CITY OF CHARLEVOIX
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
Monday, January 11, 2016 - 7:00 p.m.
210 State Street, City Hall, Council Chambers, Charlevoix, MI

A. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vice Chair Chamberlain.

B. Roll Call

Vice Chair:	Sherm Chamberlain
Members Present:	Judy Clock, John Elzinga, Julee Roth, Toni Felter, RJ Waddell
Members Absent:	Don Heise, John Hess, Dave Novotny
Interim City Planner:	Zach Panoff

C. Inquiry Into Potential Conflicts of Interest
None.

D. Approval of Agenda
Motion by Member Roth, second by Member Waddell to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

E. Approval of December 14, 2015 Minutes
Motion by Member Waddell, second by Member Clock to approve the December 14, 2015 minutes as presented. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

F. Call for Public Comment not Related to Agenda Items
No public comment.

G. New Business

1. Review of Special Land Use Application 2016-01-SU – Munson Healthcare and Charlevoix Courier for community wellness, education and activity center at 411 Bridge Street

   a. Staff Introduction
   Interim Planner Panoff stated that the Hospital in conjunction with the Charlevoix Courier was proposing a community wellness, education and activity center at 411 Bridge Street (former location of Creative Cupcake). The location is in the Central Business District Overlay District. He stated that the proposed use needed to meet certain criteria and he reviewed the permitted uses allowed. If the Commission determined that the use does not fit one of the four categories, the applicant is allowed to apply for a special land use permit if they meet the purpose of the Overlay District which is to: "create a vibrant downtown district fronting Bridge Street consisting of primarily retail and food service businesses that enhance the City's economy by defining specific uses intended to increase consumer traffic."

   b. Application Presentation (if requested)
   Cathy Jacobsen, Director of Community Health Education for Charlevoix Area Hospital, described her professional background and stated that since 2008 she designed and implemented wellness oriented programs such as the School Nurse Program and she would lead the proposed wellness center project if permission is granted. She proceeded to give a presentation about the health education and wellness programs offered by the Hospital and the proposed program would provide a retail-like space in downtown Charlevoix.

   Ms. Jacobsen explained that the use of the downtown location was in partnership with the Charlevoix Courier. The Courier would provide the local newspaper and publications such as the Dining Guide. The Hospital would offer health and wellness activities through the wellness center for residents as well as visitors to the area. Ms. Jacobsen provided details on the various proposed programs and initiatives offered through the wellness center.

   Member Clock questioned parking availability for individuals who needed handicap spaces particularly related to diabetes patients. Ms. Jacobsen explained that diabetes classes would remain at the Hospital, but pre-diabetes and healthy eating programs would be held at the Wellness Center.

c. Call for Public Comments

Mark Heydlauff, City Manager, referenced the letter he sent in support of this project and he encouraged the Planning Commission to approve this use and location on Bridge Street.

Annie Doyle, DDA/Main Street Executive Director, stated that given the limited uses in the Zoning Ordinance, the Commission had the right to access case by case situations for the validity of adding vibrancy and foot traffic to downtown. She stated that one of the weaknesses of the current Zoning Ordinance was that it provided very limited criteria to what was allowed downtown. She reviewed specific portions of the special use permit application and strongly encouraged the Commission to approve the use.

Doug Caldwell, Publisher of the Northern Michigan Review which includes the Charlevoix Courier and Petoskey News Review, expressed his support of the partnership with the Hospital and the proposed use of the downtown space.

Member Elzinga questioned if the requested special use would terminate with the expiration of this lease. Interim Planner Panoff confirmed that the special use would only be applicable to the applicant while they are in the space.

d. Planning Commission Determination of Findings of Fact

Interim Planner Panoff questioned if the Commission found that the use fit in any of the four "use by right" categories. Vice Chair Chamberlain felt if one were to take a very liberal interpretation it could possibly fit, but that may be something that could "come back to haunt us". He suggested going through the findings of fact for the special use. The Commission members agreed.

Interim Planner Panoff referenced the Findings of Fact and the six (6) Conditions of Approval contained in the Staff Report. Vice Chair Chamberlain stated that if this use was outside the Overlay District it would be approved, but because the location was on Bridge Street it would require a special interpretation by the Planning Commission.

e. Motion

Motion by Member Roth, second by Member Felter to approve Project 2016-01 SU based on specific findings of fact that the application does meet the review criteria in Sections 5.41 and 5.133. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. Pocket development presentation by Sarah Lucas of Networks Northwest

a. Presentation

Sarah Lucas, Networks Northwest, stated that there was a housing shortage in Northwest Michigan communities. She proceeded with a PowerPoint presentation focusing on housing needs in the area, approaches to meet those needs, and what role the Planning Commission might have in addressing those needs.

Ms. Lucas stated that the population growth in Charlevoix County was in two age groups, 45–55, and older. Most of the population under the age of 45 is declining, and the area has lost a lot of young people over the years due to the recession. Between 2000 and 2010 the number of families in Charlevoix declined by 14% impacting school enrollment. She stated in Northwest Michigan they weren't only dealing with a housing shortage, but also a labor shortage due to the fact that many of the young people are leaving the community. She reviewed the Target Market Analysis which looked specifically at multi-family or attached housing styles within urbanized areas like the City of Charlevoix. She stated that the area had a service based economy and even though people were working they may not be able to afford a home in Charlevoix because property values are out of reach.

Ms. Lucas stated another issue was energy efficient homes. Heating costs can make housing unaffordable especially if someone was living in a part of the community that was not served by natural gas. She explained that affordable housing is housing that does not cost more than 30% of household income; workforce housing refers to unsubsidized housing that is affordable. She stated the goal was to make sure "that we have housing that is affordable and accessible for all ages, incomes, and household types".

Ms. Lucas reviewed the different types of housing that people are looking for such as small single family homes or cottage type homes on a single lot in town, apartments or flats, townhomes, accessory dwelling units, and cottage housing in pocket neighborhoods. She defined pocket neighborhoods as very small planned unit developments, typically on a lot in an existing residential neighborhood with very specific design guidance as to what homes look like and how they are situated on a lot. She stated she had a cottage design overlay from Traverse City. She explained that generally homes are 700-1,500 square feet, there is cluster parking on the side of a lot often on an alley access, with porches facing a green space, including landscaped courtyards. Discussion followed regarding setting aside certain areas for certain population groups, seasonals, and affordable housing set asides, resident-occupied requirements, and deed restrictions. Ms. Lucas said that this was a way to increase density that does not impact the character of the older neighborhoods, and she reviewed pilot districts, public/private partnerships and non-profits, incentives for this type of development, and development ready techniques.

Ms. Lucas stated a good example of this type of housing was being built in Traverse City on a city-owned piece of land by Habitat for Humanity and Homestretch. It was in a development district, not a specifically zoned cottage district. Ms. Lucas responded to questions regarding pocket development, and Habitat and Homestretch requirements for occupancy and energy efficient homes.

Ms. Lucas indicated that most of the population growth was in the older age groups and aging in place concepts were working in traditional communities with walkable downtowns. Accessibility is more and more important as the population gets older. She reviewed alternative types of senior housing, and ways to increase density, incentivize affordable housing developments, streamline the development approval processes, form-based codes and design guidelines, and community buy-in for different types of developments and housing types.

Member Roth stated that St. Mary's Cement was hiring about 200 people for their expansion and it would be nice to have somewhere in Charlevoix where 200 people needing affordable housing could live. Ms. Lucas stated that if the company was willing to talk about the housing needs of their workers it would build community support. She stated that when the housing issue has gained the most traction is when businesses have said that they absolutely need to have more housing or they were not going to be able to function as a business. She described the task force approach used by the city of Northport related to affordable housing needs, and community design charettes that help to bring ideas and concerns out into the open. She indicated that there are good examples of affordable, quality housing units throughout Northwest Michigan that could be used to show people what affordable housing can be. Ms. Lucas proceeded to explain various incentives, grants, payment in lieu of taxes, downtown rental rehab, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program, and Housing Trust Funds which are all geared to developing and retaining affordable housing.

Ms. Lucas stated that the development process for any new cottage housing, multi-family, or affordable housing projects can be very difficult to put together often because of the cost and public's opposition, so having everyone at the table who has something to bring to the project can help make it happen. She concluded her presentation and distributed copies of a publication entitled *A Framework for Housing Choices in Northwest Michigan* from *Networks Northwest.*

3. Review of 2016 Planning Commission Meeting Schedule
   There were no changes proposed to the Meeting Schedule.

H. Old Business

1. Discussion on Land Use Master Plan Updates
   The consensus was to defer the discussion on the Land Use Master Plan updates to the next meeting. Interim Planner Panoff indicated that he supplied maps showing the current vacant lots within the City to the Members for their review.

I. Staff Updates

None.

J. Request for Next Month's Agenda or Research Items

Interim Planner Panoff stated that officer elections would be at the next regular Planning Commission meeting.

Member Elzinga questioned the status of the Planner selection process and Interim Planner Panoff replied that second interviews were held the week before Christmas.

K. Adjournment

Motion by Member Felter, second by Member Roth to adjourn. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Joyce M. Golding/fgm	City Clerk	Sherm Chamberlain	Vice Chair