**Village of Grass Lake**

**Planning Commission Annual Report**

*Covering activity from 01/01/2024 – 12/31/2024*

**Introduction**  
The [Michigan Planning Enabling Act](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-Act-33-of-2008.pdf) (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 | 10/10 | 9/1/1993 | 12/31/2024 | Yes |
| Sabrina Edgar, Village Manager, Ex Officio | 10/10 | 1/10/2022 |  | No |
| Diane Deboe, Member | 9/10 | 4/6/2023 | 12/31/2025 | Yes |
| Susan Cobb-Sterrett, Member | 9/10 | 10/20/2015 | 12/31/2025 | Yes |
| Kevin Caldwell, Member | 9/10 | 6/3/2021 | 12/31/2026 | Yes |
| David Keener, Member – Council Liaison | 8/10 | 11/15/2022 | 11/15/2026 | 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 ten times this year. A summary of meeting activity is below:

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| --- | --- |
| **Meeting Date** | **Summary** |
| January 4 | Public hearing on two proposed map amendments. Review of rezonings proposed in the Master Plan. |
| February 1 | Review of action items in Master Plan. |
| March 7 | Discussion of additional map amendments and MHSDA grant |
| April 18 | Public hearing and subsequent discussion on a rezoning request. |
| June 6 | Discussion of fee structure for planning/zoning requests |
| July 11 | Conducted a site plan review for a proposed bakery |
| September 5 | Discussion of options for revising ordinance text on parking in the Central Business District (CBD) |
| October 3 | Review of maximum anticipated parking needs vs. availability in the CBD |
| November 7 | Discussion of meeting time for the Planning Commission |
| December 5 | Discussion of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) with suggestion to recommend formation of a CIP Policy; approval of 2024 Annual Report; selection of officers for 2024 |
|  |  |

**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](https://villagegrasslakemi.documents-on-demand.com/document/83fadedc-d076-eb11-a32d-000c29a59557/21.PDF%20) was adopted on 12/15/2020. The MPEA requires a formal review (and update or reaffirmation) occur at least every five years. The Commission continued reviewing suggested action items in 2024 via a subcommittee of the Commission including the Downtown Development Authority director.

**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 considered, but did not finalize, text amendments to the parking requirements in the Central Business District.

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 two requests initiated by the Commission during 2024. The map amendments were combined with three others discussed in 2023 and were recommended for adoption by the Village Council. The Commission also received one rezoning request from a property owner; it was recommended for adoption by the Village Council.

**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. One site plan was received, reviewed, and approved by the Commission in 2024.

**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. No specific training was completed by Commissioners this year.

**In Closing**The Planning Commission had an active year in 2024, starting work on revisions to parking regulations in our downtown area; completing work on several map amendments, a rezoning request, and a site plan review; and continuing work on the action items in the Master Plan.