

Village of Grass Lake
Planning Commission Annual Report

Covering activity from 01/01/2021 – 12/31/2021



Introduction

The [Michigan Planning Enabling Act](#) (MPEA) allows for the establishment of local Planning Commissions, master plans, and other associated activities. The Village of Grass Lake’s Planning Commission is established in local ordinance 30.02 and consists of 5 members. The Planning Commission is responsible for:

- Developing the community’s master plan which provides a framework for orderly growth and redevelopment.
- Creating a zoning ordinance to translate master planning goals to land use regulations.
- Reviewing and approving site plan requests
- Drafting a capital improvements plan.

This report contains a record of the Planning Commission’s activity over the past year

Membership

Planning Commission members for this reporting period were:

Name	Meetings Attended	Member Since	Term Expires	Voting Member
Richard K. Rabeler, Chair	2/5	9/1/1993	12/31/2024	Yes
David Trent, Village Manager, Ex Officio	3/5	9/18/2017	9/1/2021	No
Jim Stormont, Interim Village Manager, Ex Officio	2/5	9/1/2021	01/10/2022	No
Estelle “Star” Mead, Member	5/5	2/18/2014	12/31/2022	Yes
Susan Cobb-Sterrett, Member	3/5	10/20/2015	12/31/2022	Yes
Kevin Caldwell, Member	4/5	6/3/2021	12/31/2023	Yes
Joe Deboe, Member – Council Liaison	5/5	12/2/2014	11/15/2022	Yes

Meetings

The MPEA requires that local Planning Commissions meet at least four times a year. The Village of Grass Lake Planning Commission usually meets at least quarterly; the commission met 5 times this year. A summary of meeting activity is below:

Meeting Date	Summary
March 4	Discussion of master plan action items, capital improvement plan
June 3	Discussion of form-based code proposal; review of sidewalk requirements
July 1	Discussion of master plan action items; review of brownfield development grant
September 2	Business tabled due to departure of Village Manager
December 2	Public hearing to consider proposed conditional use; selection of officers for 2022

Master Plan Status

The Planning Commission is responsible for regularly reviewing and updating the master plan to ensure

it continues to be relevant to the community’s needs. The community’s current master plan <https://villagegrasslakemi.documents-on-demand.com/document/83fadedc-d076-eb11-a32d-000c29a59557/21.PDF> was adopted on 12/15/2020. The MPEA requires a formal review (and update or reaffirmation) occur at least every five years. The Commission is still reviewing suggested action items.

RRC Certified Opportunity

In addition to the MPEA-required five-year review, the community’s efforts to maintain alignment with the [Redevelopment Ready Communities](#) Best Practices includes annual progress assessments to determine if the community is on track for meeting the plan’s goals and actions. The following is a table of actions discussed during 2021; action on items was delayed by the resignation of the Village Manager in August of 2021.

#	Goal	Action Item	Lead	Target	Status
5	Accommodating future growth	Proposed Municipal building	Village Manager		
6	Stimulate local economy	Marketing passport	DDA		
7	Transportation system	Sidewalks	VM		
7	Transportation system	Local Transportation	Jackson Area Transportation		

Zoning Ordinance Amendments & Rezoning

Zoning is the legal mechanism which turns planning goals into reality via development regulations. It is imperative that a community maintain an up-to-date zoning ordinance which aligns with those goals and addresses emerging trends. The Planning Commission did not discuss any amendments during 2021.

The Planning Commission is also responsible for making recommendations on rezoning requests. Such requests must align with the master plan’s future land use map. There were no requests during 2021.

Site Plan Reviews & Variances

Site plan review is a primary role of the Planning Commission and helps ensure that new development in the community aligns with the zoning ordinance requirements. Prior to Planning Commission review, staff conducts an internal review process as well. When needed, variances are considered by the Zoning Board of Appeals. No requests for site plan reviews were received by the Commission in 2021.

Training Update

Redevelopment Ready Communities Best Practice 4.6 supports the creation of training plans for community officials. Training is essential to providing the community with the tools needed to achieve local goals. Commissioners did not participate in any training events in 2021.

In Closing

The Planning Commission had a quiet year, in part due to the continuing effects of Covid-19 on both meeting options and the economy.