

**LOWELL CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
November 9, 2020**

PRESENT: Blough, Batchelor, Simmonds, Clements, Edwards

TOWNSHIP PLANNER: Tim Johnson

CITIZENS IN ATTENDANCE: 1

The Regular Meeting of the Lowell Charter Township Planning Commission was called to order by Chairperson Simmonds at 7:04 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 12, 2020 REGULAR MEETING:

Mr. Edwards moved that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 12, 2020 be approved as submitted. Motion seconded by Mr. Blough. All in favor and the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 12, 2020 are approved.

CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:

There were no changes or additions to the Agenda

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:

The meeting was opened to public comment at 7:06 pm. No one spoke. Public comment was closed at 7:06 pm.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Review Draft 2 of Mixed Use Zoning District

Tim Johnson presented his Memorandum of November 3, 2020, reviewing the issues to be addressed in the drafting of this Ordinance.

Item 1, with respect to the two-use requirement, he suggested not requiring at least two allowed uses on the property. Mr. Blough expressed concern about early development of commercial uses and the traffic it would generate. Mr. Clements and Mr. Edwards agreed that it would be better to allow market forces to determine the uses developed in the Mixed Use Zoning District.

Chairperson Simmonds was concerned that only commercial uses would be developed. Mr. Batchelor felt that a percentage of the net property area should be set for commercial use. Tim Johnson suggested a maximum percentage of commercial be allowed, but the zone could still be developed as all industrial. Mr. Clements agreed, suggesting a maximum of 15% commercial be allowed, with language allowing the developer to come back to the Planning Commission to request additional area for commercial use. This will be the approach used in the next draft of the Ordinance.

Item 2, regarding three parcels in the Northwest corner of the MX Zone. It might be better to exclude these parcels from the MX Zone for now, by excluding them from the Master Plan description of the MX Zone. Mr. Blough agreed that they should be excluded for now, as did a majority of Planning Commission members.

Item 3, Residential Use in the MX zone. This use is to be excluded from permitted uses in this zone.

Item 4, concerning four small parcels on Cascade Road, East and West of Bancroft Road, currently included in the MX Zone. After discussion, it was decided to remove these parcels from the MX Zone, and have them be planned for commercial/light industrial uses.

Item 5, the Jansma Property, will comprise the MX Zone. It was suggested this zone be renamed. After discussion it was agreed to designate it the I-96 Planning Area.

Next reviewed was Draft 2 of the MX-PUD Zoning District dated November 9, 2020. Mr. Clements asked that the language in Section 15.01 g) be revised to make compatibility between the MX-PUD development, and the single family residences nearby, be made a goal rather than an absolute requirement. This suggestion will be reviewed.

With Section 15.05 d) 2), Chairperson Simmonds noted that FAA approval for building heights would also need to be considered, and that any structures on the property should be placed to prevent those structures from falling onto land outside the zone. The necessary language will be added. Mr. Clements asked if the Planning Commission would be able to specify setbacks from a roadway for buildings above 35 feet, and was advised that such could be done at the time each building is proposed. Mr. Clements also suggested that in paragraphs 15.05 h) and i), regarding driveway and loading areas, use of the language ‘avoid negative impact’ should be standardized in favor of ‘minimize negative impact’.

In Section 15.05 c) iv) at the end of the second line the word ‘area’ needs to be added. This Section number needs to be corrected, as there is a prior section also identified as Section 15.05, which addresses Development Standards.

Mr. Batchelor asked for clarification on the phasing of development in this zone. He was advised that there may not be a need to approve each phase.

Chairperson Simmonds asked about the language in the last paragraph of Page 9 addressing Township Board involvement in the authorization of individual lots or buildings to be developed. Tim Johnson advised that there would be a general list of uses added in another draft.

Review Draft Master Plan

Tim Johnson led the discussion of the new proposed planning ideas for draft Chapter 3, Land Use Planning Analysis dated November 9, 2020.

Agricultural land use information will be updated by Mr. Blough.

Residential land was next addressed. Regarding the expansion of the R-1 Zoning District North of the Grand River, to allow development of more 2-acre lots, Mr. Clements felt that the existing PUD lots in this area would be sufficient to meet the need for small lots for at least the next five years, and asked that such a change be postponed, and be discussed again in the next Master Plan review in 2026.

With respect to a similar suggestion to allow more R-1 rezoning South of the Grand River, Chairperson Simmonds felt the possibility of creating the permitted 2-acre lots in nine sections was excessive, and not yet needed. Mr. Blough thought making these changes would take some pressure off development of small parcels in the Ag-1 Zone. Chairperson Simmonds felt this was already controlled by strong limits on how many parcels for residential use can be created from Ag-1 acreage.

Tim Johnson indicated that based on input, he would drop his R-1 expansion proposal from Chapter 3.

With respect to Commercial land, current usage information will be updated but there will be no other changes.

Mr. Batchelor asked that the number of building permits granted in 2020 be included, to show how growth is trending.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Mr. Blough advised he will be asking the Township Board to request a traffic light at 36th Street and Alden Nash, given the dangerous nature and recent deaths at that location.

Chairperson Simmonds reminded members of the Planning Commission that there would be a public hearing on the proposed Fairgrounds on November 23rd, and that he would like to see this matter moved forward that evening as far as possible. The Fairground representatives have not provided further information since their last visit to a Planning Commission meeting.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Batchelor. Motion seconded by Mr. Blough. All in favor and the Regular Meeting of the Lowell Charter Township Planning Commission was adjourned at 9:22 pm.

Submitted _____ Secretary

Timothy Clements

Approved _____