

WORKSESSION

CITY OF MANISTEE PLANNING COMMISSION

70 Maple Street, Manistee, Michigan 49660

Thursday, November 16, 2000
7:00 p.m. - Council Chambers, City Hall

AGENDA

The City of Manistee Planning Commission will hold a worksession on Thursday, November 16, 2000 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 70 Maple Street, Manistee, Michigan.

I Roll Call

II Public Participation:

1. Anyone wishing to address the Planning Commissions
All public comment on all agenda items should be presented at this time. After this public comment is normally not allowed. Public comment is only to be on topics listed on this agenda. This is a work-study session. Thus public comment will be limited in time.

III Unfinished Business and Reports:

1. None

IV New Business and Communications:

1. Zoning of Annexed Property (New High School)
2. Master Plan
3. Other Business from members or its staff
- 4.

V Adjourn.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission Members

FROM: Jon R. Rose 
Community Development

DATE: November 9, 2000

RE: Planning Commission Worksession November 16, 2000

The Planning Commission will have a worksession on Thursday, November 16, 2000 in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Items on the Agenda are:

1. Zoning of Annexed property. The new High School property has been annexed from the Charter Township of Filer to the City of Manistee. The Planning Commission will need to determine how that property should be zoned.
2. Master Plan. We will discuss items that need to be addressed with the updating of the Master Plan. At the last meeting the extension of Maywood was discussed. Take a few moments to think about items you would like to see on a preliminary list for incorporation in updating of the Master Plan.

If you are unable to attend the worksession please call Denise at 723-2558. See you there!!

cc: City Council

ARTICLE 40 - MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

4001. PURPOSE

The purpose of the district is to provide open land areas for future orderly growth of urban development and residential properties of a rural character that are presently without public water and sewage facilities, and likely to remain without such services for an extended period of time. The requirements of this district are designed to restrict residential development to lots of sufficient area to accommodate the safe and healthful use of on-site water supply and waste disposal. It is also the purpose of this district to protect and stabilize the essential characteristics of these areas in order to promote and encourage suitable environments for low density family life, until such time as it may be in the public interest to promote development of a greater intensity requiring higher levels of public services and utilities.

4002. PERMITTED USES

The following buildings and structures, and uses of parcels, lots, buildings and structures are permitted in this district.

- A. A single family dwelling and any use, building or structure accessory thereto.
- B. Accessory uses, buildings and structures customarily incidental to any of the above permitted uses, which
 1. Are attached to a dwelling or
 2. Have a ground floor area of nine hundred sixty (960) square feet, or smaller.
- C. Livestock - No livestock other than common household pets and horses shall be housed or maintained on any premises in this district, provided however:
 1. It shall be permissible for residents in this district to keep for home consumption not more than twenty-five (25) fowl, but not to exceed twelve (12) ducks, geese, turkeys or rabbits, upon the condition that the yards and pens are maintained at all times in a clean and orderly condition.
 2. Residents of this district may maintain horses on a lot of not less than five (5) acres, number of horses not to exceed two (2) per five (5) acres, upon the condition that the pasture and premises are maintained at all times in a clean and orderly condition.
 3. Provided further that any building or similar structure movable or permanent being used as housing for livestock be situated not less than fifty (50) feet from any lot line and that the fences for pens, corrals or similar enclosures must be sufficient height and strength to retain animals and not be

situated any closer than ten (10) feet to the adjacent property line.

4003. SPECIAL USES AND SITE PLAN REVIEW

The following buildings and structures, and uses of parcels, lots, buildings and structures are permitted subject to Section 1031, High Risk Erosion area; Section 9401 et. seq., Site Plan Review and obtaining a special use permit as provided in Section 8601 et. seq.

- A. Multiple family dwelling
- B. Planned unit development
- C. Public swimming pool and recreation club, and public and private park and playground.
- D. Church and public building.
- E. Public and private nursery, primary and secondary school.
- F. Home occupations
- G. Police, fire and ambulance stations, public office building.
- H. Signs - See Section 1060, Sign Regulations.
- I. Temporary dwellings - See Section 1071.
- J. Accessory uses, buildings and structures not attached to a dwelling, and customarily incidental to residential dwellings which have a ground floor area larger than nine hundred sixty (960) square feet.

4004. REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS

- A. Lot Area - Each dwelling hereinafter erected or altered shall be located on a lot not less than twenty thousand (20,000) square feet in area, provided, however, that if a central or public water supply system is made available before any construction is begun, the lot area may be reduced to a minimum of fifteen thousand (15,000) square feet. Provided further that these minimum lot dimensions shall not prevent the use of single lots of a subdivision recorded on, or before the effective date of this ordinance, which are smaller in size than required above and whose owners possess no contiguous land from which the above requirements could be met on the effective date of this ordinance.
- B. Lot Width - The minimum lot width shall be one hundred (100) feet.
- C. Building Area - No dwelling shall be hereinafter erected, or altered in this district which shall have less than seven hundred twenty (720) square feet of floor space in the first floor level, with a minimum exterior width of twenty (20) feet.
- D. Yard and Setback Requirements:
 - 1. Front yard - The minimum setback shall not be less than thirty-five (35) feet.

2. Side yards - The minimum width of either yard shall not be less than ten (10) feet; except in the case of a corner lot where the side yard on the road or street side shall not be less than thirty-five (35) feet.
3. Rear yard - The minimum setback shall not be less than thirty-five (35) feet.
4. The minimum setback for accessory buildings shall be ten (10) feet and not less than ten (10) feet between buildings.
5. Any structure, use or activity located on a parcel of land which is contiguous to the boundary of the Wetland Conservation District (Section 2501 et. seq. of this ordinance) shall have a minimum structure setback of two hundred (200) feet, measured as the shortest distance between the Wetland Conservation District boundary and the portion of the structure closest to the Wetland Conservation District boundary. Further, there shall be maintained a fifty (50) foot buffer of undisturbed, uncut, natural vegetation running parallel to and along the Wetland Conservation District boundary.

E. Height:

1. For buildings and structures - no building and no structure shall exceed a height of two (2) stories or thirty-five (35) feet.
2. For detached accessory buildings - no building and no structure shall exceed a height of ten (10) feet at the eave and sixteen (16) feet at the ridge board if a permitted use and ten (10) feet at the eave and thirty-five (35) feet at the ridge board if a special use; the total ground floor area of all buildings on a parcel shall not exceed twenty-five (25) per cent of the total parcel area, or the area of the building envelope, or a four thousand (4,000) square foot total, whichever is the smaller.

F. Required off-street parking - as required in Section 1052.

G. Regulations and standards - as required in Section 1003.

ARTICLE 44: R-3 RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

4401. Purpose

It is the intent of this District to protect established neighborhoods, existing housing with neighborhood public facilities such as schools, churches, play fields; while at the same time providing for continued development of privately held vacant lands, redevelopment of larger homes, at a density of four (4) to six (6) living units per acre and under some circumstances more dense development; and to be consistent with Medium Density Residential (MDR), and respective Public/Quasi Public (PUB) provisions of the Manistee City Master Plan of 1988, adopted as part of the City's comprehensive planning.

4402. Permitted Uses

Only the following uses shall be permitted, by permit, as specified in Section 8401 *et. seq.* of this Ordinance:

- A. *Outdoor Recreation-Parks* (including boardwalks)
- B. *Dwelling*
 - 1. *home occupation*
 - 2. *parking for currently licensed automobiles*
 - 3. *on lake front lots, one boat dock for private use*
 - 4. *storage of recreational vehicle(s), boat(s), boat trailer(s) or trailer(s) only in a side yard, rear yard or driveway.*
- C. *Duplex*
- D. *Accessory Buildings and uses to the above*

4403. Special Uses

Only the following uses shall be permitted, by *Special Use Permit*, as specified in Section 8601 *et. seq.* and according to the Standards in Section 1604 *et. seq.* of this Ordinance:

- A. *Apartment Building*; with no more than one (1) living unit per each two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet of *parcel* area when located in a converted *single family dwelling* which does not alter the exterior of the *building* and off *street* parking is provided
- B. *Hotel and Motel [7011]*; when located in a converted *single family dwelling* which does not alter the exterior of the *building* and off *street* parking is provided.
[Annotation: This subsection added by amendment, effective January 12, 1991.]
- C. *Educational Services [82]*
- D. *Religious Organizations [866]*
- E. *Planned Unit Development*
- F. *Accessory buildings and uses to the above*

[Annotation: This section changed by amendment, effective September 11, 1992, November 19, 1992, March 19, 1993 and May 18, 1998]

4404. Regulations and Standards

The following regulations shall apply to permitted uses and special uses in this District.

- A. *Parcel Area* - No *building* or *structure* shall be established on any *parcel* less than ten thousand (10,000) square feet in area.
- B. *Parcel Width* - The minimum *parcel width* shall be one hundred (100) feet and it shall

- front on a public *street*.
- C. Yard and Setback Requirements - The following requirements shall apply to every *parcel, building or structure*.
1. *Front Yard*: The *minimum setback* shall not be less than thirty (30) feet from *front property line*, or sixty-three (63) feet from centerline of a *street*, whichever is greater. In established neighborhoods, where a majority of the *buildings* do not meet the required *front yard setback*, the *Administrator* may establish a reduced *setback*. This reduced *setback* shall be the most common of the existing *front yard setbacks* of all principal *buildings* that are on the same block and front on the same *street*. This reduced *setback* provision shall be applicable to *front yard setbacks only*.
[Annotation: This section changed by amendment, effective September 11, 1992]
 2. *Side Yards*: The *minimum width* of either *yard* shall not be less than ten (10) feet;
 3. *Rear Yard*: The *minimum setback* shall not be less than ten (10) feet. For *accessory buildings*, the *minimum rear yard* and *side yard setbacks* shall be three (3) feet, excepting garages which front on a platted *alley*. Such garages shall be set back a *minimum* of twenty (20) feet from the *property line* on the opposite side of the *alley*, to provide a *minimal turning radius* for vehicles, but at no time shall the *structure* be closer than three (3) feet to the rear *property line*. The *side yard* for such garage shall be the same as for other *accessory structures*, as outlined above.
[Annotation: This subsection was changed by amendment, effective April 17, 1992.]
- D. No *dwelling* shall be constructed in this District which is less than one thousand two hundred (1,200) square feet of *building area*, and is less than twenty (20) feet wide.

ARTICLE 46: R-4 RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

4601. Purpose

It is the intent of this District to protect the established neighborhoods, *use* and adoptive reuse of large historic homes and other *buildings*; while at the same time accommodate multiple *family*, historic districts, and a variety of public institutions, and an intensity of development of seven (7) to sixteen (16) living units per acre; and to be consistent with High Density Residential (HDR), the areas designated for single *family* in the Special Project Plan number five Manistee River North Bank (SPD5) and respective Public/Quasi Public (PUB) provisions of the Manistee City Master Plan of 1988, adopted as part of the *City's* comprehensive planning.

4602. Permitted Uses

Only the following uses shall be permitted, by permit, as specified in Section 8401 *et. seq.* of this Ordinance:

- A. Outdoor Recreation - Parks
- B. *Dwelling*
 - 1. *home occupation*
 - 2. parking for currently licensed automobiles
 - 3. on lake front lots, one boat dock for private *use*
 - 4. storage of recreational vehicle(s), boat(s), boat trailer(s) or trailer(s) only in a side yard, rear yard or driveway.
- C. *Duplex*
- D. Marinas [4493], only if located on a *parcel* which has direct or contiguous access to navigable water.
- E. Accessory Buildings and Uses to the Above

[Annotation: This section changed by amendment, effective March 19, 1993]

4603. Special Uses

Only the following uses shall be permitted, by Special Use Permit, as specified in Section 8601 *et. seq.* and according to the Standards in Section 1604 *et. seq.* of this Ordinance.

- A. *Apartment Building*, with no more than one living unit for each two thousand seven hundred (2,700) square feet of *parcel* area.
- B. Hotels and Motels [701]; when located in a converted single *family dwelling* which does not alter the exterior of the *building* and off *street* parking is provided.
- C. Finance, Insurance and Real Estate [H:60-6799], EXCEPT
 - 1. Depository Institutions [60]
 - 2. Non-Depository Institutions [61]
- D. Services [I:70-8999], EXCEPT
 - 1. Hotels & Lodging [70]
 - 2. Laundry [721]
 - 3. Funeral Service [726]
 - 4. Services to Building [734]
 - 5. Mix Equipment Rental [735]
 - 6. Auto Repairing Services [75]
 - 7. Motion Pictures [78]
 - 8. Amusement [79]
 - 9. Hospitals [806]
 - 10. Medical & Dental Laboratories [807]

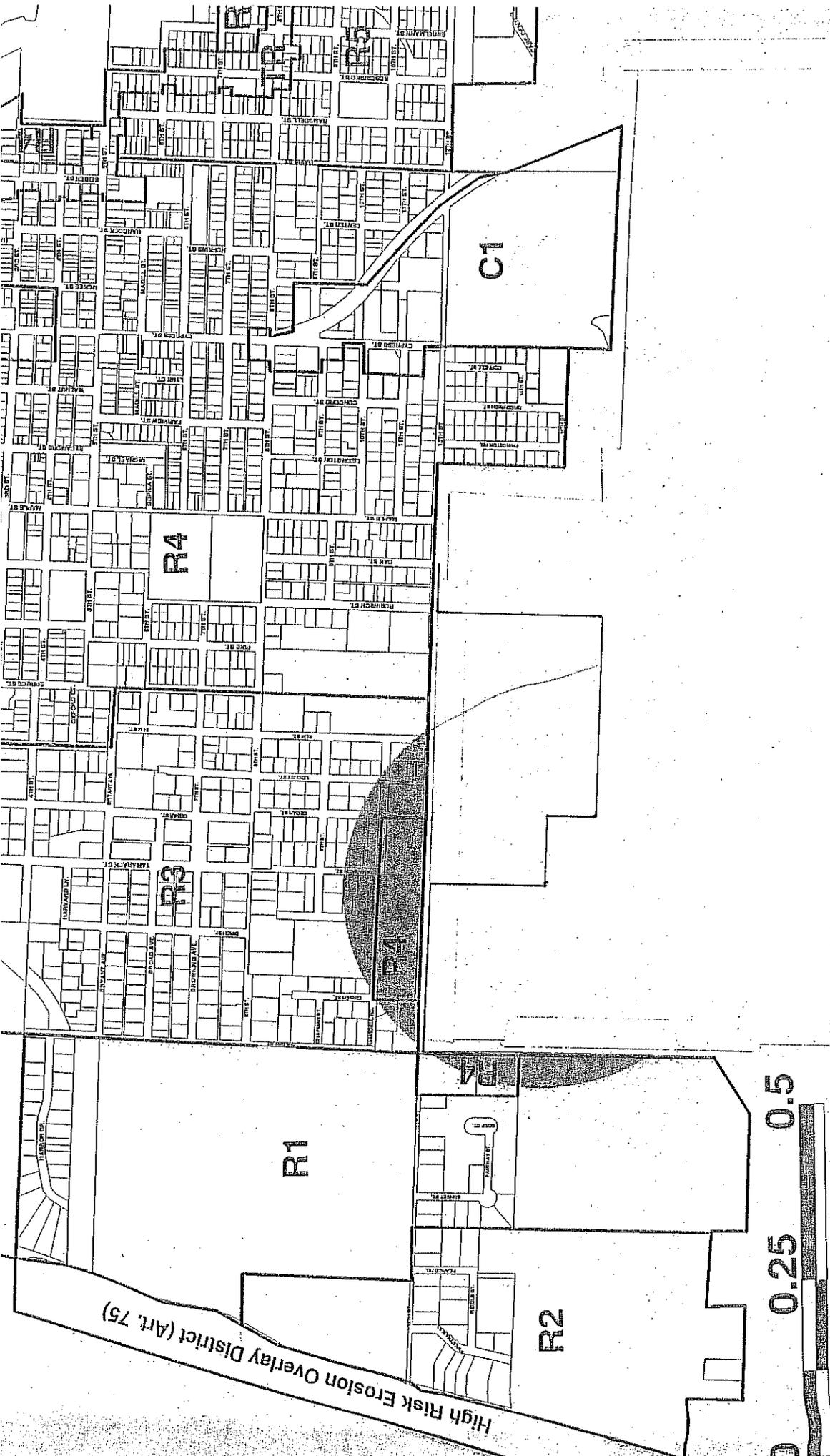
- 11. Health & Allied Services, NEC [809]
- 12. Research & Testing Services [873]
- E. Public Administration [J:91-9799]
- F. *Planned Unit Development*
- G. *Accessory building and uses to the above*

[Annotation: This section changed by amendments, effective January 12, 1992, April 17, 1992, September 11, 1992, March 19, 1993 and May 18, 1998]

4604. Regulations and Standards

The following regulations shall apply to permitted uses and special uses in this District.

- A. Parcel Area - No *building* or *structure* shall be established on any *parcel* less than six thousand (6,000) square feet in area.
- B. Parcel Width - The minimum *parcel width* shall be sixty (60) feet and it shall front on a *public street*.
- C. *Yard and Setback Requirements*
 - 1. The following requirements shall apply to every *parcel, building* or *structure*.
 - a. *Front Yard*: The minimum *setback* shall not be less than twenty-five (25) feet from front *property line*, or fifty-eight (58) feet from centerline of a *street*, whichever is greater. In established neighborhoods, where a majority of the *buildings* do not meet the required *front yard setback*, the *Administrator* may establish a reduced *setback*. This reduced *setback* shall be the most common of the existing *front yard setbacks* of all principal *buildings* that are on the same block and front on the same *street*. This reduced *setback* provision shall be applicable to *front yard setbacks* only.
 [Annotation: This section changed by amendment, effective September 11, 1992]
 - b. *Side Yards*: The minimum *width* of either *yard* shall not be less than ten (10) feet. For *accessory buildings*, the minimum *rear yard* and *side yard setback* shall be three (3) feet;
 - c. *Rear Yard*: The minimum *setback* shall not be less than ten (10) feet. For *accessory buildings*, the minimum *rear yard* and *side yard setbacks* shall be three (3) feet, excepting garages which front on a platted *alley*. Such garages shall be set back a minimum of twenty (20) feet from the *property line* on the opposite side of the *alley*, to provide a minimal turning radius for vehicles, but at no time shall the *structure* be closer than three (3) feet to the rear *property line*. The *side yard* for such garage shall be the same as for other *accessory structures*, as outlined above.
 [Annotation: This subsection was changed by amendment, effective April 17, 1992.]
 - d. *Waterfront Yard*: The minimum *setback* shall not be less than fifty (50) feet from the normal high water line.
 [Annotation: This subsection was added by amendment, effective January 12, 1991. The *Appeals Board* will not give consideration to waterfront *variance* requests of less than fifteen (15) feet from the ordinary high water line for all parcels fronting on the Manistee River Channel. The intent is to preserve open space for public walkways. See January 24, 1994 *Appeals Board* minutes.]
 [Annotation: This section changed by amendment, effective September 24, 1993]
 - 2. When a proposed nonresidential *use* is contiguous to a *dwelling* or *duplex*, a *buffer area* measured from the *parcel* boundary on which the *dwelling* or *duplex* is located shall be maintained which includes one of the following, at the *Commission's* consent:
 - a. fifty (50) feet from the *parcel* boundary on which the *dwelling* or *duplex* is located, or
 - b. a berm four (4) feet or more high, or
 - c. a solid wall four (4) feet or more high.
- D. No *dwelling* shall be constructed in this District which is less than one thousand (1,000) square feet of *building area*, and is less than twenty (20) feet wide.



High Risk Erosion Overlay District (Art. 75)

0 0.25 0.5

Miles



Zoning Versus The Master Plan

The role of planning versus zoning became a major thread of land use law in the 20th century. Which had priority, planning or zoning? Generally, it was assumed the Comprehensive Plan (otherwise called the Master Plan or General Plan) had priority, and land use regulations were created to implement the plan. This made rational sense, for the characteristics of the Comprehensive Plan included the following:

1. Plan for the physical development of a community
2. Be future oriented
3. Be geographically and functionally comprehensive
4. Include land use, public facilities, and circulation elements

This presumption of primacy of the Master Plan has been established through court cases, and establishes a firm basis for regulation through zoning.

Where there is no evidence that the legislative body's zoning decision was based upon a factual and analytical framework, no consideration of significant conditions in the community, and no focus on the particular piece of property at issue, the zoning decision must be suspect. The factual studies and analytical framework necessary to review zoning decisions most often are manifest in the form of comprehensive plans...

This view has been taken by courts in many states. For example, in *Raabe v. City of Walker*, 383 Mich. 165, 174 N.W.2nd 789 (1970) the Supreme Court of Michigan noted that:

"The absence of a formally adopted municipal plan, whether mandated by statute or not, does not, of course, invalidate municipal zoning or rezoning. But it does, as in *Biske, supra.*, weaken substantially the well known presumption which, ordinarily, attends any regular-on-

its-face municipal zoning ordinance or amendment thereof." 174 N.W.2d at 796.¹

Although the logic of having zoning regulations follow the Master Plan is inescapable, in practice that is not how it has happened. In most communities, Master Plans were looked on by the public as government instilling its will on private property owners, while zoning was seen as the tool for protecting personal private property rights and property values.

It is not mere coincidence that the concept of zoning came into being at the same time suburban areas were first being developed. The construction of inter-urban transit lines and the development of the automobile allowed middle and upper class residents to leave the density and congestion of the central urban areas and buy a house on a larger lot just outside the urban fringe. These homeowners, who had just "escaped," developed a real concern that the problems of the city would follow them to their new, pristine environments. To keep this from happening, they needed to have protective regulations, and zoning provided the perfect vehicle to give this protection. Thus, in spite of how it was stated in theory, zoning's real purpose was to protect single-family homeowners and their neighborhoods. In fact, zoning has been considered by most middle and upper income homeowners as the primary method for protecting their home and property, and this has led to its incredible popularity and support.

No one is enthusiastic about zoning except the people. The non-people--the professionals--hope it gets lost. The judges find zoning a monumental bore, most lawyers consider it a nuisance, and the planners treat it as a cretinous member of the planning family about whom the less said the better.²

In a sense, it must be seen that planning follows zoning, and gives legitimacy to it. Planning may seem more legitimate, since it can consider the broad implications of social issues and ills, and appear to accommodate the concerns of all segments of society. But planning is perceived as big on theory and concept and short on practical application. It is zoning, the behind-the-scenes tool whose importance is largely overlooked, that a community ultimately relies on for protection.

Zoning can be viewed as just one of the many tools a city has to deal with questions of land use and development, and to carry out the objectives of planning. But in essence it is just about the only effective tool a city has to deal with these agendas. To be involved with a planning commission or planning department at a local level, it becomes obvious that communities do not really plan -- they just zone. Planning may determine capital expenditure projects, and the location of public services and infrastructure, but it is zoning that defines the ultimate use of each particular parcel of developed land.

Peter Marcuse, in an article written for the APA (American Planning Association) Journal, lists a number of "critical junctures" in the history of planning where planners could have had a significant impact, but instead waived their responsibility. As he describes it, one of those key junctures took place in the 1920s, when zoning was first becoming accepted. Marcuse contends that planners defaulted by not embracing zoning, but rather seeing it as a threat to them professionally. Because of this, they lost the opportunity to mold the concept of zoning to also deal with social ills, and "...reject its use to exclude the poor, blacks, or unconventional households, from entrenched residential communities, which made zoning more a tool to protect real estate values than to improve the quality of life in democratic communities."³

In the areas where it was applied, zoning has been justified on the basis of its retaining property values. Initially, this appears to be a positive aspect. The defense of zoning is usually stated in fiscal terms. This argument usually says that to keep taxes in line there should not be an undue burden on local services, including schools. Therefore growth must be contained. Larger properties provide relatively higher tax base with minimal cost for services.

However, zoning is a government program, and as such it should serve the needs of the larger community first. The stability resulting from zoning is not uniform throughout the community as a whole. What must be recognized is that although it may help maintain property values in one area, it may cause a decline in property values in another neighborhood, where those who cannot break the zoning barrier must remain. Thus, the

<http://www.emich.edu/public/geo/55/book/c133.versus.html> 11/8/2000

question must be asked whether the overall community benefit is served, or is the gain in one neighborhood more than offset in other neighborhoods, indirectly impacted by zoning, where it does not work to the advantage of residents, but through benign neglect to their disadvantage.

¹ Robert L. Judkins. 1990. "The Presumption of Validity Is Weakened Without Adequate Planning." *Planning and Zoning News*. August 1990. p. 8.

² Babcock. *The Zoning Game*. p. 17.

³ Peter Marcuse. "Who/ What Decides What Planners Do?". *APA Journal*, Winter 1989: 79-81.

Suggested other pages... 

<u>Problems with Zoning</u>	<u>The Downtown Master Plan</u>
<u>Legal Aspects of Zoning</u>	<u>Performance Zoning</u>



The Downtown Master Plan

The Master Plan, or Comprehensive Plan, is the planning document which gives a general framework which includes planning for the development of downtown, or the center city, area. Charles Haar¹ has referred to the master plan as a form of "impermanent constitution." Its purpose is to lay out a future for an area, and to provide reasonable certainty and predictability for potential investors.

The purposes of a downtown master plan are numerous. The downtown master plan should give direction for positive change, indicating how much and what kind of development is appropriate, and what is not. It should also give guidance for day-to-day decisions by city officials, since the planning commission and city council cannot and should not handle all the details of the development process. It should suggest the impact of changes over time. The plan can give better visual definition to the downtown--recommending height restrictions and setbacks, for example. It should include a plan for the regeneration of older, blighted areas, and also give outlines for concerns of historic character and the preservation of historic fabric. The master plan should deal with the timing of development, suggesting an appropriate time frame for the development or redevelopment of various areas. Finally, the plan should serve as a document for the common citizen to understand proposed changes and put them in a proper context, and it should define obligations for city officials and those that follow on appropriate decision-making.²

Traditionally, the characteristics of a master plan are that it plans for the physical development of the downtown, that it is future oriented, and that it is geographically inclusive and looks at the entire downtown or center city. Elements of the plan will include a designation of permitted land uses, development of public facilities, and an analysis of transportation and circulation patterns. Such master plans are usually developed using the

"rational planning process," a process that includes the following steps.

- survey and analysis of data
- make projections into future
- develop goals for future growth
- establish planning policies based on goals

What the Master Plan should do...

1. Give direction for positive change while keeping livability (guide how much development)
2. Give guidance for day-to-day decisions
3. Give better visual definition physically (height restrictions, open space)
4. analyze impact of new development (especially the impact of new roads, sewer lines)
5. Give guidance for redevelopment of older areas (blight removal vs. historic rehab)
6. Encourage proper timing for development (e.g., provide incentives for housing, not offices, in downtowns)
7. Should be clear enough for common citizen to comprehend
8. Should be considered an obligation for elected officials and those that follow.

The Master Plan and Zoning

Master plans are important planning documents, and should be the primary document for planning an area of a city. But historically, master plans, which deal with policies and programs, have been overlooked in favor of documents that deal with regulations. For instance, although zoning ordinances are meant to follow the ideas of the master plan, very often zoning regulations preceded the development of the plan.

City planning courses teach that zoning regulations represent the means for implementing master plans; but the first New York City zoning resolution predates the establishment of the New York City Planning Commission by twenty-two years, and the publication of the city's first comprehensive plan by fifty-three

years. The experience of other American cities has been similar, showing that zoning first, planning afterwards, is the usual sequence.³

¹ Charles M. Haar and Jerold S. Kayden. 1989. *Zoning and the American Dream: Promises Still to Keep*. Chicago: Planners Press.

² From a paper prepared for the Michigan Society of Planning Officials conference in March, 1992, prepared by Mark Eidelson, Brenda Moore and Mark Wyckoff.

³ Jonathan Barnett. 1982. *An Introduction to Urban Design*. New York: Harper and Row.

Suggested other pages...

<u>Profile of Planning Department</u>	<u>The New Master Plan</u>
<u>Planning Dept. Organization Chart</u>	<u>Zoning versus the Master Plan</u>
<u>Zoning for Downtowns</u>	

Contacts:

Master planning: Jim Segedy, Ball State University



TRAVERSE CITY MASTER PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Copies of the City Plan

What Is the City Plan?

The City Plan "master plan" is a key product of a continuous planning process and is an official statement of goals and policies that express a vision about the future of Traverse City. The City Plan is policy oriented and provides a consistent set of policies for evaluating subsequent proposals. It is intended to be used as a guide to help decipher those proposals, both public and private, that contribute to the community from those that do not.

Who Created It?

Over sixty residents of the community served as resource people on the early drafts of the City Plan . In addition, hundreds of hours of public testimony were received by the Planning Commission. Public input generated many changes to the initial draft. On September 28, 1994 the Planning Commission adopted the City Plan. Since then, the Planning Commission has held additional public hearings and with new input received by the public, several revisions were made. Since planning is an ongoing, inclusive public process, it can be expected the City Plan will continue to be changed.

Who Implements the City Plan?

Implementation of the City Plan occurs over time. Accepting a grant to improve an intersection, a decision to buy bayfront property or to rezone or not rezone someone's property are examples how isolated individual decisions implement the Plan. Developing a capital improvement program and

adopting zoning laws consistent with the City Plan are important ways the Plan gets implemented. If the City Plan becomes out of date and no longer reflects the goals and values of the community, the document loses value and needs to be rewritten. To keep the vision current a public review of the City Plan is planned each November.

[[TOP](#)]

Community Goals

Seventeen community goals provided the basis of the City Plan. Essentially, these goals are consistent with the community goals found in the 1977 City Plan. The order is not of importance.

1. Maintain a small-town atmosphere.
2. Protect and enhance the rich, natural environment.
3. Promote a healthy mix of residential and business development while providing for the preservation of property values and the opportunity for economic expansion.
4. Preserve and enhance the community's historic resources.
5. Plan parks and open space areas and recreational opportunities within neighborhoods.
6. Boardman Lake and Boardman River south of Eighth Street will serve primarily as a recreational and residential resource.
7. Boardman River north of Eighth Street

will serve primarily as a commercial, recreational and residential resource.

8. Preserve existing neighborhoods, including residential, business and industrial. Encourage active neighborhood and business associations and assist in developing neighborhood plans.

9. Maintain and encourage a diversity of housing.

10. Promote the development of community centers and neighborhood centers.

11. Maintain and encourage a vital Regional Center.

12. Promote a diversified and sustainable economy.

13. Support industrial growth in industrial parks and in appropriate areas throughout the City.

14. Provide for planned growth with an awareness of change.

15. Create a balanced and diversified transportation network, including air, rail, public transit and motorized and non-motorized travel.

16. Maintain a consistent zoning enforcement policy.

17. Continue cooperative governmental action to deal effectively with local, area

and regional challenges and goals.

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Resource Protection Plan

A high quality environment is vital to the economic health of Traverse City and the quality of life enjoyed by the residents. This chapter of the City Plan recognizes that both the natural and built environments contribute to Traverse City's desirability to as a place to visit and live. Resource exploitation or destruction for short term economic gain without consideration of long term impacts will contribute to an uncertain future. The City Plan advocates development standards that will protect the communities historic resources.

Historic Resources

Several historic areas are noted. These include: downtown/old town, the neighborhoods adjacent to downtown, Oak Park and Slabtown neighborhoods and Grand Traverse Commons.

Environmental Resources

The City Plan identifies nine sensitive environmental resources where specific development protection measures are needed. Those resources highlighted for protection include the: Grand Traverse Bay shoreline, river and stream banks, wetlands, hillsides, woodlands and areas of special soil conditions, air quality, water quality and contaminated sites.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan

Although parks do not contribute directly to the tax

base of Traverse City, these public open spaces do intrinsically contribute to the desirability of living and working in Traverse City. This increases property values which in turn increases the tax base of the City.

Our parks and open spaces provide conservation areas which also serve to help protect fragile natural resources, such as the water quality of the Bay. The Plan proposes the fragile natural resources be secured, when economically feasible, for permanent open space. Additional parkland along the Bays and in neighborhoods deficient in parks is also a priority.

Accessibility

Improving accessibility to the community's parks and recreational areas for children and adults is a key ingredient for the City Plan. The Plan emphasizes the need to maintain and construct bike-paths and walkways which will link neighborhoods to our parks and recreational areas. Equally important is the need to make the City's parks and recreational facilities accessible to those who are handicapped.

Parks & Open Space Acquisitions

The long term goal of the City Plan is to have nearly all of the West Arm of Grand Traverse Bay shoreline in public ownership between Bryant Park to the intersection of M-22 and M-72 (near Tom's West Bay). The Plan also seeks to develop parks in areas currently devoid of recreational sites. The deficient areas are primarily south of Eighth Street. For more specific information regarding parkland acquisition, the Traverse City Parks and Recreation

Plan should be consulted.

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Community Facilities Plan

Urban Service District

The City Plan recommends that urban services be limited geographically in order to gain some control on the outward growth of the community. By embracing such a concept to limit areas for urban services, the City Plan recognizes that Traverse City and the surrounding townships will need to encourage higher densities. To implement an urban service area the Plan recognizes that it will take regional cooperation among the local units of government..

Public Utilities

The Plan describes key public facilities and their capacity to serve growing demands. The waste-water treatment plant is nearing its capacity and due to site limitations, expansion is limited. The Plan suggests that a new plant in the region will be needed. The Traverse City Light and Power's long range plan to remove the power plant from the Bay by 2009 is noted in the Plan.

Community Buildings

Community buildings like the library and schools provide valuable services, but they also are tax exempt. When these facilities expand, the City Plan encourages they do so in an efficient manner. One policy

states, "Encourage community buildings, when feasible, to expand internally or upwardly as an alternative to outward expansion. An outward expansion might mean to take additional property off the tax roll.

Trafficways Plan

Philosophy

The City Plan purports that transportation should adequately serve Traverse City, not dominate it. Following this philosophy, priority is placed on making cost-effective minor improvements to the existing major street system, without sacrificing community character. The Plan suggests that road widening projects be carefully scrutinized to determine their impact on the community and small town character we wish to preserve. Therefore, it is intended that alternative techniques be explored in determining their practicality prior to making investment decisions to widen streets and intersections.

Priorities

Paving, resurfacing, improving carrying capacities of intersections, reducing the number of driveways on existing streets, allowing on-street parking and installing sidewalks and bike lanes are all viewed as high priorities. Consideration of the non-motorist shall be an integral part of all street improvement projects. Streets should be designed to encourage motorist to travel at safe speeds.

Reducing Demand

The City Plan recognizes some roadway expansion is necessary, but also encourages looking for ways to reduce the demand for travel. By placing job sites and some commercial conveniences near homes travel demands can be reduced. For example, the promotion of the corner market at the edge of a neighborhood and adding housing units downtown are two ways to reduce traffic growth.

The City Plan also encourages development to coordinate traffic circulation with adjacent properties when appropriate. Through the use of shared driveways and integrated parking, traffic congestion and accidents in commercial areas can be reduced.

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Street Improvements

Major Streets

Immediate improvements will make more efficient use of the existing major streets and call for the most basic changes, such as installation of computerized traffic signals, reduction of the number of driveways and improvements to 17 intersections. In addition, the City Plan supports a new north/south road along the west shore of Boardman Lake. The purpose of this road is threefold: 1) Improve access to downtown, 2) Reduce traffic demands on Union and Cass Streets

and 3) Improve accessibility to underdeveloped properties along Boardman Lake.

Three major streets (West Front-west of Cedar Street, South Garfield -north of Eighth Street and Peninsula Drive-north of East Front Street) are specifically recommended to remain as two-lane streets since they bisect residential areas. It is anticipated that intersection improvements will help increased volumes of traffic projected for these street segments.

Minor Streets

In residential areas, special consideration is given to design minor streets that will encourage slow traffic speeds and discourage through traffic. Recommended treatments for existing streets may include traffic-calming designs such as retaining on street parking and using traffic circles.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Travel

There are areas within Traverse City that are vehicle-oriented, where driving is encouraged and walking is difficult. Numerous driveways, obstacles, and lack of sufficient right-of-way to develop adequate sidewalks contribute to an environment hostile to the pedestrian. The Plan supports street improvement projects that consider the needs of the pedestrian and bicyclist by incorporating sidewalks and bike lanes.

Parking

It is the intent of the Plan in the long term to reduce the need for parking by promoting compact, mixed-use developments which put services, shopping, jobs, and housing within walking distance of one another. When parking is provided, it is the goal of the Plan to reduce the unsightly impact of parking lots by placing them on the side or rear of buildings. In downtown, several parking structures are sought to free up space for new buildings and reduce visibility.

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Rail and Air Transportation

The Plan anticipates a resurgence in rail transportation in northwest lower Michigan for the shipment of products. The present volume of traffic in Traverse City does not warrant rail lines on both sides of Boardman Lake. With a new rail bridge planned to be constructed south of town one set of tracks can eventually be removed.

Passenger service is also a possibility in the future. Because of likelihood that transportation will become increasingly important, the sale of abandoned rail corridors should strongly be discouraged. Both active and unused railroad corridors should be evaluated as potential corridors for recreation trails and/or a light rail system.

Air Transportation

The Cherry Capital Airport is a vital link to the Traverse City's economy and provides a significant

economic impact. Its ability to expand, however, is constrained by urban areas and topographical obstructions. To meet the needs long term needs of a growing metropolitan area, the Plan suggests a new site for a commercial service airport should be initiated.

Land Use/Design Plan

The Land Use Plan is a conceptual vision for recommended land use. Compatible residential, business, commercial, industrial and civic uses are encouraged to locate as neighboring uses. To achieve compatibility between uses on nearby sites, building and site design must be addressed. The siting and design of buildings, parking lots, maintenance of privacy and screening of environmental irritants such as unsightly walls, glare, noise and dumpsters are all important considerations.

Residential Lands

Neighborhoods provide the foundation for the City to grow and prosper. Without these "building blocks", the town is susceptible to decay and fragmentation. Consequently, the City Plan places great importance on enhancing residential areas and protecting them from negative influences such as uses which generate excessive noise, traffic or late hours of operation. The Plan supports compatible new residences within existing neighborhoods. Multiple family developments are envisioned along Boardman Lake, the Morgan Farm area (northwest portion of the City) and in downtown.

Housing Density

The Plan calls for a wide range of densities throughout Traverse City. Generally, the existing neighborhoods will maintain their current lower densities. The Morgan Farm area in the northwest section of the City would permit up to 7 dwellings per acre, which is slightly higher than the older Traverse City neighborhoods.

The downtown (Regional Center) is envisioned to have steep increases in density. The Plan supports densities up to 60 dwellings per acre. Presently, with the exception of Riverview Terrace which has a density of about 60 dwellings per acre, most downtown blocks have few or no dwellings. The Iron Works and Red Mill sites near downtown are also slated for high density, with up to 45 and 60 dwelling units per acre respectively.

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Affordable Housing

For many people in the area, it is difficult to find affordable housing in Traverse City. The lack of affordable housing has forced many people employed within the City to reside on the urban fringe and make long commutes to work. This establishes a pattern of traffic which congests the major roads leading into and out of the City. The Plan seeks remedy this situation to a degree by placing affordable housing near employment centers.

The Plan supports controls to ensure affordable housing comfortably blends into the existing neighborhoods. Developing affordable housing on small, scattered sites around the City is preferable

over concentrating affordable units on single large parcels. For example, the City Plan supports the development of apartments over garages as a method to add affordable housing within the City.

Commercial Lands

The Plan describes three types of commercial areas. The areas, in order of scale from the largest to the smallest, are the Regional Center (Central Business District), Community Center and Neighborhood Center. It is the intent each of these commercial center types are developed as compact, pedestrian-friendly commercial centers.

Regional Center

It is the intent of the Plan to encourage the Regional Center to grow and prosper as a full service center, catering to both residents and visitors. Growth is to be directed inwardly to intensify development of the Regional Center. Included in the wide mix of uses will be the substantial growth of residential dwellings. To facilitate higher density development, the surface parking areas which consume large portions of the Regional Center will be consolidated vertically into parking structures. This will free up areas for new building sites.

While the emphasis will be to maintain the small or pedestrian scale, not all of the Regional Center can or should be characterized this way. A balance must be found which creates variety in the size of buildings, and satisfies other, equally valid needs such as views and increased open space.

Community Center

While the Regional Center serves as the primary

focal point, Community Centers also play a major role in the economic health of the City. Community Centers provide jobs, shopping and services closer to where people live. At the same time, they contribute to an environment which promotes one stop shopping and transit ridership.

Community Centers are envisioned to resemble small downtowns, supporting large buildings such as grocery and furniture stores.

Neighborhood Center

The purpose of a Neighborhood Center is to accommodate small businesses and serve surrounding residents with goods and services within walking distance or a short drive. Uses found in small compact Neighborhood Centers are those which residents would likely use on a daily or weekly basis such as a small grocery store, bakery or hardware store. Uses which generate heavy motor vehicle traffic, excessive noise, or extended business hours may be inappropriate for these centers. Generally, these centers are located on the edge of neighborhoods or between neighborhoods.

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Offices Areas

Offices can be used as a transitional area between in more intensive commercial or industrial uses and quieter residential neighborhoods. In general, they are not dependent on high visibility. Therefore, it is the vision of the Plan to locate offices away from prime locations for retail and industrial uses.

Resort Areas

Resort areas are found along US-31. These areas are reserved for hotels, motels, accessory offices and limited commercial uses such as restaurants. Residential dwellings may also locate here. The Plan envisions these sections of town to be one of the most attractive and inviting commercial areas in town.

Mixed-Use Areas

Mixed-use areas are planned to be developed with diverse complementary land uses, and designed to be integrated with adjacent properties. Five areas have been designated for mixed-use, of which, three are on the periphery of downtown. These areas are commonly known as the Morgan Farm, Red Mill, Iron Works, Train Depot, and Rennie Hill areas. The Plan suggest that incentives for residential development be developed for these areas. Also, in recognition of lower parking demands for mixed uses, parking requirements should be lessened.

Industrial Lands

Recent changes in production methods and technological advances in pollution abatement now permit industry to locate on smaller parcels and adjacent to other land uses with little or no adverse impacts. These advancements, present an opportunity to encourage selected light industry uses in commercial areas or near residential neighborhoods. It is the intent of the Plan, however, to remove industrial areas along Boardman Lake and the Power Plant from the Bay. Prime industrial sites, with good rail, airport service, and/or collector and arterial roads are intended to be preserved for industrial developments.

Copies of the City Plan

A complete copy of the City Plan with with a colored Future Land Use Map may be purchased for \$15 at City Planning Department, 400 Boardman Avenue, Traverse City, MI 49684.

For more information regarding plans for Traverse City please contact the Russell Soyring, City Planning Director at:
616-922-4465 (Phone)
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