larson asked if there were any changes, additions, or corrections to the April 6, 2023, regular Planning Commission DRAFT MEETING MINUTES. Commissioner Brown motioned to accept April 6, 2023, meeting minutes, and Commissioner Bogen supported it. Motion passed.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

33 Chair Larson asked the public members if anyone would like to comment on any item, not on
34 tonight's agenda that they would have three minutes to speak and please step forward and state
35 their name and address. No members of the public were present so no comments were given. Chair
36 Larson closed the Public Comment session.

37 **6. NEW BUSINESS**

38 **a. 148 E. Michigan Avenue Site Plan Review**

39 Chair Larson opened New Business regarding 148 E. Michigan Avenue and commented that after
40 reviewing the staff report, which is quite thorough, directing the Commission to the bottom of
41 page two to highlight a typo in the staff report and asked for clarification of the typo from the
42 Village Planning Consultant. Mr. Kotrba stated that after discussing this issue with Ms.
43 Anderson, the regular Village Planner who was not present at this meeting, she explained that
44 the information was intended to convey the presence of an enclosed dog run on the former site
45 plan submitted in 2018 and that the updated plan set did not contain this enclosed dog run.
46 Therefore, she was unaware if this feature was indeed going to be included as a part of the
47 amendments that have been proposed to the new project. Therefore, it should be noted to the
48 Planning Commission that staff does not have complete information regarding this former dog
49 run enclosed by a five-foot-tall fence and whether or not this feature would be added to the
50 new plans, and what height the fence enclosing this potential feature would be. Larson thanked
51 Kotrba for the clarification regarding the minor typo located on page two.

52 Chair Larson then noted to the Planning Commission that they have all read through the report
53 and that she does not feel it is necessary to read through every item pointed out by staff. But it
54 is clear to all members that many items in this application have not been submitted or answered
55 as the Zoning Ordinance requires and therefore there are many issues that staff felt should be
56 resolved or answered before proceeding forward with this review. It was clear to both staff and
57 the Planning Commissioners that the lack of a site plan submission for this project really cannot
58 help answer any of their questions or concerns. Larson stated, and asked for confirmation from
59 Mr. Joseph, that the Village Council relies on making decisions based on Planning Commission
60 recommendations that contain a complete application and include all the necessary supporting
61 documentation for the Village Council to make an informed decision on any project. Mr. Joseph
62 confirmed this statement by Chair Larson.

63 Chair Larson noted that she reviewed the site plan submission items list in the Zoning Ordinance
64 and that it clearly states that 11 hard copies and a digital copy should be included, in the
65 submittal package and that they need to be drawn by a registered engineer, architect, or
66 landscape architect, and the plans must be stamped and sealed by the design professional
67 before any application should be accepted for a review. There is also a significant list of
68 submission items that must be drawn or located on the site plan or adjoining plans in the
69 application package, in addition to the application and fee. Therefore, it is clear that this
70 applicant has not submitted the most important part of the required package. Larson also

71 commented to the Planning Commissioners that they have only received a drawing and a basic
72 rendering of the proposal, and this submission included very little information about the
73 updated proposal, the dimensions of the updates, etc. which are required to be supplied before
74 an application is deemed accepted. The majority of the information that was provided to the
75 Village were copies of the drawings submitted over five years ago. These copies were of such
76 poor quality that it was nearly impossible to read the details that were actually on the drawings
77 and she could not even read it with a magnifying glass. Several Commissioners also agreed with
78 her about the clarity of the drawings submitted. Larson commented that this is unacceptable
79 and should not have been accepted by the Village and presented to the Planning Commission at
80 this time. All other Commissioners agreed with this statement. It was agreed upon to postpone
81 this review and no decision will be made until a proper site plan with supporting documentation
82 containing all the required information is submitted by the applicant.

83 There was further discussion about the overall height of the proposed structure and that it is
84 violating the maximum height in both feet and stories in the downtown district. This was a great
85 concern from Commissioner Brown and he would like to discuss whether this is indeed a four-
86 story or is it just an appurtenance similar to stairwell or elevator bulkhead houses, which are
87 permitted to exceed the maximum height of the downtown. Brown also commented that the
88 design overlay that covers the downtown district required all buildings in the downtown to
89 maintain and constructed with a “flat roof” and that the proposed roof structure does not
90 contain a flat roof. Brown further commented that the updated design will be visible from street
91 level and is much more obtrusive to the eye compared to the previous design. Therefore, it was
92 unanimously agreed that this decision should be postponed to a future date. Commissioner
93 Bogen made a motion to postpone this review to a future date until the applicant re-submits all
94 the required information to the Village before it will be accepted for review or consideration.
95 Commissioner Hickmott supported Commissioner Bogen’s motion. The motion carried.

96 **7. OLD BUSINESS**

97 **a. Planning Commission Work Program 2023-2024**

98 Chair Larson moved to New Business and the 2023-24 Planning Commission work program. She
99 requested who was putting together the annual work program for the Planning Commission and
100 asked Mr. Joseph if he was assembling this work program. Mr. Joseph confirmed this but noted
101 that he has not put anything together up to this point because he is unaware of exactly what the
102 Planning Commission would like to work on this year and would like to discuss that with the
103 Commission at this meeting. Larson also asked if the former Planning Consultant was the person
104 that drafted the work program before and Mr. Joseph confirmed this question as well. Kotrba
105 asked if a Planning Commission annual report was completed this Spring. Larson confirmed that
106 an annual report was drafted by herself and has been in the past and that it did contain a work
107 program that was sent to Village Council for review. Kotrba was pleased that this statutory
108 requirement was accomplished because many Planning Commissioners are unaware that this is

109 a requirement of the Michigan Planning Enabling legislation. Kotrba asked what items were on
110 this annual report work program list. Some of the items noted were several zoning ordinance
111 amendments, such as food trucks, short-term rentals, wall signage amendments, parking
112 standards, streetscaping standards, and potential design corridor overlays for the main corridors
113 that are the principal gateways to the community. It was discussed in the past that it may be
114 beneficial to create a gateway overlay to standardize the design requirements for these
115 corridors to create a friendly and welcoming appearance for visitors. The other major item on
116 the annual work program was the Master Plan update. Brown explained to Kotrba that McKenna
117 Associates completed the previous Master Plan in 2017 and they would like someone else to
118 perform this for their overdue update that needed to be completed in 2022. They inquired if
119 Williams & Works were familiar with writing Master Plans and had settled that for this update,
120 they would like the Planning Consultants to handle the Master Plan update process. Kotrba
121 explained that Williams & Works is very familiar with all forms of long-range planning and the
122 firm has been planning and writing long-range plans in addition to municipal planning
123 consultation since the early 1970s. This makes Williams & Works, one of the oldest, if not the
124 oldest, planning consultation firms in the State of Michigan. This segued into the Master Plan
125 discussion for the next agenda item.

126 **b. 2023 Master Plan Update**

127 Larson commented that each Commissioner had previously come up with a list of items to
128 change or add to the Master Plan over the last year and that it was not very focused or ordered,
129 that it jumped around the Plan a lot. Kotrba asked if he could get copies of each Commissioner's
130 listed items for a comprehensive overview of what their thoughts were because it would be
131 helpful before the next meeting. Larson explained that they do not have anything written down,
132 but that if the new consultation team reviewed the last several month's meeting minutes that it
133 should guide items discussed. Kotrba stated that he would gather all the meeting minutes for
134 review. Brown noted, that he would supply Kotrba with an updated list and email it to him with
135 new items that he has added to the older items he identified on his list. Kotrba thanked him for
136 his input.

137 Kotrba then asked if the Planning Commission has made its decision if an update has been
138 approved. Larson stated that no formal approval or request from the Village Council for a new
139 update contract, but that they are really in the discussion phase of whether a formal update is
140 necessary for this five-year review. Kotrba discussed the process that he feels would be most
141 beneficial for the Planning Commission to review the Master Plan and then at the end of the
142 review, the Planning Commission can make a final determination if the Master Plan needed to
143 be updated or if it was good for another five years.

144 Kotrba first stated that he would gather all the previous year's meeting minutes and comb
145 through them extracting topic highlights that happened during the meeting discussion about
146 Master Plan items that have been completed, should be kept, or if they were any new items to

147 add. He would take Commissioner Brown’s additional comments that he will provide to the
148 consultants and they will then perform an audit on the Master Plan and create a comprehensive
149 list chapter-by-chapter with staff comments in addition to Commission comments. This would
150 then provide the Commission with an organized list that the Planning Commission can then
151 review over the next couple of meetings to see what should or must be updated or changed.
152 Commissioner Palenick commented that the former Planning Consultant unfortunately was the
153 one that was writing down all these comments about changes or adjustments and that they will
154 likely be unable to have these notes now. Kotrba stated that it is okay, and this new audit run-
155 through will be structured and performed with the Commission which will likely spark thoughts
156 that the Commission had previously had with the prior consultant.

157 Commissioner Bogen also commented about their interest in a new survey or engagement piece
158 to include in a future update and this may be a good time to perform a thorough update and
159 create a new engagement or community input program. Brown asked if Williams & Works
160 would be able to use the old survey or most of the items from the old survey that McKenna
161 Associates had performed because the Village does not have any of the raw data or any
162 information from that piece of the last Master Plan in 2017. They only have the final pdf version
163 of the document and cannot provide the new consultants with any raw information to help
164 them work with any older information. Kotrba commented that this was okay and that the
165 consultant team would just completely rewrite the old information and transfer the final output
166 of the old survey into a new platform and re-analyze as much as they can get. He also
167 commented that it may be beneficial to add additional, newer items that are of interest to the
168 Commission or the Community in this new engagement piece which may not have been a
169 priority or concern during the creation of the last plan. Larson commented that they had 138
170 responses to their last survey, and would like to see more when a new one is created. Kotrba
171 asked what type of platform the survey was developed upon, whether was it a mailer, web-
172 based, etc. Hickmott commented that the last survey was a surveymonkey.com survey. Kotrba
173 stated that using that platform is common because it is the largest platform online to perform
174 surveys and that Williams & Works has used SurveyMonkey in the past and can easily use that
175 platform in the future if the Commission was happy with how well it worked.

176 **8. PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS**

177 Commissioner Nottingham commented on an Engineer review of the dam located downtown and
178 has the potential to repair the dam to a more updated size because it is only repaired to a
179 temporary point at the moment.

180 **9. STAFF/CONSULTANT COMMENTS**

181 Joseph commented that he attended the Van Buren County EDC Board Meeting.

182 **10. ADJOURNMENT**

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184 Chair Larson motioned to adjourn the regular Planning Commission meeting, and Nottingham
185 supported it. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 pm.

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Bradley S. Kotrba

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Bradley Kotrba, AICP, Village Planning Consultant

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Recording Secretary

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Approved 6/1/2023






Approved 5-4-23 PC Minutes

Final Audit Report

2023-07-10

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