



PLAN COMMISSION

February 16, 2021 at 6:30 PM via Go To Meeting

Join the meeting using a computer, smart phone or tablet at

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/757238013>, or by phone at 1-877-568-4106 using
access code 757-238-013.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Consent Agenda
 - a. Approval of minutes from the December 1, 2020 Plan Commission meeting
4. Public Comment (non-agenda items)
5. Action Items:
 - a. Review of Timeless Timber commercial redevelopment proposal public input and recommendation regarding Development Agreement
6. Discussion Items
 - a. Updates and discussion of Comprehensive Plan implementation projects
7. Announcements/Reports/Comments/Questions
 - a. Updates on Tax Incremental District #10 amendments and Downtown Building Improvement Grant Program
 - b. Updates on Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) waterfront updates and set date for joint Plan Commission/Sustainability Committee meeting
8. Adjournment

It is possible that a quorum of members of other governmental bodies of the municipality may be in attendance at the above stated meeting to gather information or speak about a subject, over which they have decision-making responsibility. Any governmental body at the above stated meeting will take no action other than the governmental body specifically referred to above in this notice. The City of Ashland does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, age or disability in employment or provision of services, programs or activities. NOTE: Upon reasonable notice, the City of Ashland will accommodate the needs of disabled individuals through auxiliary aids or services. For additional information or to request this service, contact Megan McBride at (715) 682-7041.

City of Ashland – Plan Commission Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the Ashland Plan Commission was held on **Tuesday, December 1, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.** via GoToMeeting.

Committee Members Present: Matt Mackenzie, John Beirl, Ana Tochterman, David Mettillie, Laurie Gregor, Katie Gellatly, Mayor Lewis

Committee Members Absent: N/A

Staff Present: Megan McBride, Lucas Phillips

Mayor Lewis opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Agenda

1) Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda by John Beirl, seconded by Ana Tochterman. Passed unanimously.

2) Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the minutes from the October 20, 2020 Plan Commission meeting by Laurie Gregor. Seconded by Ana Tochterman. Passed unanimously.

3) Public Comment (non-agenda items)

None.

4) Action Items

- a) Public Hearing regarding Conditional Use Permit to allow up to fifteen (15) additional multi-family residential units at 522 Chapple Avenue, zoned Mixed Residential/Commercial (MRC). Applicant: Impact 7

Motion to go into Public Hearing by Matt Mackenzie. Seconded by David Mettillie. Passed unanimously.

Megan McBride provided background regarding the Class 2 Public Hearing notice that was submitted for this Conditional Use Permit for consideration, fulfilling the legal obligations. The Conditional Use Permit is coming forward at this time to allow Impact 7 to apply for a WHEDA tax credit which has a deadline in December. The proposed development would have townhomes on the property, and additional housing units developed inside of the Wilmarth Mansion itself.

No public comments were received during the meeting, and Megan McBride stated that she did not receive any comments prior to the meeting from any neighbors or community members.

Katie Gellatly asked what is currently in the Wilmarth Mansion building, and Megan McBride stated that it is currently a mixture of office space and event space. The entirety of the property will be converted to residential units.

Mayor Lewis asked if the rent range stated in the packet will be eligible for a sliding scale based on income. Kate Sullivan from Impact 7 stated that the units will be eligible for scaled rents based on WHEDA standards. Mayor Lewis asked who would manage the new construction, and Kate Sullivan answered that Impact 7 currently manages the units on that lot, and would continue to manage the new and existing units.

Megan McBride provided information regarding the Conditional Use Permit and the additional density that would be created on this site. She explained that the development would still be contingent on a Site Plan approval.

Matt Mackenzie asked if there is a setback required on this property due to its proximity to the Tri-County Corridor, and Megan McBride answered that it has a 30 foot setback from the Corridor, that is accounted for on their current plans. Megan McBride stated that their primary concerns lay in providing enough off-street parking and snow storage.

Lauren Dahl from C&S stated that she has been working with Impact 7 and the City to provide funding incentives to make the development feasible, as well as maintain the historic integrity of the Wilmarth Mansion and compatibility with the surrounding housing.

Ana Tochtermann questioned the amount of parking that is accounted for in the plan – she noticed that there appears to be one parking space per housing unit. Megan McBride explained that this has been an ongoing discussion, and there is the potential to share parking between the housing at this site and the neighboring Senior Center, which does not have a need for overnight parking.

Ana Tochtermann asked if this housing would be eligible for housing vouchers, and Michael Carlson from Impact 7 stated that it would absolutely be eligible for the voucher program, and Impact 7 has extensive experience working with these programs.

Mayor Lewis asked if the proposed development was contingent on being awarded tax credits this year. Michael Carlson answered that the tax credits do impact the design of the development, but their “fallback position” would be to combine state and historic tax credits, as well as other federal credits that would allow for restoration and adaptive reuse of the Wilmarth Mansion and the attached Robert Homes Villa.

Motion to go out of Public Hearing by David Mettillie. Seconded by Ana Tochtermann. Passed unanimously.

Matt Mackenzie stated that he feels like the development fits nicely into the area, and is well situated within the City. He stated a desire to keep operations residential at that building, and a need to ensure that there is enough parking for the tenants.

Mayor Lewis spoke in favor of the development, particularly the good management that has historically been in place at this property, and how well the residential development will fit in to that part of the City, with its proximity to downtown and the Corridor trail.

Motion to approve the Conditional Use Permit by Ana Tochtermann. Seconded by Matt Mackenzie. Passed unanimously.

5) Discussion Items

a) Discussion of 2021 meeting schedule

Megan McBride wanted to check in with Commission members to ensure that the current dates and times of the meetings are still good with the members. No concerns were expressed, so the meeting times will continue to be every other Tuesday at 6:30 pm.

6) Announcements/Reports/Comments/Questions

a) Updates on zoning and code updates related to green infrastructure and water quality

Megan McBride provided updates regarding the ongoing process of updating the waterfront code updates. She stated that they received a proposal from Greif in response to the City's RFP, and that this was the only proposal received. She stated that she is excited for Greif's Public Input process, which allows for more accessible input gathering from the public. She stated that this will probably be starting in the beginning of January. There will likely be a joint meeting between the Plan Commission and Sustainability Committee with the consultants.

Mayor Lewis asked for clarification regarding if these code updates will be rolled out across the whole city, or only parts. Megan answered that the code updates are focused on waterfront districts, including zoning in the Oredock Upland area, as well as providing incentives to promote green infrastructure.

b) Updates on public input and development process for Timeless Timber site

Megan McBride explained that she had sent out over 70 information packets to neighbors of the Timeless Timber redevelopment site, and will have a synthesis of the responses received that will be brought to Plan Commission as well as City Council. Public input will inform the Development Agreements for the residential and commercial redevelopment of the site, and Development Agreement negotiations are anticipated to take place in February 2021.

John Beirl asked about the status of the Copper Cup development off of Stuntz, and Megan McBride answered that they are moving forward in the spring – the delay has mostly been due to land surveyors in the area being very busy, but the Copper Cup developers are working on the Site Plan.

7) Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by David Mettillie. Seconded by Mayor Lewis. Passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:07 pm. Minutes done by Lucas Phillips.

Timeless Timber Site Public Input Summary

Commercial Proposal

Please use the space below to share any thoughts and feedback about the proposed commercial use and its compatibility with the surrounding area/neighborhood

- Dissatisfaction with another restaurant (specifically a Mexican restaurant)
 - “[Ashland] has enough restaurants, gas stations, and second-hand stores”
- Should be a Menards or Texas Roadhouse
- Desire for industry to return to this site
- Concerned with a bar being this close to traffic (concern for drunk driving implied)

Please use the space below to share any thoughts and feedback about the proposed commercial site plan and building design

- Building design is satisfactory
- Like the access from 23rd Ave E; flows better to US-2
- Don’t agree with routing traffic onto 22nd Ave E. at 3rd St E. – prefer to route onto Main St E. to provide better access to L&M, Break Water, and Tractor Supply

Please use the space below to share any additional thoughts and feedback about the proposed commercial or residential development

- Question to whether or not the sewer system can handle this new construction
- Many concerns about traffic, especially as it pertains to safety
 - 21st Ave E and 22nd Ave E have turned in to “race tracks”
 - Need sidewalks, particularly if moving forward with the residential development
 - Ideas for rerouting traffic:
 - Route Cedar out the West side
 - Route traffic from the West to Tractor Supply to avoid customers having to go around Park, down 21st or 22nd, then back West; this also brings traffic off US-2
- Move the trailer park on the East end to the proposed Timeless Timber residential site and build the proposed residential development to the trailer park site

Residential Proposal

Please use the space below to share any thoughts and feedback about the proposed residential use and its compatibility with the surrounding area/neighborhood

- General concern for affordable housing resident's criminality and drug activity
 - Concern it will bring property values down
 - Request for resident drug testing and background checks
 - Need for needle disposal
- General concern for residential housing to be near such a high traffic road
 - Signs for kids at play
- Should be specifically marketed as senior housing
- Unfair to local landlords to allow tax credit housing in the City
- .Want to see community gardening space incorporated into site design

Please use the space below to share any thoughts and feedback about the proposed residential site plan and building design

- The building design is satisfactory
 - Residential development should be closer to the schools and health care facilities
 - Like the "green buffer zone"
 - Concern with sound and noise disturbance for the residents due to traffic and the surrounding businesses (specifically Kwik Trip)
-

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Updates

Updated: February 2021

	Comp Plan Goal	When?	Updates
Make Downtown Great	Establish a targeted Downtown Revitalization Zone	S	The Main Street Board has identified several free technical assistance projects through Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) which will take place in June, 2021 to further this goal. Projects will include: 1) a Downtown Master Plan (future streetscape design), 2) a cohesive branding and wayfinding system for the downtown, and 3) a Strategic Plan for the Main Street Program.
	Implement a state affiliated Main Street Program	S	Ashland became a Main Street community in 2020.
	Implement Historic Tax Credits as a means to revitalize Main Street's historic structures	M	The City partnered with the WI Historical Society in 2019 to host a forum to educate downtown property owners on Historic Tax Credits. The Planning Department has worked directly with property owners on HTC applications, with 1 application submitted and approved in 2020 and 1 currently in progress.
	Strengthen and expand the Second Street Historic District to leverage funding	M	Expansion of the Second Street Historic District is not an option at this time (based on consultation with both the WI Historical Society and a private historic preservation consultant who completed Ashland's 2017 Historic Resource Survey). The City is looking to fund a 2021 building improvement grant program prioritizing historic preservation and structural building improvements to accomplish this goal.
	Market downtown's abundant parking opportunities	M	Specific strategies and materials for this will be included in Strategic Plan and Wayfinding Plan developed by WEDC in June 2021.
	Explore the opportunity to create a Business Improvement District (BID)	M	No progress. May be explored in 2-3 years when the Main Street Program begins the process of becoming its own non-profit.
Protect and Connect the Lake	Capitalize upon the Waterfront Trail as a protection area	M	The City and other community partners will be organizing a native plantings project to take place at strategic waterfront parks in 2021. The location of the trail has been shifted in 2 strategic locations to protect it from future damage related to major storm events.
	Complete the ore dock and upland entryway area	M - L	In progress. Master Planning of Oredock Upland will take place in 2022.
	Ensure the reuse of the Superfund clean up sites protects the integrity of the lake	M	The Superfund site is in the process of being turned back over to the City, for redevelopment into a park with updated boat launch and parking area.

Knit the Urban Fabric Together	Add connections from the Waterfront Trail to the Tri-County Corridor Trail	O	No updates.
	Bay City Creek trail connection	L	An easement will be retained for a future parking area through Copper Cup development for Bay City Creek trail parking.
	Maslowski Beach, via Prentice Park, to the Tri-County Corridor Connection	M	No updates.
	Northern Great Lakes Visitors Center- trial connection and loop	M	No updates.
	Reimagine the city's entryways	L	Funding for entryway feature included in Planning Department capital budget for 2022 and 2023
	East meets West-- Connect the neighborhoods	L	No progress.
	Capture views to the lake along north/south street corridors	L	No progress. This will be a consideration incorporated into the City's UDO updates in 2021.
Strengthen the Housing Market	Diversify and upgrade via infill housing	O	The proposed residential development for the Timeless Timber site will diversify housing options as they would be new, ADA compliant multi-family housing units (identified as a need in the City's 2018 Housing Report). One of the grant criteria for the downtown building improvement grant program was for costs associated with build out of new downtown residential uses.
	Conservation buffer	O	Ongoing, the City has not paid to expand City infrastructure within the conservation buffer area since Comp Plan adoption.
	Strategic demolition	M	The City Housing Committee has recommended use of City Communtiy Development Block Grant Revolving Loan Fund (CDBG RLF) dollars for strategic acquisition of blighted, vacant properties and demolition of the structures thereon. The lots could then be donated to an eligible non-profit for construction of new infill affordable housing.
	Strategic code enforcement	S	The City converted the Property Maintenance position from part-time seasonal, to a full-time position in 2018.
	Healthy Neighborhoods	L	The Parks & Recreation Department and Planning Department will be working with a Northland College Professor and class to implement a pilot Healthy Neighborhoods project in 2021. This will be done by engaging residents around their interests, and what being healthy in their neighborhood means to them. This will then help inform the future public input process for the East End Skating Rink, and serve as a pilot for engaging neighborhoods to identify and connect communities of interest, and begin to build social capital related to the neighbrhoods identified in the Comp Plan.

	Careful disposition of vacant land	O	The City marketed the Timeless Timber site through RFP's in 2020, Development Agreements are in progress. Beaser Avenue site being saved for redevelopment until regional housing study is completed. The oredock upland will be redeveloped according to the Master Plan to be completed in 2022.
Promote Place-Based Economic Development	Implement this plan's "quality of place" initiatives	O	Ongoing. Downtown streetscape and placemaking planning will occur with WEDC in June 2021. Based on the current Public Works project scheule, ideally complete reconstruction of Main Street would take place in 2025 or 2026.
	Leverage Northland College's environmental mission	S	The recommended TID #10 amendments include funding to host 3 business plan competitions to promote entrepreneurialism and fill vacant Main Street storefronts
	Promote collaborative entrepreneurialism in downtown Ashland	S	The business plan competition proposed would help further this goal. No other updates at this time.
	Complete an Economic Development Strategic Plan	S	Economic Development Strategic Plan was adopted in 2018.
Set a Strong Example of Sustainability	Provide rebates for home retrofitting	M	No progress.
	Prioritize energy efficient improvements and updates to city buildings and facilities	M	The City has completed HVAC replacement projects at the two largest energy using facilities (Bretting Center and Water/Wastewater Utility) from 2019-present. The Public Works Department has been gradually switching light fixtures to LED in all City facilities.
	Institute a mandatory recycling and composting ordinance	S	The City has a mandatory recycling ordinance in place. Mandatory composting can't be implemented without an adequate facility to accommodate this. The City has been working to partner with the Northland College Food Lab, and has offered to allow them to use land at the City's landfill to increase their capacity for a community-wide program. They feel they would likely outgrow this space within 2 years as well, and therefore are evaluating alternative sites to meet their long-term needs.
	Create easy ways for residents and businesses to opt into renewable energy	M	The Xcel Energy solar farm constructed in 2018-2019 created an easy way for residents to opt into solar energy without having to own and maintain their own panels. The City also received silver designation from the national SolSmart program in 2018, which involved updates to City ordinances, permitting processes, and cross-training of staff to streamline and simplify the solar permitting process in Ashland. Moving forwards, the City was accepted into the Partners in Energy program through Xcel Energy to develop and implement strategic energy goals in the City over the next 2 years.
	Promote green spaces within Ashland	O	Ongoing, no updates.

	Increase access to local food	L	The Planning Department has added a line item to annually contribute to the Farmer's Market budget. A portion of this contribution is specifically designated to support their double points SNAP/EBT program to support access to local food for residents of all income levels.
	Promote alternative modes of transportation	O	The City will be repaving the Waterfront Trail and 5th Street Corridor to improve condition for users.
	Increase options for solar panels and solar farms in Ashland	L	Xcel Energy's solar farm and the City's SolSmart designation process also furthered this goal.

DOWNTOWN BUILDING IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

**City of
Ashland**

Find yourself next to the water.



TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING

\$300,000

GRANT CRITERIA

1

BUILDING REPAIRS

- Preserve the structural and/or historical integrity of the building

2

EXTERIOR BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

- Priority given to historic preservation projects
- Includes façade and signage updates

3

NEW OR EXPANDED COMMERCIAL USES

- Priority given to food-based uses
- Example: expanding or building a commercial kitchen

4

BUILD OUT OF NEW UPPER STORY RESIDENTIAL UNITS

- Utilizing existing vacant upper floors to increase housing diversity and availability

PROJECT SUMMARIES

**316 MAIN ST E.
OMER NELSEN ELECTRIC**

\$20,000

Replace leaking roof to preserve the structural integrity of the building

**220 MAIN ST E.
ASHLAND LOCK & KEY**

\$22,500

Structural repairs to building; facade improvements; build out of commercial kitchen

**201 MAIN ST E.
2ND STREET BISTRO**

\$25,000

Facade improvements; replace roof and gutters; addition of outdoor seating

**121 MAIN ST E.
COLOR CENTER**

\$4,500

Signage updates

**101 MAIN ST W.
MIXED COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL**

\$25,000

Structural improvements; facade improvements; build out of lower level living units

**113-115 MAIN ST W.
MIXED COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL**

\$7,784.60

Facade improvements

PROJECT SUMMARIES

**116 MAIN ST W.
HOME EXPRESSIONS**

\$20,000

Replace leaking roof to preserve the structural integrity of the building

**216 MAIN ST W.
FALL GENERAL SURGERY**

\$10,000

ADA improvements for more historical accuracy

**313 MAIN ST W.
SPINSTER BOOKS**

\$5,000

Water/humidity management to preserve the structural integrity of the building

**412 MAIN ST W.
BAY CITY CYCLES**

\$22,500

Structural and building improvements; facade improvements

**413 MAIN ST W.
GABRIELE'S GERMAN CHOCOLATES**

\$22,500

Structural repairs to building; build out of new upper level residential

**415 MAIN ST W.
BEADS & BLOOMS**

\$25,000

Structural repairs to building; facade improvements

PROJECT SUMMARIES

**417 MAIN ST W.
FUTURE COPPER PASTY**

\$22,500

Build out of new commercial kitchen

**505 MAIN ST W.
MOORE'S ON MAIN**

\$20,000

Structural repairs and building improvements

**509-515 MAIN ST W.
VACANT**

\$25,000

Structural repairs to building; facade improvements

**516 MAIN ST W.
ONE ON ONE HAIR DESIGN**

\$20,000

Building improvements

**200 CHAPPLE AVE
HAUKAAS LAW**

\$5,000

Replace windows for more historical accuracy

