

<p><b>CITY OF KALAMAZOO PLANNING COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2006</b></p>
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**Introduction**

This is a summary of the activities conducted by the Kalamazoo City Planning Commission during year 2006, plus information on other significant tasks undertaken by the Planning Division staff.

**Planning Commission Members**

The Planning Commission was made up of the following members in 2006:

Terry Kuseske, Chair	Frank Cody, Vice-Chair
Bertha Stewart	Linda Weiner
Sonja Dean	Kelly DeRango
James Kneen	Casey Fawley
Merilee Mishall	

Commissioner Kneen was appointed to the Commission in March of 2006 and Commissioner Mishall was appointed in July. The membership of the Commission became full with the appointment of Commissioner Mishall. Commissioners Dean and Cody were also appointed to additional terms in 2006. The Commission convened eleven (11) public meetings during the year. The regular meeting for August was cancelled due to the lack of any items for review by the Commission. The meeting in September was held at the Northside Association for Community Development (NACD) offices located on N. Park Street.

**Summary of requests reviewed by the Planning Commission**

A total of twenty-two (22) requests were processed by the Planning Division staff for review by the Planning Commission in 2006 (compared to 30 requests in 2005). The request types are identified as follows:

Rezoning	10	Special Use Permits	4
Appeals	1	Riverfront Overlay	1
Site plans in BTR Park	1	Street Vacations	5

The rezoning requests included rezoning the Knollwood Apartment complex to a higher density residential zone to allow for redevelopment, rezoning the Riverfront Target Area properties to the CMU and RMU districts and approving the Riverfront Overlay District for the same area, and the rezoning of parcels on S. Westnedge Avenue, Drake Road, W. Main Street, and Sage Street to allow for new commercial or office projects. The special use permits that were granted were to allow use of the former school on Birch Avenue for a church, use of the former school on Pleasant Avenue for the ARK program, use of a house on W. Lovell Street for a transitional residence for teenage girls, and to allow MacKenzie's Bakery to expand its food production operation. The site plan that was approved was for the new Rockford Lab Building to be constructed in the WMU BTR Park. The appeal request was of a decision by the Downtown Design Review Committee pertaining to the roofing materials for the Rugger's Up and Under Restaurant on W. Michigan Avenue.

The Planning Commission attended a retreat on March 7 at Kalamazoo College. A bus tour of current projects in the city was conducted. A presentation was provided by Kalamazoo College students pertaining to community planning. A presentation was also provided of the activities of the Downtown Design Review Committee. The selection process for new Commissioners was discussed. And a discussion took place regarding the concepts of good community planning.

### **Summary of Planning Division staff activities**

The following is a list of significant activities completed by the Planning Division staff in 2006:

1. The Riverfront Overlay Zoning District was approved by the City Commission on July 31. The Planning Division staff facilitated the project including development of draft and final versions of the document, review by city staff, review by the public during two community meetings, and coordinating public hearings before the Planning and City Commissions. This concluded a two-year planning process.
2. The Planning Division processed 50 site plan projects. Thirty-nine (39) of the plans have been approved to date. Over \$7,000 in fees was collected for the program this year. The Site Plan Review Committee convened 39 meetings for the purpose of reviewing the site plans. Some of the more notable site plans included re-use of a former Stryker building for Goodwill Industries, the Southtown Condominium project, new corporate headquarters for Griffin Pest Control, the Davis Creek Business Park, re-use of a former bank building for the Milwood Landscape Supply business, several improvement projects for Bronson Methodist Hospital, Crane Park Condominiums, the new downtown building for Greenleaf Trust, re-use of the former Neil's Auto Service building, installation of a new elevated water storage tank on the west side of the city, and renovation of the building at Michigan and Edwards for the Depot Landmark company. Forty-nine (49) site plan cases from 2006 and prior years were closed out through the inspection and enforcement process. A total of \$312,490 in financial performance guarantees was obtained to enable certain sites to be occupied prior to completion of all required improvements. The sites were monitored for completion of the work.
3. A list of possible amendments to the zoning ordinance was assembled and reviewed by

the Planning Division staff. The changes will help to clarify certain regulations of the ordinance and will address various issues that have surfaced since the ordinance was adopted. The amendments will be presented to the Planning and City Commissions in early 2007 for approval.

4. The Planning Division staff assisted the Public Services Department with the development of a new Wellhead Protection Ordinance, which will provide regulations for development on sites close to city wells. The ordinance will be part of the Zoning Ordinance, and will be brought to the Planning and City Commissions for review and approval in 2007.
5. Assistance was provided to the Economic Development Division in creating the site plan for the Davis Creek Business Park. The infrastructure for the Park will be installed in 2007.
6. The Planning Division staff also assisted the Economic Development Division with guidelines for the development of the River West project on the former KTS site. This will likely be the first major project in the Riverfront Target Area, and work on it will continue in 2007.
7. The site plan programs for the City of Portage and the City of Grand Rapids were reviewed for comparison with the Kalamazoo program. All three cities process a similar number of applications each year, and have different staffing levels. Portage and Grand Rapids require Planning Commission review and approval of site plans, and provide responses to the applicants within 45 days of plan submittal. Kalamazoo conducts an in-house review of site plans and responds in approximately 14 days.

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