A. Call to Order

B. Roll Call

C. Adoption of Formal Agenda

D. Approval of Minutes (February 7, 2019)

E. Communications and Announcements

F. Public Hearings:

1. P.C. #2019.01: Request from the Westwood Plaza, LLC to rezone 604 N. Drake Road from Zone RS-5 (Residential, Single-Dwelling District) to Zone CC (Commercial, Community District). [Recommendation: motion to recommend to the City Commission to approve the rezoning.]

G. Unfinished Business

1. Natural Features Protection Overlay update

H. New Business:

1. Annual meeting:

   a. Review of annual report for 2018
   b. Re-nomination of Commissioners Wissner, Milliken, and Baartman for new terms
   c. Election of officers for the Planning Commission
   d. Site Plan Review Program administration discussion

I. Citizens’ Comments

J. City Commission Liaison Comments

K. City Planner’s Report
L. Miscellaneous Comments by Planning Commissioners

M. Adjournment
A. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Hughes-Nilsson called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Planner Anderson proceeded with roll call and determined that the aforementioned members were present.

C. ADOPTION OF FORMAL AGENDA

Commissioner Greenman Wright, supported by Commissioner Vyas, moved approval of the February 7, 2019 Planning Commission agenda. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Wissner, supported by Commissioner Baartman, moved approval of the January 3, 2019 Planning Commission minutes. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

E. COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

F. PUBLIC HEARINGS

P.C. #2018.29: Request from the Community Planning & Economic Development Department and the Oakwood Neighborhood Association to approve the Oakwood Neighborhood Plan. [Recommendation: motion to approve the Plan and recommend to the City Commission to confirm the approval of the Plan as an amendment to the 2025 Master Plan.]
Commissioner Espinosa reported that he would abstain from this conversation and vote.

Ms. Katie Reilly gave the staff report. She said the planning effort was led by the Oakwood Neighborhood Association’s Planning Committee. To gather input from the neighborhood, they put together a survey, held nine focus groups, had pop up meetings at some existing community events, and held open houses. They also had a living wall for the plan with feedback opportunities at the Neighborhood Center.

Ms. Karen Larson, Oakwood Neighborhood Board Member, came forward to present the plan. She said they met with numerous groups to increase their understanding of the needs and desires for the neighborhood and to determine the best coalitions. They also had a favorable response when the plan was presented back to community. Ms. Larson reported they would like to have a new Community Center and more green space and naturalized areas where people can bike and walk.

Ms. Larson also reported that they found connectability to be very important. They found their neighborhood needs more sidewalks, and some need to be repaired or replaced. She cited the importance of the sidewalks and crosswalks, and connecting them to schools. Ms. Larson stated they lost their bus stop, which means they lost a major ability to access transportation in an affordable manner. Ms. Larson noted that their youth and seniors are extremely valuable resources that they need to continue to cultivate. They want to address senior issues for housing, home repairs, and nutrition. She reported they are making a coalition with the Woods Lake Association and the Winchell Association, and Parkview Hills is renewing their Neighborhood Association. Ms. Larson reported that instead of being one community, they will be a system of communities, which will uplift and help each other.

**Commissioner Hughes-Nilsson opened public comment portion of the hearing.**

No one came forward.

**Commissioner Greenman Wright, supported by Commissioner Wissner, moved to close the public comment portion of the hearing. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**Commissioner Milliken, supported by Commissioner Greenman Wright, moved to approve P.C. #2018.29: the Oakwood Neighborhood Plan and recommend to the City Commission to confirm the approval of the Plan as an amendment to the 2025 Master Plan.**

Commissioner Milliken and Commissioner Greenman Wright made favorable comments regarding the plan. Commissioner Milliken noted that it was a comprehensive, well thought-out process. He also appreciated that they viewed the process as an opportunity to affect change, to look to the future with vision, and to create coalitions. Commissioner Greenman Wright appreciated that they are seeking to develop the assets and the benefits already present in the community. She noted the Complete Streets approach for sidewalks, walkability, and the bus route as well as the attention to the water shed.
Roll call vote was taken and passed unanimously. Espinosa abstained.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

H. NEW BUSINESS


Commissioner Hughes-Nilsson reported that she was abstaining from this conversation and vote.

Mr. Sean Fletcher, Director of Parks & Recreation, and Mr. Christopher Khorey of McKenna and Associates, came forward to present the staff report. Director Fletcher reported on their successes with the Henderson Tot Lot and with the Davis Street Park. He said having a Master Plan approved will enable them to secure funding through the DNR to get state grants. This will also serve as a plan for capital projects for the next 5 years. Director Fletcher stated they have tried to equitably spread the park improvements throughout the City. He also shared they have created an internal 10-year capital plan. He reviewed the following parts of the plan:

Great Neighborhood & Complete Neighborhoods
Director Fletcher noted that the parks (ex: Crane Park, Rockwell Park, Henderson Tot Lot, Davis Street), Parks programs, and walking paths are helping to make neighborhoods better. He stated that the parks are the City’s venues. They had an LED Video board approved recently, so they can have movies in the park. Director Fletcher also stated that youth development is a huge focus for them. They desire to impact youth, give them the right spaces, get them away from phones and video games, and get them outdoors. He shared that Rockwell Park is an example of how they focus on youth. They designed that park knowing Phase 2 would include a building with restrooms and an indoor gathering space. That will provide space for the Super Recreation Program which attracts 25-40 kids per day. They also give meals at that site.

Inviting public places
Director Fletcher said they work with neighborhoods to find out what is wanted and balance that with what can be done. He gave the example of Reed Street Park. They are transforming it with a couple of age-appropriate playgrounds, court space, walking paths, and a picnic shelter. Director Fletcher stated they look for opportunities to acquire space. They know the Oakwood area is lacking for green space, but they have to identify a strategic partner and collaborate with them to accomplish this.

Director Fletcher outlined their park improvement process. He said the initial planning meeting is held in the park they want to improve. They talk about the vision for the park, engage people, and get their ideas. At that time they would have different plans available for the meeting such as Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 and the current Neighborhood plan. They would come up with a concept plan, and then come up with a design for the improvements. At the second meeting,
they work on fine-tuning the plan. When it is time for construction, they attempt to keep people up to date on the timeline. They will do that for the planned improvements to Verburg Park, taking one year to plan and one year for construction.

Community Outreach
The Parks & Recreation Department utilized a variety of different events to obtain input for the plan. They used movie events, lunch-time live events, and the Millwood National Night Out. They had an event at different parks in each quadrant of the community. A community survey was completed with a random sample of 5000 households. A total of 320 surveys were returned. Director Fletcher stated the information from the survey will really help with the 10-year strategic vision. He wants to focus on specific achievable goals.

Large Community Parks
Director Fletcher stated they have a goal to improve Milham Park, Upjohn Park and Spring Valley Park by 2028. He also said they want to put spray pads in each quadrant of the City with Farrell Park being the first by 2020.

Director Fletcher reviewed the 5-year Master Plan. He mentioned working with the FFE on funding for improvements to Reed Street Park, Springmont Tot Lot, Rockwell Park, Verberg Park, and Upjohn Park, and for Milham Park dam improvements and a spray pad for Ferrell Park.

Mr. Chris Khorey shared information about planning regions. He said Kalamazoo is a large city and Parks & Recreation operates 30 properties. Since parks are inherently a neighborhood amenity, they wanted to do this plan on a neighborhood scale. He said they grouped some neighborhoods together and organized them into planning regions. These planning regions help them understand differences in amenities in different parts of the city and to look at green space gaps.

Commissioner Espinosa asked about the non-motorized map. Planner Anderson responded that the map is in the Master Plan and the data is utilized to show gaps where sidewalks are missing in and around our parks. This map helps illustrate where funding can be funneled when it becomes available.

Commissioner Milliken asked if the Strategic Vision he mentioned was a working document to use internally or if it will be a formal approved document. Director Fletcher stated that it will be more of an internal document to help keep them on track.

Commissioner Milliken commented that partnerships and collaborations will be key in moving forward. A lot of the 5-10 minute radius deficiencies can be filled by schools and WMU where people go to recreate. Director Fletcher stated that while they know that recreation through schools does fill gaps, for purposes of this plan, those facilities don’t count when the DNR asks for certain things to be in the plan.

Motion made by Commissioner Vyas and support by Commissioner Greenman Wright on P.C. #2018.26 to recommend to offer support for the Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

Commissioner Greenman Wright commented that the plan is extremely easy to read and well presented.
A roll call vote was taken and passed unanimously. Commissioner Hughes-Nilsson abstained.

I. CITIZENS’ COMMENTS (Regarding non-agenda items)

Mr. Jeff Messer, resident, asked for information regarding site plan projects 2018.43 and 2018.50, the United Building expansion and the former Wayside West bar on Stadium Drive.

J. CITY COMMISSION LIAISON COMMENTS

None

K. CITY PLANNER’S REPORT

Planner Anderson stated that in response to several Commissioners’ questions about sanitary sewer back-ups and flood issues, she consulted with Director James Baker of the Public Services Department. He told her that when there is flooding, the utility pipes in street are sealed. Sometimes utility pipes between the street and a house can have cracks and water can get inside. The City offers to install backflow preventers for residents in the highest flood areas. When the water gets to a certain level, the backflow preventer shuts off the pipe so nothing goes out to the sanitary system and nothing comes in. If it engages, you can’t use the water/wastewater facilities, but you can prevent the backup. Planner Anderson said that there is very little the City can do outside of that. She said they have discussed the program with residents in a lot of our key flood plain areas and will continue to do so in the future. Planner Anderson wanted Commissioners to know the program is available, and the flooding issue is not a deficiency or inability for the sanitary system to manage flows.

Commissioner Hughes-Nilsson asked if the City pays for the installation of the backflow preventer or if the residents pay. Planner Anderson shared that the program is free for residents. Commissioner Espinosa asked when the program was implemented. Planner Anderson wasn’t sure, but knew it was at least last year if not before.

Planner Anderson shared more information gathered from Director Baker. When someone proposes a project in a flood plain, a couple of things have to happen in order for the project to go forward. If you are displacing where flood waters can go, you have to compensate for that on your site. They also make sure the project will not create any flood impacts further downstream. Director Baker reviews those projects and said he has confidence in how the MDEQ reviews them. Per Director Baker, the MDEQ would not approve a project which would create flood impacts further downstream. Planner Anderson reported that the City has an ordinance which requires developments not to discharge more storm water than currently. Staff member Anna Crandall looks carefully at pre and post construction calculations for storm water volume changes.

Planner Anderson also let Commissioners know the work of dredging the Crosstown Ponds will be done in 2019 and they will have a community meeting to let everyone know when and what that entails. They plan to have information on backflow preventers at that meeting. Neighborhood Activator Katie Reilly and Planner Anderson have been strategizing on how to do outreach to people in flood areas.
Commissioner Espinosa asked about ordinances related to wetlands. Planner Anderson stated they do have an ordinance regarding wetlands and it is also being incorporated into the Natural Features Protection ordinance. She said a lot of what is included in the Natural Features Protection ordinance is already in codes right now, they are just making a few changes.

Commissioner Milliken asked if there were any plans for below-ground improvements for Lake Street. Planner Anderson stated that the upcoming project for that street is a resurfacing project. She said the last time they opened up Lake Street, they lined the pipes.

Planner Anderson reported the Michigan Association of Planning will be offering Planning Commissioner related trainings. She inquired if the Commissioners would be interested in more information about the trainings, and asked them to let her know if there were any specific presentations from City staff they would like to hear. Planner Anderson informed the Commissioners that the MAP conference is in Kalamazoo this year in September.

Planner Bauckham came forward to give the site plan report. He said there have been five new projects so far this year. One project is a new building for 7-Point Supply, which will be located in the Davis Creek Business Park. Another new project is planned improvements to Reed Street Park located on Portage Street.

Projects under construction:

- Oakwood Animal Hospital - building addition
- Hydra Elevated Wellness - a new Marihuana dispensary on Portage Street
- Hartwood Farms – a Marihuana grow operation on Sprinkle Road
- Friendship Village – new pool building
- Lewis Howard Company – new storage building on E. Vine Street
- Lot 9 Project – the new mixed-use building on Water Street
- 400 Rose Project – the new mixed-use building on Rose & Lovell
- Newell Rubbermaid – building addition in the BTR Park
- Exchange building – the new 15-story building in the downtown

Planner Bauckham gave updates on the projects identified by Mr. Messer. The United Building went through the site plan review process. They needed to do changes and informed the Planning Department they were going to redesign the project. The project will still be done, but it is currently on delay. The Enterprise Leasing company wanted to do a truck leasing business at the former Wayside West building on Stadium Drive. They went through the site plan review process and were asked to do some changes, particularly in the landscaping improvements. The company has placed the project on hold. Planner Bauckham reported that the Economic Development staff recently met with the company about including the property in the Brownfield Plan. The hope is to move it ahead this year.

Planner Bauckham reported that at the March meeting, they will have a rezoning of a parcel connected to the Westwood Plaza complex at W. Main and Drake. The applicant owns the parcel, which is vacant and was used for storm water drainage. The property is currently zoned for residential and they would like it rezoned to CC. They would like to move the current driveway access for the complex onto the parcel to help support a new restaurant.
L. MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS BY PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Espinosa asked for an update on the National Feature Overlay. Planner Anderson said that on December 3rd a 6-month moratorium was issued by the City Commission and the Planning Department has until June 3 to create a set of ordinances and standards. They have been meeting with an ad hoc group of natural features experts to help them understand the standards and what should be included. Planner Anderson said they are using 4 tenets to create the standards: 1. They must be grounded in reality; 2. Staff can administer, manage and follow up on them; 3. The ordinance has to be able to be applied to the entire city; and 4. The ordinance will allow for a different way of doing development. She said the draft will be on the Imagine Kalamazoo web site by next Friday for public review. Focus group meetings will be the next step. They will have discussions with environmental conservation groups, some interested neighborhoods, and the development community. Planner Anderson said they will have a public meeting in March, and then it will come before the Planning Commission on April 9. The last step will be two readings at the City Commission.

Commissioner Milliken asked about the mapping component of the ordinance. Planner Anderson stated that the overlay will be mapped and will match (for the most part) what was in the Master Plan. Once past this phase, they plan to do a more detailed mapping study of the city. She said there are 5-6 features being regulated through this with each one needing a few months time for study. After that there will be an education phase. There is a whole layer of activities out there that residents and neighborhoods could do to be a better steward (ex: plantings, pesticide use, and native plant species preservation).

M. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Wissner, supported by Commissioner Vyas, moved to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 pm.
Project Address: 604 N. Drake Road

Case #: P.C. #2019.01

Request: Rezoning from Zone RS-5 (Residential, Single-Dwelling District) to Zone CC (Commercial, Community District)

Meeting Date: March 7, 2019

Applicant: Westwood Plaza, LLC

Owner: Same

Public Hearing: Yes

Date Legal Ad Published: February 20, 2019

Project Summary:
The request is to rezone 604 N. Drake Road from Zone RS-5 (Residential, Single-Dwelling District) to Zone CC (Commercial, Community District).

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the rezoning request to the City Commission.
ANALYSIS

Property Size:

0.5 acres

Description of Current Use of Property:

The subject parcel is vacant.

Current Zoning District:

Zone RS-5 (Residential, Single-Dwelling District).

2025 Master Plan & Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 Alignment:

The 2025 Master Plan Future Land Development Plan denotes the parcel to be included in the R-1 Residential future land use category. Staff believes the zoning change to the Commercial District is appropriate for the following reasons:

1) The boundaries of the future land use plan are “painted with a broad brush,” meaning they aren’t intended to exactly follow property lines. The parcel is directly north and east of commercially zoned property.

2) The parcel in question fronts and only has access from Drake Road. It shares a rear property line with a rear property line of a residential lot off a cul-de-sac, making access from the residential street, Westbury Lane, unlikely. Drake Road provides this lot’s context.

The request also addresses the Economic Vitality goal of the Strategic Vision. It does so by allowing an existing driveway entrance to be relocated onto the subject parcel creating sufficient space for a planned new restaurant at the corner of Drake and West Main. This project will revitalize this portion of the Westwood Plaza, which formerly contained a commercial building that was removed several years ago.

Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses:

North: Zone RS-5 – Single-family homes
East: Zone CC & RS-5 – Westwood Plaza and homes
South: Zone CC – Westwood Plaza
West: Zone C – Commercial uses in Oshtemo Township

Project Description:

The subject parcel is vacant. It previously contained a single-family home. The applicant owns the parcel along with the adjacent property to the south, which contains the stores and businesses that make up the Westwood Plaza shopping
complex. A new restaurant with a drive-through is being planned for the corner of Drake Road and West Main. To better accommodate the new restaurant, the applicant would like to relocate an existing driveway entrance into Westwood Plaza from Drake Road. This driveway would be moved north, onto the subject parcel. As such, the applicant would like to change the zoning of the parcel to the same CC zone as the current Westwood Plaza property.

Community Outreach

The applicant has spoken with the director of the Westwood Neighborhood Association regarding the rezoning. The applicant has also communicated with many neighbors surrounding the subject parcel about the request. A report on the results of this outreach effort will be provided at the Planning Commission meeting. Notices were mailed to all property owners and occupants located within 300 feet of the subject parcel regarding the rezoning request and inviting them to the Planning Commission meeting. A notice of the meeting was also published in the Kalamazoo Gazette.

Findings:

Staff has made the following findings regarding this request:

1. The rezoning allows the zoning of the subject parcel to match that of the adjacent property to the south, and the relocation of a driveway entrance onto the subject parcel to support a proposed new restaurant.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Planning Division recommends that the Planning Commission recommend to the City Commission to approve the rezoning of 604 N. Drake Road from Zone RS-5 to Zone CC.

Attachments:

1. Existing Zoning Map
2. Proposed Zoning Map
3. Aerial Map
4. Existing Land Use Map
5. Future Land Use Map
6. Concept plan for restaurant
P.C #2019.01 Rezone 604 N Drake Rd
from Zone RS - 5 to Zone CC (Westwood Plaza Parcel)
P.C #2019.01 Rezone 604 N Drake Rd from Zone RS - 5 to Zone CC (Westwood Plaza Parcel)
P.C #2019.01 Rezone 604 N Drake Rd from Zone RS - 5 to Zone CC (Westwood Plaza Parcel)
P.C #2019.01 Rezone 604 N Drake Rd
from Zone RS - 5 to Zone CC (Westwood Plaza Parcel)
Introduction

This is a summary of the activities conducted by the Kalamazoo City Planning Commission during 2018, plus information on notable tasks and projects undertaken by the Planning Division.

Planning Commission Members

The Planning Commission was made up of the following eight members at the beginning of 2018:

- Greg Milliken
- Derek Wissner
- Emily Greenman Wright
- Alfonso Espinosa
- Rachel Hughes-Nilsson
- Charley Coss
- Sakhi Vyas
- James Pitts

Jack Baartman was appointed to the Planning Commission in April, and the Commission attained full representation. Commissioners Pitts, Hughes-Nilsson, and Greenman Wright were each appointed to additional terms on the Commission, which expire in March 2021. The Planning Commission convened eleven (11) regular meetings during the year plus one special meeting on August 21. The regular March meeting was cancelled due to lack of agenda items. All of the meetings were held in the City Commission Chambers in City Hall. The annual meeting was conducted on April 10. At that meeting, the Commission voted to continue to have the site plan review program coordinated by the Planning Division staff. In addition, Commissioner Hughes-Nilsson was re-elected as chair of the Commission, Commissioner Milliken was elected as Vice-Chair, and Commissioner Wissner was re-elected as Secretary.

Summary of requests reviewed by the Planning Commission

A total of thirty (30) requests were processed by the Planning Division staff in 2018 for review and action by the Planning Commission. This compares to twenty requests processed in 2017. The classifications of the requests were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rezoning</th>
<th>Special Use Permit</th>
<th>Street Vacation</th>
<th>Text Amend.</th>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
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The rezoning requests were as follows:
1. Rezone 711-713 Simpson from Zone M-1 to Zone RM-15 to allow a transitional residence use for women in the existing house. **Approved.**

2. Rezone multiple parcels on E. Cork Street from Zone M-1 to Zone CC to make the existing uses conforming and to prevent new industrial uses in this area. **Approved.**

3. Rezone 3 parcels on E. Ransom and Harrison Street from Zone RMU to Zone CMU, and from Subarea 3 of the Riverfront Overlay District to Subarea 4 to allow a mixed-use project on the parcels. **Approved.**

4. Rezone 615 W. Kalamazoo Avenue from Zone M-1 to Zone CMU to allow a mixed-use project on the parcel. **Approved.**

5. Rezone a portion of 333 E. Alcott Street from Zone M-1 to Zone RM-24 to allow a mixed-use project on the parcel. **Approved by the Planning Commission. Withdrawn by the applicant prior to City Commission review.**

6. Rezone multiple parcels in the Northside neighborhood to Live Work 1, Live Work 2, and Node to support the neighborhood plan. **Approved.**

7. Rezone 10 parcels on Lake Street and Stockbridge Avenue from Zone CC, Zone CN-1, and Zone M-1 to Zone RM-36 to allow a mixed-use project on the parcels. **Denied by the Planning Commission. No City Commission review.**

The special use permit requests were as follows:

1. Allow a transition residence use for women in the existing house at 711-713 Simpson. (See rezoning case #1.) **Approved.**

2. Allow a lodge use in the existing building at 701 Riverview Drive. **Approved.**

3. Allow a new parking lot on nine parcels located on John Street and Heilman Court for the Bronson Healthcare Group. **Approved.**

4. Allow a group day care use in the existing house at 2235 Southern. **Approved.**

5. Allow a transitional residence use for the Second Chance for Hope agency in the existing house at 137 Wall Street. **Approved.**

6. Allow a transitional residence use in the existing house for the Samaritas agency at 703 W. Cedar Street. **Approved.**

The street vacation/re-alignment requests were as follows:

1. Vacate the north segment of Caves Court to the City Brownfield Redevelopment Authority for development purposes. **Approved.**

2. Vacate the north segment of Foresman Avenue to the adjacent property owner for residential purposes. **Approved.**

3. Vacant Heilman Court east of S. Burdick Street to the Bronson Healthcare Group for creation of a new parking lot. (See special use permit #3.) **Approved.**

4. Vacate Scudder Court between E. Frank and Parsons Street to PlazaCorp Realty for the creation of a new parking lot. **Approved by the Planning Commission. Needs railroad company approval prior to review by the City Commission.**

5. Vacate the section of Cooley Street north of Kalamazoo Avenue to the Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Agency for improving the parking lot. **Approved by the Planning Commission. Approval pending from the City Commission.**
The first text amendment request originated from the Planning staff and added three new zoning districts to the Zoning Ordinance; Live Work 1, Live Work 2, and Node. **Approved.** The second text amendment also originated from the Planning staff and included changes to the dimensional regulations of Section 5.1 of the Zoning Ordinance for residential districts to ease certain non-conformities. **Approved.**

The new plans adopted were as follows:

1. The Northside Neighborhood Plan. **Approved.**
2. Affirmation that 925 Grant Street is not a park and is not included in the City’s Parks and Recreation Master Plan. **Approved.**
3. The Eastside Neighborhood Plan. **Approved.**
4. The Vine Neighborhood Plan. **Approved.**
5. The Complete Streets Policy for the City of Kalamazoo. **Approved.**
6. The Edison Neighborhood Plan. **Approved.**
7. The Oakwood Neighborhood Plan. **Approved.**
8. The Parks and Recreation Department 10-year Strategic Plan. **Approved.**

The site plan request was for an expansion of the Newell Rubbermaid Company building in the WMU-BTR Park. The CIP for 2019 was also approved.

The tasks completed by the Planning Commission in 2018 addressed the 2025 Strategic Vision Goals of “Strength Through Diversity” in encouraging an inclusive City where everyone feels at home, and “Economic Vitality” in advancing a supportive infrastructure for growing businesses and stabilizing the local economy for the benefit of all. They also addressed the 2025 Master Plan Goal pertaining to the creation of new neighborhood plans

**Summary of Planning Division staff activities**

The following is a list of significant activities completed by the Planning Division staff in 2018:

1. A new site plan review process was put in place in January of 2018. It consists of a preliminary application site plan review stage, and regular site plan review process. For the preliminary stage, applicants completed a questionnaire that provided basic information on the project. If a concept plan was available, it was also typically provided to staff. The Site Plan Review Committee reviewed the materials with the applicant during a meeting. Following this meeting, the applicant was able to prepare the regular site plan for review. The site plan and associated materials were provided to the Committee members for review using the City PZ&E and Bluebeam software systems. Once the Committee members completed their review (typically after three weeks), a meeting was held with the applicant to go over comments and finalize the site plan. Verification of needed changes was conducted, and the site plan was approved. A survey was conducted mid-year of the users of the new process to determine how it was working. The responses were generally positive.
2. The Planning Division processed seventy-six (76) preliminary application site plan projects in 2018. Sixty (60) regular site plan projects were also processed during the year. This compares with fifty-four processed cases in 2017. Forty-seven (47) of the projects were approved by the end of the year, two were withdrawn by the applicants, and two were placed on hold by the applicants. The rest of the projects were still being reviewed at the close of 2018. Nearly $16,000 in application fees was collected for the program. The Site Plan Review Committee convened forty-three (43) meetings to review the projects. Some of the notable projects included the complete renovation of the Midtown Marketplace site on Howard Street, the new Bronson Hospitality House on S. Burdick Street, expansion of the Newell Rubbermaid facility in the BTR Park, the new mixed-use building at Rose and W. Lovell Street, the new mixed-use building east of the Radisson Hotel on Water Street, the Eastside small homes project on E. Main Street, the new Hilton Hotel on N. Rose Street, the new Creamery mixed-use building at 1101 Portage Street, a new pool building for Friendship Village on N. Drake Road, expansion of the Schupan Aluminum company on Davis Creek Court, the new building on E. Alcott Street for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, and improvements to five existing City parks.

3. Thirty (30) site plan cases from 2018 and prior years were inspected for compliance and closed out.

4. During 2018, 538 trees and 2,933 shrubs were planted or committed to be planted in the City for approved projects under the site plan review program. The landscaping count for the program since its inception in year 2000 totals 9,642 trees and 37,369 shrubs.

5. The accomplishments of the Site Plan Review Program addressed the 2025 Strategic Vision Goals of “Strength Through Diversity” and “Economic Vitality.” It also addressed the 2025 Master Plan Goal for “Inviting Public Places” pertaining to the new park improvement projects that were approved.

6. Ten (10), new Neighborhood Enterprise Zone (NEZ) requests for homestead tax exemptions were processed for homes in the Vine Neighborhood. One application to transfer a previously-approved request to a new property owner in the Vine Neighborhood was also processed. All of the requests were presented to and approved by the City Commission. This program addresses the 2025 Master Plan Goal of advancing home ownership in the neighborhoods.

7. The Planning staff attended the monthly Technical Committee meetings of the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) to share information on road and infrastructure projects planned within the county, and to provide updates on planning initiatives for the City. Staff also attended the monthly Traffic Board meetings to discuss citizen/staff requests for proposed changes to roads and parking facilities within the city.

8. Work commenced on the creation of a Natural Features Protection Overlay for the City. The purpose of the Overlay is to identify and map areas in the community that include important wetland, water resources, and woodland/ecosystems that need to be preserved.
It also will provide regulations for development in/near these areas. A draft of the Overlay was being created, and it is anticipated to be presented to the Planning Commission for review in April of 2019. The Overlay addresses the 2025 Strategic Vision and Master Plan Goal of “Environmental Responsibility” in the community.

Prepared by: Robert H. Bauckham, AICP
Senior Development Planner
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<th>Project Description</th>
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<td>2019.07</td>
<td>3013 Oakland Drive</td>
<td>Add equipment to cell tower</td>
<td>AT&amp;T</td>
<td>1/9/2019</td>
<td>1/16/2019</td>
<td>2/12/2019</td>
<td>$385.00</td>
<td>3/6/2019</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Project under review</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019.05</td>
<td>1700 Portage Street</td>
<td>Reed Park improvements</td>
<td>City Parks &amp; Rec.</td>
<td>1/23/2019</td>
<td>2/6/2019</td>
<td>2/6/2019</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2/27/2019</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Project under review</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019.04</td>
<td>2805 E. Cork Street</td>
<td>New building</td>
<td>Seven Point Supply</td>
<td>12/19/2018</td>
<td>1/9/2019</td>
<td>1/9/2019</td>
<td>$564.00</td>
<td>2/27/2019</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Project under review</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019.02</td>
<td>519 W. Willard</td>
<td>Add equipment to cell tower</td>
<td>Sprint</td>
<td>12/17/2018</td>
<td>1/2/2019</td>
<td>1/9/2019</td>
<td>$385.00</td>
<td>1/30/2019</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Approval provided</td>
<td>2/1/2019</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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Total: $2,820.43