



June 10, 2021

Hon. Mayor and Council Members
210 State Street
Charlevoix, MI 49720

RE: 2021 Charlevoix Planning Commission Annual Report

Hon. Mayor and Council Members:

As required per the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Section 125.3819 (2) (Act 33 of 2008, as amended), the Planning Commission respectfully submits a report of the activities they undertook in the previous twelve months (May 2020-April 2021).

"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."

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

1. R.J.Waddell, Chairperson
2. Dennis Halverson, Vice-Chair (res. Mar. 2021) / Vacant
3. Sherm Chamberlain, Vice-Chair (elected Mar. 2021)
4. Ben Edwards (res. June 2020) / Mary Millington (apt. Oct. 2020)
5. Toni Felter
6. Brian Gelb (res. Sept. 2020) / Reid Beegen (apt. Dec. 2020)
7. David Gray
8. Jennifer Muladore
9. Philip Parr (res. Nov. 2020) / Emma Suarez Pawlicki (apt. Apr. 2021)

PLANNING STAFF

Planning and zoning services are provided by regional planning agency, Networks Northwest. The Zoning Administrator provides on-site support by maintaining regular office hours on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday 8 AM – 5 PM. Planning and zoning staff include:

1. Kathy Egan, Regional Director of Community Development, Networks Northwest (ret. Nov. 2020)
2. Jennifer Neal, Community Planner, Networks Northwest
3. Jonathan Scheel, Zoning Administrator, Networks Northwest

MEETINGS

The Planning Commission met a total of ten (10) times in the past year and the meetings are typically scheduled for the second Monday of the month, at 6:00 PM, and City Hall. All meetings are held in compliance with the *Open Meetings Act, PA 267 of 1976, as amended*. Due to pandemic restrictions, the June, September, November, December, January, February, March, and April meetings were held remotely either fully or partially.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Monday, May 11, 2020 – Cancelled | 7. Monday, November 9, 2020 |
| 2. Monday, June 8, 2020 | 8. Monday, December 14, 2020 |
| 3. Monday, July 13, 2020 – Cancelled | 9. Monday, January 11, 2021 |
| 4. Monday, August 10, 2020 | 10. Monday, February 8, 2021 |
| 5. Monday, September 14, 2020 | 11. Monday, March 8, 2021 |
| 6. Monday, October 12, 2020 | 12. Monday, April 12, 2021 |

DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS

During the previous year, the Planning Commission reviewed several development proposals in the form of site plan reviews. The Zoning Ordinance requires Planning Commission review and approval for all Level B Site Plan applications. The Zoning Administrator, Jonathan Scheel, will often present Level A Site Plans to the Planning Commission to gather input and update them about current projects. The following Level B Site Plan Reviews were completed by the Planning Commission:

1. A request to add six (6) rooftop decks to a previously approved site plan for fourteen (14) new multiple-family dwellings located at 115 Pine Rive Lane. The site plan was approved with conditions.
2. A request to waive parking requirements to accommodate a rooftop deck at 120 Michigan Avenue, Hotel Earl. The request was approved.
3. A request to build a mixed use building located at 1108 Bridge Street. The applicant, Ron Way of Way Building, proposed a project which included first floor commercial office space and second floor residential units. The site plan was approved with conditions.
4. A request to build a rooftop deck located at 230 Bridge Street. The project would provide outdoor living space for the residential use in the downtown mixed-use building. The site plan was approved with conditions.

2021 MASTER PLAN UPDATE

In February, the Planning Commission initiated a review of the City's Master Plan. The current Master Plan was adopted in December of 2016, and in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008), the Planning Commission shall review the plan at least every five years after adoption. The plan will be updated with new and relevant data and will include expanded discussion on emerging issues such as housing. Public input will be sought throughout the update process and the plan is expected to be completed in 2022.

UPDATES TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE

The Planning Commission reviewed the Zoning Ordinance for language pertaining to a wide range of topics. In several cases the language required an amendment in which a public hearing was held and the proposed language was reviewed by the city attorney.

1. The Planning Commission began the year by reviewing language for Rooftop Uses. Prior to drafting this language there was no language to guide any activities on rooftops. The Zoning Ordinance amendment drafted applied to all districts. A public hearing was held and proposed ordinance language was recommended to City Council for adoption.
2. Immediately following the drafting of the rooftop uses language, the Planning Commission reviewed the Site Plan Review language in the Zoning Ordinance. Draft language was presented that made the site plan review process more clear, quick, and transparent. Amended language included a Pre-Application Conference, minor changes to the requirements for both Level A and B site plan reviews, Coordination with Other Departments and Agencies, Standards for Site Plan Approval, Authority and Limitation, and an As Built Plan. A public hearing was held and proposed ordinance language was recommended to City Council for adoption.
3. The Planning Commission reviewed a number of housekeeping changes to various sections of the Zoning Ordinance. Amendments included changes to sections for State Construction Code, Definition of Building Height, Decision of the Board, Accessory Buildings and Uses, Renting of Residential Properties, PUD Review and Procedures, and Building Appearance. All changes were minor in nature and intended to clarify existing language. A public hearing was held and proposed ordinance language was recommended to City Council for adoption.

OTHER REVIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Planning Commission completed a review of their Bylaws and made three changes:

1. An additional sentence was added to the Section 2: Membership that provided for recording completed education and training sessions completed by the commissioners.
2. Section 5: Meetings was updated with the most current edition of *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised*.
3. Section 9: Planning Commission Responsibilities was updated to include making recommendations to City Council for uses on public properties and donations to be used in public spaces.

At the request of the City Manager, the Jonathan Scheel presented a memo regarding the proposed adoption of the International Property Maintenance Code. Adoption of the code would allow the City to pursue blighted properties prior to them deteriorating beyond the point of repair and need to be torn down. The Commission recommended the proposed ordinance language to City Council for adoption.

At the request of the Planning Commission Chair, Jonathan Scheel presented a status report of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). The Planning Commission drafted language and recommended approval to permit Accessory Dwelling Units in the R2 District to City Council in March of 2019. Jonathan's report, dated January 11, 2021, stated he has issued four permits for ADUs. He noted that two are substantially complete and two are under construction. City residents have raised concerns that the size and scale of the structure are not compatible with the neighborhood. If considerations for architectural standards are addressed, Jonathan recommended permitting ADUs in the R1 and R2A Districts. The Commission has had on-going discussions about the architectural standards that are appropriate for ADUs.

Throughout the course of the year the Planning Commission heard presentations from City Staff and agency leaders on various other topics.

- The City Manager presented the Capital Improvements Plan as well as the Alley Corridor Vision draft.
- Kent Knorr, Recreation Director, presented the conceptual plan for a dog park located on Carpenter Street.
- Lindsey Dotson, Executive Director for the Charlevoix Main Street Downtown Development Authority presented downtown design guidelines.
- Dean Martin, Community Development Fellow for the City of Charlevoix present a number of initiatives including a the City's effort to conduct a sidewalk inventory, the City's Economic Development Strategy, and a review of the Implementation chapter of the 2016 Master Plan, and provided an update on the City's effort to become Redevelopment Ready Certified.
- Steve Schnell, Program Director of the Charlevoix County Housing Ready Program presented his agency, the City' Housing and Business Park Initiative, and the City's efforts on the Deed Restriction Program.

LOOKING FORWARD...

As part of the Planning Commission's update of the City's Master Plan they will discuss goals and objectives as well as implementation strategies to fulfill the vision of the City. The implementation strategies are typically assigned to a City department, public body, or organization capable of completing the task and assigned a level of prioritization or a timeframe for completion. This prioritization will likely direct the Commission's work plan for the upcoming year. Anticipated strategies include Zoning Ordinance amendments, further discussion of architectural standards and design guidelines, and joint projects with the Historic District Commission and Downtown Development Authority.

Respectfully submitted,

PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF CHARLEVOIX, MICHIGAN

R.J. Waddell, Chairperson