

City of Charlevoix
Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 30, 2024 - 1:00 PM
Council Chambers, 210 State Street, Charlevoix, MI

A. Roll Call

Chair:	Jennifer Muladore
Members Present:	Shelley Boehmer, Sherm Chamberlain, John Kurtz
Staff Present:	Jonathan Scheel, Director of Planning and Zoning
Other Attendees	Sarah Van Horn, Charlevoix Chamber; Zach Sompels, Housing North,
Present:	Shirley Gibson

B. Approval of Agenda

C. Call for Public Comment Not Related to Agenda Items

D. New Business

1. Review Michigan Association of Planners Conference

Notes

- Members of the subcommittee have been attending trainings and conferences regarding housing and met to share updates and plan next steps for the subcommittee.
- John Kurtz attended the MAP Conference in Grand Rapids, with sessions on the Michigan Zoning Atlas, Purpose-Built Communities, and Rural MI Prosperity. Experts are redefining “low income” and focusing on active neighborhoods with a vision for children playing, safety, trees, fewer STRs, and an increase in mixed use. There are grants available to help with education or economic development and local government. We already have one but should keep an eye out for more opportunities to push housing work forward. There is a Rural Readiness program for brownfield development in Gaylord that could help us help property owners in the city to include housing in redevelopment plans. Major themes from a Making Small Cities Thrive session also focused on adapting, saying no when it’s appropriate, and being consistent with our future vision laid out in the master plan.
- Shelley also attended the MAP Conference and attended some different sessions. Her impressions aligned with John’s. We should say no to things but be consistent as a commission—i.e., maintaining civility in public meetings. Public engagement is important and we should be attending more civic club meetings to educate them on what we do and the goals laid out in our master plan. We need to do our homework before meetings in order to have good conversations about how a project fits our community, learn from failures, and take our time.
- Sarah attended the Housing Summit in Traverse City and had updates on brownfield redevelopment with an eye to some of the future possibilities in Charlevoix. There are a lot of questions about how TIF funding works, but also a lot of opportunities to be

flexible, for example the developer could pay a public services “fee” to the municipality. We need to communicate more and help our local brownfield authority (the county) to understand the benefits and opportunities available. In addition, we should update our zoning to include more language about walkable communities and changing demographics. Small and middle housing are also great for an aging community and not just working families. One idea is to put housing in plain English, i.e., “We can’t stop change, only the form it’s going to take.” To explain, we know that traffic is increasing in the area regardless of where development happens—so we need to reframe our thinking to how this affects the community in terms of workers, restaurants, businesses, and their needs beyond who lives in a specific house or rental.

- Zach updated the group on MEDC maps for housing and the importance of assigning a dollar value to development outside of the community core. Services cost more when farther away from their sources, so infill development saves the community money. This is a big education opportunity during public meetings and site reviews.
- Sherm led a discussion on conservation properties—there is an opportunity to work with land conservancies and large property owners who may be considering future land donations to share the importance of smart development that includes conservation of precious natural resources. There is a way to accomplish both goals in our region and it would benefit everyone.
- Public comment: Shirley wanted to emphasize that the Commission has the ability to say no when a project does not fit the neighborhood or community. We need to be proactive and consistent in following our master plan and be clear about how individual projects are harmonious when approving site plans (or not). She also noted that the Peppervine development is looking good and May Street should be more like that. Finally, design standards for R1 and R2 would help us maintain that consistency in our vision.

Action Items:

- Sherm has been working on collecting data that could be turned into a presentation for civic groups on the Charlevoix-specific housing changes and master plan evolution over time.
- John is keeping an eye out for potential redevelopment properties and building relationships with landowners that might be willing to work with us in the future.
- Jonathan is continuing the grant project with Charlevoix Township and should have a meeting soon to discuss how we can align our zoning along our borders.
- New ideas from this and regular PC meetings will go into the plan matrix for 2025 to update zoning ordinance and encourage more housing in our community.

E. Adjourn

