

## **PLANNING COMMISSION**

**March 3, 2016**

The City of Portage Planning Commission meeting of March 3, 2016 was called to order by Secretary Stoffer at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of Portage City Hall, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue. Six citizens were in attendance.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Secretary Stoffer led the Commission, staff and citizens in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Christopher Forth, Deputy Director of Planning, Development and Neighborhood Services; Michael West, Senior City Planner; and Randy Brown, City Attorney.

### **ROLL CALL:**

Mr. Forth called the roll: Schimmel (yes), Dargitz (yes), Stoffer (yes), Bosch (yes) and Patterson (yes). A motion was offered by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Bosch, to approve the roll excusing Commissioners Welch, Felicijan, Somers and Richmond. The motion was unanimously approved 5-0.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Secretary Stoffer referred the Commission to the February 18, 2016 meeting minutes contained in the agenda packet. A motion was made by Commissioner Dargitz, seconded by Commissioner Schimmel, to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion was unanimously approved 5-0.

### **SITE/FINAL PLANS:**

None.

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

1. Special Land Use Permit: Group Child Care Home (Bowden), 10606 Oakland Drive. Mr. West summarized the staff report dated February 25, 2016 regarding a request by Ms. Julie Bowden to establish a group child care home for up to 12 children at her residence located at 10606 Oakland Drive. Mr. West stated that Ms. Bowden has operated a family child care home for up to six children from her residence for the past 22 years. Mr. West stated the application fulfills the requirements for issuance of a special land use permit and was recommended for approval.

Ms. Julie Bowden (applicant) was present to support the application. The public hearing was then opened by Secretary Stoffer. No citizens spoke regarding the proposed group child care home. A motion was made by Commissioner Bosch, seconded by Commissioner Patterson, to close the public hearing. The motion was unanimously approved 5-0. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Bosch, seconded by Commissioner Patterson, to approve the Special Land Use Permit (group child care home) for Ms. Julie Bowden, 10606 Oakland Drive. The motion was unanimously approved 5-0.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None.

**STATEMENT OF CITIZENS:**

None.

7:10 p.m. - The Commission took a short recess.
7:15 p.m. - The Commission reconvened the meeting in City Hall Conference Room No. 2

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. FY2016-2026 Capital Improvement Program. Since the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) document was just recently received by the Commission and given that four of the nine Commissioners were not present, Commissioner Bosch suggested that a detailed category by category review of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) document occur at the March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. Other Commissioners concurred. Mr. Forth discussed the extensive public outreach effort that began in September 2015 with the CIP Open House, Portager articles, CIP web site and on-line citizen survey. Mr. Forth also discussed the Planning Commission preliminary review of the draft 2016-2026 CIP document in January 2016 which also included the results of the on-line citizen survey. Mr. Forth stated the Planning Commission could continue discussions of the 2016-2026 CIP at the March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, however, a recommendation to City Council would be needed at that meeting, or a special meeting would need to be scheduled for the following week. Mr. Forth asked that any questions/comments be emailed to him and the full Commission by next week Tuesday, March 8<sup>th</sup> for research and inclusion in the Planning Commission agenda which will be mailed on Friday, March 11<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Dargitz asked whether more complete streets elements could be incorporated into the CIP, especially along Portage Road in the Lake Center Area. Mr. Forth stated a traffic study of the Lake Center Area has been completed and a presentation of the findings will be provided to the Planning Commission in April. Commissioner Dargitz asked about the cost of Fire Department vehicles (Battalion Chief, Training Officer, Fire Marshal) and the need for new vehicles every three years. Commissioner Dargitz also commented on the "Strong Towns" approach to development that was outlined in an article in the July/August 2015 edition of the Michigan Planner publication. Commissioner Dargitz stated she recalled briefly discussing this approach with the Planning Commission last Fall and was wondering if an appropriation could be included in the CIP (e.g. \$100,000) for small projects that could be proposed by community or neighborhood groups and presented to the city for review and evaluation. Mr. Forth indicated the details associated with this type of a project would need to be identified and presented to the Planning Commission for review, consideration and consensus. Mr. Forth also noted award of a grant to various organizations/groups may not be considered as an eligible CIP project. Commissioner Dargitz stated that after mentioning this idea last Fall, she thought her idea would be carried forward by staff for further consideration and possible creation of a CIP project. Commissioner Dargitz indicated that she was unclear on how CIP ideas/concepts should be presented and developed for further consideration by staff and the Planning Commission in light of the revised CIP meeting process. Staff and Commissioners Bosch and Patterson did not recall a prior meeting when this proposed idea/concept was discussed. Commissioner Schimmel stated she did recall a previous conversation regarding this matter. Commissioners Patterson and Bosch stated that any idea/concept presented by an individual Commissioner needs to be detailed, preferably in writing, so that the full Commission can consider the matter and determine whether there is a consensus to move forward. Mr. Forth and Mr. West concurred and stated that staff could provide assistance in further developing the idea/concept, after it has been discussed, considered and agreed upon by the majority of the Commission.

Mr. Forth and Mr. West briefly discussed the internal process for development of the 2016-2026 CIP document that began in September 2015 with solicitation of citizen input and ideas; internal preparation and evaluation of specific CIP projects and cost estimates by the various city administrative departments; development and preparation of the draft CIP document and presentation to the Planning Commission in January 2016; and finalization of the draft CIP document and presentation to the Planning Commission for review/recommendation in March 2016 (Planning Commission recommendation is required prior to the first City Council meeting in April 2016). Secretary Stoffer asked if staff could provide a general timeline which summarizes the process and related deadlines for development of the annual CIP document. Mr. Forth stated that this timeline would be provided to the Commission with the March 17<sup>th</sup> agenda materials. Secretary Stoffer restated that any Commissioner questions/comments regarding the 2016-2026 CIP should be emailed to staff and copied to the full Commission by next week Tuesday, March 8<sup>th</sup> so that staff could research and provide answers prior to the March 17, 2016 meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher T. Forth, AICP  
Deputy Director of Planning, Development and Neighborhood Services