2020-2021 FISCAL YEAR ANNUAL REPORT
CITY OF OAK PARK
PLANNING COMMISSION

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Kimberly Marrone, Economic Development and Planning Director
Salam Habhab, Economic Development and Planning Specialist

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires an annual report to be submitted to the legislative body in regards to planning and development. I am happy to present this report to both the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and City Council.

Section 19 (2) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act provides that:

> "A planning commission shall make an annual written report to the legislative body concerning its operations and the status of planning activities, including recommendations regarding actions by the legislative body related to planning and development."

Fiscal 2020-2021 was a busy year in the Economic Development and Planning Department and the Planning Commission in particular. Together we have persevered to continue supporting our local small businesses and community of Oak Park amidst the unprecedented times of COVID-19, in an effort to lessen the social and economic challenges that impacted our community. Despite the pandemic, we have completed several projects and adopted the new City's Zoning Ordinance. We have also discussed and started several new endeavors that will impact and help transform our city for years to come.

Kimberly Marrone
Economic Development and Planning Director

PLANNING

Long range planning for the physical development of the City of Oak Park is the primary focus of the Planning Department. In addition to preparing and maintaining the Master Plan the department is responsible for the administration of the Zoning Ordinance and other planning tools to achieve the goals and objectives listed in the plan. The day-to-day operations of the planning and zoning functions for the City include addressing a considerable amount of phone calls, emails, and visits from the public, as well as administrative duties including preparation of public hearing notices, meeting minutes, scheduling of meetings and preparing meeting packets.

For those seeking project specific approvals, staff spends a substantial amount of time with potential applicants to ensure they have a clear understanding of their options as well as the process involved for each one. Staff diligently works with developers through the site plan review application and encourages all to attend a pre-application meeting prior to submission.

Planning Commission

Commission Members

Gary Torgow, Chairperson
Joe B. Brown, Vice Chairperson
Marian McClellan, Mayor
Carolyn Burns, Mayer Pro Tem
Michael Eizelman, Secretary
Erik Tungate, City Manager
Michael Seligson
Howard Tkatch
Marie Walters-Gill

Summary

The Planning Commission is a nine-member volunteer board appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. They are responsible for planning the future growth of the community and review of specific development projects including special use permits, zoning ordinance amendments, and property rezoning requests. The Planning Commission is also charged with the preparation and adoption of plans for the City including the Master Plan and Capital Improvement Plan.

The Planning Commission meets at 7:00 P.M. on the second Monday of each month in the City Council Chamber. Planning enabling legislation outlines that the Commission should represent a broad spectrum of interests, including industry, transportation, commerce, education, agriculture, etc.; this same statute outlines that the Commission should represent the various geographic areas of the City. As provided for by statute, there are two City Council members

appointed to the Planning Commission each with voting rights and one member of the Planning Commission also serves on the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Planning Commission Meetings

During fiscal 2020-2021, the Planning Commission conducted five regular meetings and one special meeting. Over the course of the year, seven meetings were cancelled for lack of business. Following is a summary of Planning Commission Action from the past year:

DATE	ACTION
07/13/2020	Public Hearing to consider a Special Land Use request submitted by Kroger Grocery Store for a Specially Designed Merchant and Specially Designated Distributor License (sales of packaged alcohol, beer & wine) located at 26200 Greenfield Rd.
	Approved a Special Land Use request submitted by Kroger Grocery Store for a Specially Designed Merchant and Specially Designated Distributor License (sales of packaged alcohol, beer & wine) located at 26200 Greenfield Rd.
	Public Hearing to consider a Special Land Use request submitted by Pioneer Health Care Management – Oakridge Manor for a 76-bed Skilled Nursing Facility located at 13200 Oak Park Blvd.
	Approved a Special Land Use request submitted by Pioneer Health Care Management – Oakridge Manor for a 76-bed Skilled Nursing Facility located at 13200 Oak Park Blvd.
	Public Hearing to receive comments on proposed text amendments to Article XVII. General Provisions, Section 1709: Outdoor Dining, to allow for decorative outdoor lighting.
	Approved adoption of the proposed text amendments to Article XVII, General Provisions, Section 1709: Outdoor Dining, to allow for decorative outdoor lighting.
	Public Hearing to receive comments on proposed text amendments to Article XVIII, Signs, Section 1805: Exemptions to permitting, Section 1807: Specific Sign Standards and Section 1814: Variances to correct reference errors, allow for an additional wall sign in some circumstances and limit the size of some temporary signs.
	Approved adoption of the proposed text amendments to Article XVIII, Signs, Section 1805: Exemptions to permitting, Section 1807: Specific Sign Standards and Section 1814: Variances to correct reference errors, allow for an additional wall sign in some circumstances and limit the size of some temporary signs.

Public Hearing to receive comments on proposed text amendments to Article IV, R-1 One Family Residential, Section 401: Permitted uses, and 402: Special Land Uses, and Article XIX, Section 1915: Public recreation uses to modify regulations for recreation uses in single family residential districts.

Approved adoption of the proposed text amendments to Article IV, R-1 One Family Residential, Section 401: Permitted uses, and 402: Special Land Uses, and Article XIX, Section 1915: Public recreation uses to modify regulations for recreation uses in single family residential districts.

10/12/2020 Received and entered the 2019-2020 Annual Report of the City of Oak Park Planning Commission into the record of the Planning Commission.

Received administrative approval for a Final Site Plan Review from Hutch's Jewelry located at 23400 Greenfield Road.

Approved a letter for the Detroit Master Plan of Policies stating the plan is not inconsistent with Oak Park Master Plan.

Public Hearing to receive public comments on the proposed Master Plan for the City of Oak Park.

Approved adoption of the proposed Master Plan for the City of Oak Park.

10/28/2020 Special Meeting - Approved a Site Plan Review request submitted by Alta Cremation & Services, Inc. located at13425 Capital St.

04/12/2021 Public Hearing held to consider a Special land Use request submitted by Berkley Coffee, LLC. located at 14661 W. Eleven Mile Rd, Suite 500 for a Tavern License that will serve Beer and Wine.

Approved a Special Land Use request submitted by Berkley Coffee, LLC. Located at 14661 W. Eleven Mile Rd, Suite 500 for a Tavern License that will serve Beer and Wine.

Received and approved the Capital Improvement Program 2021-2022 Annual Budget.

Considered and discussed a presentation for proposed revised Oak Park Zoning Ordinances.

05/10/2021 Public Hearing held to consider adoption of revised Oak Park Zoning Ordinances.

Approved adoption of the revised Oak Park Zoning Ordinances.

Public Hearing held to consider proposed Zoning Map Amendments for the

City of Oak Park to change the zoning from Light Industrial to Industrial Flex for the following addresses: 21955 Republic, 21950 Wyoming, 21930 Wyoming, Capital Street Addresses: 13390,13380,13350,13270,13240,13200, 13080, 13040, 13000, 12980, 12950, 12930, 12900, 12720, 12700, 11000, 10850, 10800, 10750, 10700, 10600, 10400, 10280, 10240, 10230, 10200, 10150, 10130, 10120, 10100, 10030, 10020, 10010, 8750, 8700, 8624, 8564, 8538-8544, 8500, Parcel ID's with no addresses: 52-25-32-151-035, 52-25-32-176-019, 25-33-151-037.

Approved adoption of the proposed Zoning Map Amendments for the City of Oak Park to change the zoning from Light Industrial to Industrial Flex for the following addresses: 21955 Republic, 21950 Wyoming, 21930 Wyoming, Capital Street Addresses: 13390,13380,13350,13270,13240,13200, 13080, 13040, 13000, 12980, 12950, 12930, 12900, 12720, 12700, 11000, 10850, 10800, 10750, 10700, 10600, 10400, 10280, 10240, 10230, 10200, 10150, 10130, 10120, 10100, 10030, 10020, 10010, 8750, 8700, 8624, 8564, 8538-8544, 8500, Parcel ID's with no addresses: 52-25-32-151-035, 52-25-32-176-019, 25-33-151-037.

Public Hearing held to consider proposed Zoning Map Amendments for the City of Oak Park to change the zoning from General Business to Mixed Use 2 for the following addresses: Coolidge addresses: 23137, 23001, 23100, 23090, 22150, 22100-22140, 22001, 22011, 22031, 22041, 22101, 22105, 22111, 22115, 22121, 22125, 22131, 22123, 22135, 22141, 22151, 22153-22155, 22173, 22185, 2221, Nine Mile addresses: 13770, 13600, 13500, 13400, 13300, 13351, 13631, 13641-13645, 13651, 13701, 13801, 13805-13807, 13821-13825, 13831, 13835, 13841, 13845, 13855, 13901, 13905, 13925, 13941, Parcel ID with no address: 52-25-31-228-021.

Approved adoption of a proposed Zoning Map Amendments for the City of Oak Park to change the zoning from General Business to Mixed Use 2 for the following addresses: Coolidge addresses: 23137, 23001, 23100, 23090, 22150, 22100-22140, 22001, 22011, 22031, 22041, 22101, 22105, 22111, 22115, 22121, 22125, 22131, 22123, 22135, 22141, 22151, 22153-22155, 22173, 22185, 2221, Nine Mile addresses: 13770, 13600, 13500, 13400, 13300, 13351, 13631, 13641-13645, 13651, 13701, 13801, 13805-13807, 13821-13825, 13831, 13835, 13841, 13845, 13855, 13901, 13905, 13925, 13941, Parcel ID with no address: 52-25-31-228-021.

06/29/2021 Public Hearing held to consider a PUD Site Plan Review request submitted by Ferlito Group to construct a 30-unit Transit Oriented Apartment Development (The Nine Apartments) located at 8775 Nine Mile Rd.

Approved a PUD Site Plan Review request submitted by Ferlito Group to construct a 30-unit Transit Oriented Apartment Development (The Nine Apartment) to be located at 8775 Nine Mile Rd.

Site Plan Review Process – Customer Feedback

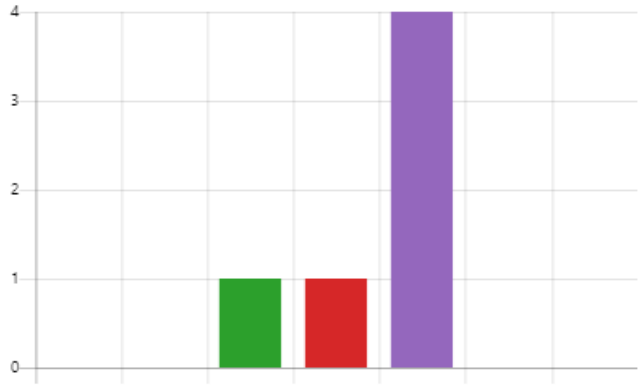
Redevelopment Ready Communities Best Practice 3.9 requires that the City obtain customer feedback on the Site Plan Review process, as well as the permitting and inspection process. Where appropriate, improvements to the process identified through this feedback are to be integrated. Internally, lessons learned are to be captured and incorporated into future projects by the staff.

A survey was created to solicit feedback to determine if the site plan process was satisfactory or could use improvements. Below is a synopsis of the input we received.

1. Please indicate the category to which you belong below:

More Details

Resident	0
Contractor	0
Commercial or Industrial Prop...	1
Business owner	1
Engineer or architect	4
Non-profit developer	0
Real Estate Development Cons...	0



2. Did you find the Site Plan approval process to be well organized and easy to navigate?

More Details

Yes	5
No	0
Somewhat	1

3. How would you rate the pace of the Site Plan approval process. (5 is quick and efficient, 3 average, 2 slower than most, no action, required my constant interaction to usher the project along)

More Details

6
Responses

4.50 Average Rating

4. Do you feel the Planning Commission was thorough; understanding your concerns and addressing all of the important and relevent items?

More Details

Yes	6
No	0

5. Were the City staff and/or Planning Commission members responsive to your questions, comments, or concerns?

More Details

Yes	6
No	0

6. Did you find the Site Plan approval to be a fair and judicious process compared to other municipalities?

More Details

Yes	6
No	0

7. Did you feel that the final decision was consistent with the governing guidelines of the Site Plan approval process?

More Details

Yes	6
No	0

8. Thank you for your feedback. Please feel free to write additional comments, suggestions or concerns below:

More Details

1
Responses

Latest Responses

8. Thank you for your feedback. Please feel free to write additional comments, suggestions or concerns below:

1 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	We absolutely love working with the City of Oak Park. Kim Marrone is fantastic and we look forward to developing more projects with her in Oak Park!

Planning Commission Training

Throughout the year the City Clerks' office has informed the members of any training opportunities. We encourage members to attend these training courses and to notify the City Planner of their attendance so that we may track it.

Master Plan

The Master Plan for the City of Oak Park outlines the goals and strategies which will guide the City over the next five years. The plan provides vision, goals and strategies to direct future land use and guidelines to enhance the community's appearance.

Implementation of the Master Plan Goals

Through the City's Master Plan the Economic Development and Planning Department has begun adopting the changes as identified in the Master Plan. A great deal of progress has been made on its numerous implementation actions. Some of these implementations are listed below:

The adoption of the new City's Zoning Ordinance and Master Plan, is the highlight of these implementations. The updated Master Plan creates a framework to guide decisions that affect the social, physical and the economic environment of the City.

Community:

- **Goal 2: Expand Housing Options.** The approval of the proposed development of 30-unit Transit Oriented Apartment encourages new housing style to meet the needs of current and future residents.

Commerce:

- **Goal 1: Create Vibrant, Dynamic Commercial Corridors.** The approval of Kroger Store to be allowed to carry a specialty designed merchant and specially designated distributor license that expands their services platform, and Berkely Coffee to develop a coffee shop with mocktails and entertainment, promotes for diversity of uses and amenities that will satisfy the public needs.
- **Goal 2: Attract High Quality Diverse Restaurants.** The approval of the development of Berkley Coffee which will serve baked goods, coffee, and mocktails.
- **Goal 3: Provide Streamlined, Business-friendly Permitting Process and Easily Obtainable Resources for Businesses.** The Economic Development and Planning Department worked diligently with the developers of Kroger Store, Pioneer Health care, Hutch's Jewelry, Alta Cremation & Services, Berkley Coffee, and Ferlito Group to provide resources and speed up the appropriate development and approval processes (Administrative Approval, Site Plan Review, and Special Land Use).
- **Goal 4: Revise and Improve Commercial Parking Zoning Regulations and Municipal Parking Options.** The Economic Development and Planning reviewed, analyzed, and revised the parking requirements of the Zoning Ordinance utilizing best practices; for example, the provision of off-street shared parking and bike parking.
- **Goal 5: Update Maps, Zoning, and Ordinances**. The approval of zoning map amendments that changed some industrial properties from Light Industrial District to Industrial Flex District to allow for transitional industrial areas to foster a mixture of live/work areas. Zoning changes were also made at the intersection of Nine Mile and Coolidge business districts rezoning from B1, Neighborhood Business and B-2, General Business to MX-2, Mixed Use District to allow for a variety of uses and upper level housing opportunities. In addition to the approval of multiple text amendments to improve the outdoor dining areas and to allow for additional wall sign and limit the size of some temporary signs. Eventually, this will improve the visual appearance of the city, spur investment, and create a vibrant community.
- **Goal 7: Redevelopment of Blighted or Underutilized Buildings.** The Economic and Development and Planning Department reviewed, revised, and proposed new landscape standards for new and existing developments, as well as new design standards for new development.
- **Goal 10: Improve Industrial Areas.** The new Zoning Ordinance provides design

standards and landscape and screening standards which address the various districts within the city; residential, commercial, and industrial. In addition to the approval of text amendments that changed the zoning of some light industrial properties to industrial flex districts to foster a mixture of live/work areas.

Future Planning Goals

The Economic Development and Planning Department with the guidance of the Planning Commission will continue working toward accomplishing the goals of the Master Plan to strengthen our community, enhance our diverse culture, and stimulate commerce, as summarized below:

Community

- Improve appearance of alleys and explore better ways to utilize the space. *On-going*
- Identify opportunities and pursue areas for new public spaces. *On-going*
- Discourage new surface parking lots adjacent to pedestrian-oriented commercial corridors and encourage the placement in the rear of the building. *On-going*
- Improve connections to neighboring communities, amenities and other bike trails. *Mid-term*

Culture

- Update Zoning regulations and allow green storm water infrastructure design. *On-going*

Commerce

- Encourage development that promotes pedestrian over auto related parking requirements. *On-going*
- Enforce regulations to ensure quality developments. *On-going*
- Continue pre-development meetings with all necessary departments to speed up the development and approval process. *On-going*
- Revise parking requirements utilizing best practices of other cities and consider shared parking and payment in lieu as alternatives. *Short-term*
- Update Future Land Use Map. *Short-term*
- Identify opportunities and create multi-use transitional zones from commercial or industrial into neighborhoods, as well as buffers to protect residential areas. *Mid-term*
- Consider Form Based Code and create design standards for new development. *On-going*
- Review landscaping standards and add landscaping/screening buffers to industrial area to reduce the negative visual characteristics of these developments. *Mid-term*
- Improve overall appearance of the Industrial Park and encourage development of public spaces as part of new industrial development. *Mid-term*

Short term – within one year
Mid-term – within the next three years

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is the only board authorized to interpret, waive or modify requirements of the City of Oak Park Zoning Ordinance. This Board operates as a quasi-judicial body similar to a court of appeals. Decisions made by the Zoning Board of Appeals are final. Relief from ZBA decisions are granted only by the Circuit Court.

Board Members (Who Served During 2020-2021)

James Huston, Chairperson
Jack Blumenkopf, Vice Chairperson
Michael Seligson, Planning Commission
Taleesa Anderson
Kristina Andreski-Price
Abrahma (Avi) Snider

Summary

The Zoning Board of Appeals consists of members who were appointed by the City Council. The Zoning Board of Appeals conducts regular, public meetings in City Council Chambers on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Meeting agendas are posted on the City web site.

Zoning Board of Appeals Meetings

During 2020-20121, the Zoning Board of Appeals conducted four regular scheduled meetings. Eight meetings were cancelled for lack of business. Following is a summary of Zoning Board of Appeals action from the past year:

DATE	ACTION
07/28/2020	APPROVED - CASE NO.20-01: Kenyatta Spratt, 21331 Kipling St. Property Identification Number: 52-25-31-426-031, appeal request for three variances from the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance as follows: I. Article XVI, Section 1600, requires the minimum lot width of a parcel to be fifty (50) feet. The applicant requested a waiver of two (2) feet, nine (9) inches for two (2) parcels, resulting in two (2) parcels; Parcel A being forty-eight (48) feet, two (20 inches and Parcel B being forty-eight (48), one (1) inch. II. Parcel A: Article XVI, requires that the sum of both side yards shall be fourteen (14) feet. The applicant requested a waiver of the five (5) feet, four (4) inches on Parcel A to allow for the sum of both side yards to be eight feet (8), eight (8) inches.

III. Parcel B: Article XVI, requires that the sum of both side yards shall be fourteen (14) feet. The applicant requested a waiver of five (5) feet, four (4) inches on Parcel B to allow for the sum of both side yards to be eight feet (8), eight (8) inches.

09/22/2020 APPROVED - CASE NO.20-02: Kyle McKechnie, 8625 Capital St. Property Identification Number: 52-25-33-152-010, appeal request for one variance from the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance as follows:

I. Article XVII, to allow for an existing building that does not meet the parking requirements of the Zoning Ordinance

10/27/2020 AMENDED AND APPROVED - CASE NO.20-03: Kristen Hipwell, 14021 Labelle Rd. Property Identification Number: 52-25-29-230-005, appeal request for two variances from the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance as follows:

I. Article XVII, Section 1717, A,2 requires that fencing shall be thirty (30) inches in height or less. The applicant requested a waiver of eighteen (18) inches to allow a fence to be forty-eight (48) inches in height.

II. Article XVII, Section 1717, A, 2, requires that no fence shall extend toward the front of the lot farther than the front building line, except for fences which serve as architectural or decorative landscaping and are not used to enclose property and are thirty (30) inches in height or less. The applicant requested a waiver to allow for a fence in the front yard that will enclose the property to the sidewalk.

Amendments of approval:

I. To allow a fence with a setback of 6 feet.

II. No requirements for the color of the fence.

05/25/2021 APPROVED - CASE NO.21-01: Michael Ferlito, 8775 Nine Nile Rd. Property Identification Number: 52-25-33-101-006, appeal request for one variance from the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance as follows:

I. Article XVII, Section 1726 Off Street Parking and Loading G. Table requires that 2 parking spaces per unit be provided for multi-family developments. The applicant requested a variance of 27 parking spaces to provide 33 parking spaces on site.

<u>Zoning Board of Appeals Training</u>

Throughout the year the City Planner will inform the members of any training opportunities. We ask that the members who attend any of these trainings to notify the City Planner of their attendance so that we may track it in the future.