

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE KENTWOOD PLANNING COMMISSION
JULY 24, 2018, 7:30 P.M.
COMMISSION CHAMBERS

A. Chair Jones called the meeting to order at 7:30p.m.

B. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner VanderHoff.

C. Roll Call:

Members Present: Dan Holtrop, Timothy Little, Mike Pemberton, Monica Sparks, Frank VanderHoff

Members Absent: Bill Benoit and Garrett Fox (with notification)

Others Present: Community Development Director Terry Schweitzer, Economic Development Planner Lisa Golder; Senior Planner Joe Pung

Motion by Kape, supported by VanderHoff, to excuse Benoit and Fox from the meeting.

- Motion Carried (7-0) –
- Benoit and Fox absent–

D. Approval of the Minutes and Findings of Fact

Motion by Holtrop, supported by Pemberton, to approve the minutes of July 10, 2018 and Findings of Fact for: Case#23-18 Panda Express Chinese Kitchen – Special Land Use and Site Plan Review for a Drive-Thru Restaurant Located at 3170 – 28th Street SE

- Motion Carried (7-0) –
- Benoit and Fox absent -

E. Approval of the Agenda for July 24, 2018

Motion by Pemberton, supported by Holtrop, to approve the agenda for the July 24, 2018 meeting.

- Motion Carried (7-0) –
- Benoit and Fox absent -

F. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak to non-agenda items

There was no public comment.

G. Old Business

H. Public Hearing

Case #24-18 Inglenook Condominium – Major Change to the PUD – Located the on the South side of Burton 4200 Block

Schweitzer stated the Inglenook Condominium project received final PUD site Plan approval on January 11, 2005. The Development Agreement relating to the development specified that the overall PUD perimeter side yard and individual rear yard building setbacks to be 30 feet.

Schweitzer stated the property owners at 2187 Greenstone Drive wish to construct a 16'x16'screened porch addition to the back of their house. He stated this would yield a setback of ten (14) feet off the perimeter of the condominium site. The Inglenook Condominium Development Agreement requires a minimum 30 foot setback off along this portion of the condominium site. .

Schweitzer stated City staff has conducted a review of the city records relating to the Inglenook Condominium Planned Unit Development (PUD) including the building permits issued for the construction of the homes as well as building additions. In addition, drawing upon the engineering plans for the utility and street infrastructure, city staff was able to take measurements from the edge of the street to reasonably verify that the no building construction within the development has previously encroached upon the required perimeter building setback or individual rear yard building setbacks for enclosed or unenclosed porches, steps, patios or similar construction along the perimeter of the development.

Schweitzer stated the RPUD-1 zoning ordinance provisions allow the Planning Commission to vary the rear yard setback of individual dwelling units after consideration of common open space areas or parks which abut the rear yard.

Schweitzer stated there is no common open space area or parks abutting the rear yard of the home at 2187 West Greenstone. The adult foster care small group home building and adjacent single family detached building are both within 30 feet of the common lot line nearby the homes at 2187, 2181 2193 and 2199 West Greenstone.

Schweitzer stated he is recommending denial of the request of Jim and Jennifer Forester to reduce the 30 foot overall PUD perimeter sideyard and individual rear yard building setbacks for the Inglenook Condominium PUD and as it would specifically relate to the home at 2187 West Green Drive SE as described in Case#24-18.

David Kenndy, President of the Inglenook Condominiums was present. He stated he appreciated all the work that staff has done and this has taught them a lot. He stated he doesn't have any disagreements of the recommendations of staff. He stated the Forester's would still like to continue with the project, but as he reviewed the documents he doesn't see a way for them to continue with the project.

Jones opened the public hearing.

There was no public comment.

Motion by VanderHoff, supported by Pemberton to close the public hearing.

- Motion Carried (7-0) –
- Benoit and Fox absent –

VanderHoff stated he is in agreement of the planning staff's recommendation and he is not in favor of the request.

Little, Holtrop, Pemberton, Kape Sparks and Jones concurred with the recommendation of staff

Motion by Pemberton, supported by Holtrop, to recommend to the City Commission denial of the Request of Jim and Jennifer Foerster to reduce the 30 foot overall PUD perimeter side yard and individual rear yard building setbacks for the Inglenook Condominium PUD and as it would specifically relate to the home at 2187 West Greenstone Drive, SE as described in Case #24-18. Denial is conditioned upon basis points 1 – 6 as described in Schweitzer’s memo dated July 19, 2018.

- Motion Carried (7-0) –
- Benoit and Fox absent -

I. Work Session

There were no Work Sessions

J. New Business

There was no New Business

K. Other Business

1. Master Plan Discussion

Planning Principle 3: Place Strengthening

Kentwood is considered a first tier suburb of Grand Rapids, the metro area’s principal central city. As such, it shares many similarities with the areas of Grand Rapids that it borders, as well as with other inner suburbs; thus, distinctions between governmental units blur and a clear identity is not readily noticed. Recognizing this, the following planning ideas are meant to help distinguish Kentwood within the metro area and create a fresh expression about its identity.

A. Gateways

Gateways are simply marks of distinction within the community, and are typically placed along city boundaries on arterial roadways in visible and strategic locations. Gateways and gateway treatments can vary widely – and often involve art/urban/constructed works, special landscaping treatments, or very unique “artifacts”; for example, the Uniroyal automobile tire along Interstate 94 just outside Detroit, acts as a gateway into that city. These gateway icons should be taller than wide and should be illuminated at night.

To date the City has installed entrance signs at the following five locations 1) Kalamazoo Avenue median north of 60th Street, 2) Kelloggwoods Drive at the entrance to Kelloggwoods Park, 3) northwest corner of 44th Street and Patterson Avenue, 4) north side of 28th Street west of Patterson Avenue, and 5) south side of 44th Street east of Division Avenue but no prominent features have been constructed or proposed.

VISION:

1. The city will establish more prominent gateways at the major entrances to the city, including, but not limited to, 44th Street and Division Avenue, Patterson Avenue and 28th Street, East Paris Avenue near Lake Drive, or other key locations.

TASKS:

- a. Kentwood shall determine the gateway locations and note on the Future Land Use map.
- b. Determine process for the gateway features.
- c. Secure funding and sponsorship for gateway development and site maintenance.
- d. Several potential gateway locations were identified during the 2005 planning workshops, and were initially categorized as either “urban” or “green” gateway opportunities. This gateway planning concept is not the highest priority of Kentwood, but deserves additional attention and should be kept in mind as an enhancing element of future plans.

Figure 11: Gateway Map.

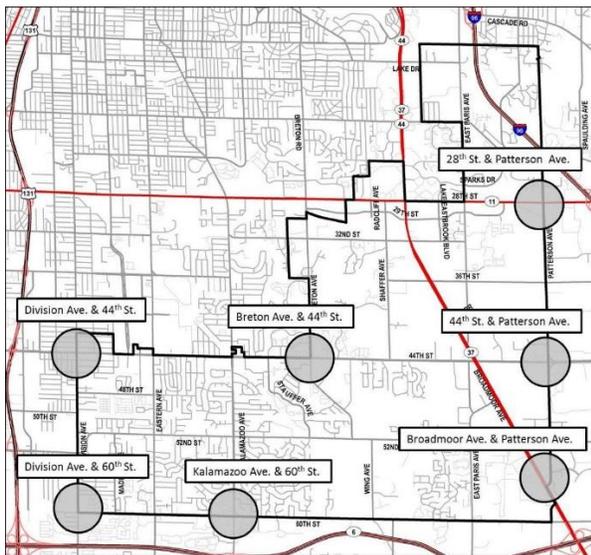
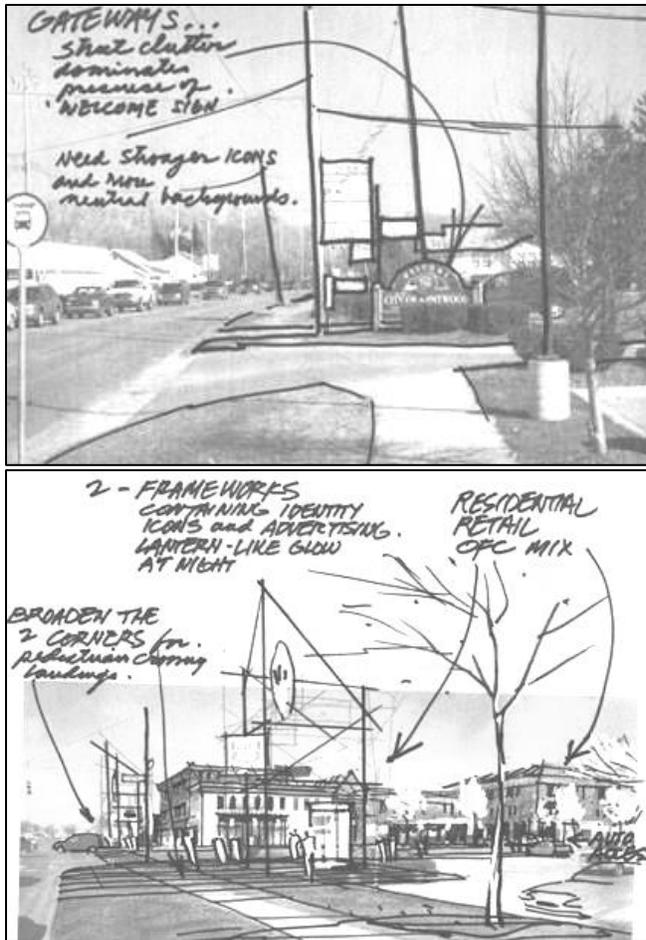


Figure 12: Two Sample Illustrations of a Gateway location at the 44th Street and Division Avenue Intersection



B. Strengthening the “Sense of Place”

In a metropolitan area with so many similar looking commercial developments and residential projects, it is important to continue to seek distinction and a sense of place in future Kentwood plans. By thinking in terms of neighborhood and pedestrian scale, and by beginning to cluster a wider variety of uses (commercial combined with residential, community services, green space and recreation, for instance), greater distinction will begin to emerge. These planning ideas will foster unique combinations of projects, increase an area’s identity and usefulness, and engender a greater sense of community and resident pride.

Figure 13: Example of how a Sense of Place may be strengthened



VISION

1) The city will strive to be a unique place where people will want to live and visit.

TASKS

- a) The city will encourage continued investment in properties and businesses.
- b) The city will offer a sense of place by taking advantage of amenities—Plaster Creek, Patterson Farm, Heyboer farm, etc. as unique features to the city of Kentwood.
- c) Kentwood will continue develop events such as a farmers markets, concerts, art fairs etc.
- d) The city will encourage architectural quality for existing businesses to improve the sense of place. For example, the improvements that were made to Woodland Mall such as the Barnes and Noble and the plaza area helped to improve the sense of place for Woodland Mall.
- e) The city will continue support the Division Avenue BRT.
- f) The city will adopt the City Campus Plan into the Master Plan.
- g) Kentwood will work with business and neighborhood associations to establish an identity for their business or residential district.
- h) The city will support public art to improve the sense of place and provide cultural enrichment.
- i) The city will continue to support events at the library that will help develop a sense of place for the City Campus area.

Planning Principle 5: Partnerships and Organization

While the City of Kentwood has the ability to plan land uses and growth within its borders, there are many external factors that affect the City's planning efforts. Traffic, transportation, housing, economics, ecology, and market dynamics are all influenced by regional forces that span geopolitical boundaries. Therefore, decisions made by communities across the greater Grand Rapids metropolitan region affect neighboring jurisdictions. To best address transportation, housing, economic and environmental concerns, Kentwood must engage the adjacent cities and townships in partnerships so that the issues pertinent within each community, as well as each community's independent vision and future plans can respond to external influences. Building upon the cooperative examples advocated by the Grand Valley

Metro Council (GVMC) the City of Kentwood will work to develop these mutually beneficial collaborative relationships to help guarantee that the recommendations in this Master Plan, in addition to future planning efforts, are neither conflicting nor redundant. Due to changes in Michigan law, there are now provisions for expanded multi-jurisdictional planning opportunities and greater regional cooperation. Thanks to this enabling legislation, it is now possible for municipalities to work together to address planning issues that cross geopolitical boundaries.

This planning principle permeates the city's Planning Principles as regional cooperation and open dialogue is critical to successfully implementing many of these ideas. Partnerships, furthermore, are not limited to governmental partnerships. In fact, it will often be public-private partnerships that are most effective at implementing many of the planning principles in Kentwood.

VISION:

1. Kentwood will continue its strong partnerships with the Grand Valley Metro Council, the ITP, The Right Place, Inc., the Wyoming/Kentwood Chamber of Commerce, the Kent County Road Commission, the Four Corners Study Group, and area municipalities. Kentwood will work with these organizations to coordinate planning and economic development in the region.

TASKS:

- a) Coordinate the connection of bike trails in the community.
- b) The city will use tax base sharing and other economic tools to retain businesses in the area.
- c) Kentwood will work with GVMC on regional planning issues.
- d) Kentwood will look into cooperative agreements between municipalities for municipal services.
- e) The city will work with adjacent communities to establish DDAs (Downtown Development Authorities), Corridor Improvement Authorities, or other incentive programs to benefit both communities in the provision of economic development programs.
- f) Kentwood will improve communication with the public by using social networking sites and other methods.

Pung stated we will change this to say will continue to.

- g) Kentwood will collaborate with the Four Corners Planning Group on issues facing the communities on the southeast side of Grand Rapids.

Jones questioned the Four Corners and stated there needs to be some discussion about what housing is going to be

Planning Principle 5: Sustainability

The word *sustainability* for a community includes the concept of managing a community's resource base such that future generations can enjoy the same or improved quality of life. It is not only a concept that addresses the maintenance of the environment, but also for the ongoing operation and prosperity of the community and the health of its citizens. Although sustainability is broad term that can be defined in

many ways, the Master Plan will focus on the sustainability goals and tasks that may have an impact on land use or development issues facing the city.

VISION:

1. The city of Kentwood will strive to be a sustainable community through its efforts to maintain and improve the city's environmental quality, to sustain itself financially over time, to promote a healthy living environment for its residents and to use its resources wisely. The Master Plan will address the sustainability principles which impact land use decision making and development in the following areas: greenspace, economic sustainability, resources, and healthy living environment. It is anticipated that the city's focus on and attention to sustainability will attract and retain residents and businesses to the city.

TASKS -- Greenspace

- a. Maintain and improve the city's public parks and greenspaces and improve citizen access to these areas.
- b. Plant trees to create more livable community. Specific yearly goals should be established for the number of trees to be planted, and the goal incorporated into the city's Schedule of Capital Improvements and budget. Emphasis should be placed on replacing ash trees that have died or have been removed from city streets. A program of tree donations should be established to reduce costs.
- c. Increase the number of non-motorized trails through the community and connect these trails to parks, schools, shopping, workplaces, and transit. The non-motorized Plan shall rank the trails by priority, and the Plan shall be used in establishing projects for the Schedule of Capital Improvements.
- d. Continue work toward the adoption and enforcement of new storm water management techniques that improves water quality, air quality, aesthetics and adds natural features to the built environment.
- e. Review maintenance policies to eliminate products or practices that will damage the environment.
- f. Continue to add parkland and open space as necessary to provide access to natural systems for city residents. Additions to parkland and open space shall be made with maintenance responsibilities in mind.
- g. City will continue to incorporate requirements for greenspace into developments.

TASKS – Economic Sustainability

- a) Continue to support the ITP and require transit stops near new developments; continue support of Form-Based Code on Division Avenue to allow flexibility in the land use and more attractive development.
- b) Work to encourage and promote mixed use developments to cut down on commute times for area workers and reduce traffic.
- c) Encourage redevelopment of contaminated properties in the city to allow for the more productive reuse of property, and make property owners aware of programs for these contaminated (brownfield) properties.

- d) Re-occupy foreclosed, vacant properties; make use of the Kent County Land Bank Authority as needed.

Golder stated Kent County Land Bank is now Nova Lab. She might take this one out.

- e) Kentwood will promote both the Kentwood as well as the Kent County Homeowner Loan Program to preserve and improve the housing stock in the city.
- f) Continue work to make Kentwood a place in which people will want to stay and invest, in order to maintain the tax base and services.
- g) Promote environmental sustainability to attract new businesses and residents to the city and will provide a way that Kentwood can distinguish itself from other communities.

TASKS -- Resources/Recycle/Energy Conservation

Kentwood will continue to improve water quality through its adoption and enforcement of the new low impact storm water management techniques to reduce the amount of storm water runoff and improve water quality, air quality, and reduce water usage.

- a) New municipal buildings in Kentwood will be built to LEED Standards
- b) Promote recycling and support recycling programs to reduce waste at city facilities.
- c) Kentwood will encourage the redevelopment of contaminated sites within the city.
- d) Use of renewable energy when feasible, reducing waste of natural resources, and by encouraging Kentwood residents, businesses and industry to become partners in this effort.
- e) City will conduct an energy feasibility study or audit to measure and improve energy efficiency.
- f) Continue upgrade of city facility and street lighting to LED.
- g) Continue to find ways to eliminate waste in the water system through meter replacement.
- h) Offer incentive programs to encourage residents and businesses to save water—low flow fixtures, etc.
- i) Partner with businesses to decrease energy and water usage through conservation.
- j) Work with Grand Rapids to identify businesses that use significant quantities of water and work to find ways to conserve.
- k) Decrease the need for water for landscaping by use of native species or other landscaping that require less water. Consider changing city's landscaping requirements to allow landscaping using less water.
- l) Explore use of alternate energy sources reduce barriers to their use, including the installation of solar panels on the landfill or on other property as well as the capture of land fill gases of conversion to energy.
- m) Use City of Kentwood or Kent County Housing Commission funds to promote ways to save energy for homeowners.
- n) City will expand opportunities for recycling as well as composting of yard waste.

TASKS -- Healthy Community

- a) Promote healthier lifestyles through connection of open spaces to allow the opportunity for walking, biking, and other means of transportation. Specifically the city will increase the number of non-motorized trails through the community and connect these trails to parks, schools, shopping, workplaces, and transit. The non-motorized trails and its ranking by priority can be found in the non-motorized plan for the city.
- b) Kentwood will continue to improve water quality through its adoption and enforcement of new low impact storm water management techniques to reduce the amount of storm water runoff and improve water quality, air quality, and reduce water usage. An example is the incorporation of rain gardens into a development to reduce storm water runoff and improve water quality.
- c) The city will promote and encourage community gardens.
- d) The city will continue to support its farmers market and improve accessibility to area residents. The city will encourage use of non motorized facilities to access the market.

Planning Principle 7: Commercial Development/Redevelopment

Kentwood is known for its shopping centers that for years have provided the Grand Rapids area with the only regional shopping venue. Now several regional shopping centers exist, and the city’s Woodland Mall has to work harder to keep its market share of sales.

Woodland has had to continuously improve its image and offerings to keep up with more modern shopping centers. The anticipated addition of the Von Maur store will keep the mall current and relevant in the market, even as many malls are predicted to close across the country. The success of many Kentwood businesses on 28th Street depends on the continued success of Woodland Mall.

In addition, many other smaller commercial areas provide goods and services to Kentwood residents and businesses. Some show signs of aging and others suffer vacancies due to the changing nature of retail sales. These commercial districts also need to be supported by the city. There may be some commercial areas in the city where retail uses no longer seem appropriate. These areas could be re-purposed for another use. Likewise, there are some areas that may need additional commercial depth and density in order to be successful. The city must re-plan these areas as well.

Many new, successful commercial developments are incorporating mixed-use development into their centers. Transit Oriented Developments (TODs) are also appropriate land uses that could accompany commercial redevelopment. TODs are developments that are in close proximity to major transit routes, and incorporate elements of commercial, office, and high-density residential uses. Locations for TODs are highlighted on the city’s Future Land Use Map.

One of the most obvious candidates for redevelopment of an older commercial area is the Division Avenue corridor. Since the adoption of the 2012 Master Plan, the city has developed and adopted a Form Based Code for the corridor.

VISION:

1. The city wants its commercial areas to succeed, and therefore will support commercial development and redevelopment and create opportunities for its success.
2. In dominant retail corridors such as the 28th Street and 29th Street corridor, it may be necessary to re-assemble properties into larger parcels and to think more comprehensively about access roads and parking rather than the single-purpose models of the past.

3. Kentwood will make commercial areas more viable by making them accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit services, and by encouraging adjacent residential uses to connect to retail uses.
4. Kentwood will use available tools to encourage the health and success of commercial development in Kentwood.
5. Kentwood will continue efforts to be business-friendly and encourage the expansion of businesses in the area.

6. The city will monitor the success of commercial areas of time to determine whether to introduce mixed use development into struggling commercial corridors.

TASKS -- General

- a. The city shall identify areas of potential decline and consider which areas may need to be re-planned or re-purposed within commercial areas, including the 28th Street/29th Street corridor.
- b. The city shall meet with property owners and realtors along the 28th Street and 29th Street corridor to gain an understanding of issues that fact the area and how the city may be able to assist.
- c. The Master Plan will incorporate locations for transit oriented development. Zoning regulations for TODs may be developed for these areas.
- d. The city will develop a definition or understanding of mixed-use development and how it applies to communities in Kentwood.

TASKS -- Division Avenue:

- a. The city will continue to work with the city of Wyoming to make public improvements to the Division Avenue corridor
- b. The city will explore funding mechanisms to help with envisioned public improvements for the corridor, such as a Corridor Improvement Authority, or other mechanisms to promote and improve the area.
- c. The city will proactively meet with housing developers to gain an understanding of barriers to residential development along the Division Avenue Corridor.

TASKS -- Woodland Mall and the 28th Street area.

- a. Support the efforts of Woodland Mall to be successful.
- b. Encourage support of a Corridor Improvement Authority or DDA for the 28th Street corridor.
- c. Support the concept of Woodland Mall as a transit oriented development by encouraging and accommodating various types of transit to Woodland Mall. This would include support of a transit hub near the mall, additional sidewalk and pedestrian access, bike racks; etc.

- d. Support uses that keep 28th Street a vibrant retail area.
- e. Improve access by requiring streets to accommodate alternate modes of transportation (Complete Streets).
- f. Improve aesthetics of 28th Street through landscaping, signage, etc.
- g. Improve pedestrian access along the corridor and to the businesses through sidewalk connections.
- h. Consider allowing other compatible uses, such as residential uses, along the 28th Street corridor to allow for more customers and activity for the retail development.
- i. For areas in decline, encourage the addition of mid-block streets or access to increase visibility and access to commercial areas and allow for the potential for more mixed use development.

TASKS -- Neighborhood commercial:

- a. Encourage the establishment of business associations.
- b. Distribute information on loan programs available to small businesses.
- c. Encourage mixed use to reduce vacancies and increase potential shoppers to the area.
- d. Identify areas where the amount or type of commercial retail is no longer viable, and recommend additional/alternative uses for these areas.
- e. Incorporate standards for redevelopment to encourage desired elements such as mixed-uses and green space.
- f. Ensure that all commercial areas are accessible to all modes of transportation.

2. Commissioners' Comments

3. Staff's Comments

Adjournment

