

	A regular work session of the Kalamazoo City Commission was held on Monday, August 28, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room at City Hall.
Roll Call	COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Mayor Bobby J. Hopewell Vice Mayor Don Cooney David Anderson Erin Knott Matt Milcarek Shannon Sykes COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Jack Urban* Also present were City Manager Jim Ritsema, City Attorney Clyde Robinson, and Deputy City Clerk Shelby Moss.
Commissioners Excused	Commissioner Sykes, seconded by Commissioner Milcarek, moved to excuse the absence of Commissioner Urban. With a voice vote the motion passed.
Discussion Items	Discussion items were considered next.
Discussion of Draft Master Plan and the Built Environment	Community Planning and Development Director Rebekah Kik and City Planner Christina Anderson delivered a PowerPoint presentation entitled <i>Imagine Kalamazoo Master Plan & the Built Environment</i>. A copy of this presentation was filed with the paperwork for this meeting. In response to questions from Commissioner Anderson, Planner Anderson explained in order to use “zoning as a strength” the city needed to be proactive in changing the zoning to match the desired vision for a neighborhood. Director Kik indicated the City’s current zoning was a burden, but once the “red tape” was removed the zoning code could be used as a building block. Planner Anderson identified steps that could be taken immediately such as a “stress test” to identify the gaps between the current zoning code and the desired vision for the City as outlined in the Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 plan. Director Kik indicated a complete rewrite of the zoning code would be a very involved process, comparable to the Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 process. Director Kik described form based zoning vs. use based zoning, and she stated the shift to form based zoning accounts for the character of a neighborhood. Director Kik explained the Master Plan was a big picture vision for the City, but both the Master Plan process and the Shared Prosperity Kalamazoo work were based off information gained from Imagine Kalamazoo 2025. *Commissioner Urban arrived at 6:50pm In response to questions from Commissioner Cooney, Director Kik stated the Master Plan was a necessary foundation for conversations about affordable housing, mixed use housing, a vacant land strategy, and reducing “red tape.” Director Kik stated the vision for the City had changed over the years but the zoning code had not changed and was causing numerous zoning variance requests. Director Kik stated there would be additional conversations about affordable housing and mixed use housing in September.

Commissioner Urban requested that City Manager Ritsema and City Attorney Robinson keep the momentum going on the work being performed to update the zoning code.

In response to questions from Commissioner Anderson, Planner Anderson stated while the City would like to move towards more form based zoning there would still be times when use based zoning was necessary, such as regulating medical marihuana facilities. Director Kik stated the Master Plan was currently in the required 63 day comment period. The City had distributed the plan to neighboring townships, cities and the county and had already received several comments back. Director Kik explained the Redevelopment Ready Community certification process did not dictate zoning, but instead provided technical assistance related to best practices for becoming a Redevelopment Ready Community.

In response to questions from Commissioner Sykes, Director Kik stated there were no barriers to incentivizing affordable housing and mixed income housing in all areas of the City. Director Kik indicated the strategic vision stated affordable housing was important to the City, and the Master Plan would follow that vision. Director Kik explained the location and amount of land available for development would dictate where new development would occur. Director Kik indicated staff in the Community Planning and Development Department recognized the need to minimize displacement, and she suggested a gentrification vulnerability analysis and identifying neighborhood wants and needs before any development took place.

In response to remarks from Commissioner Urban, Planner Anderson stated the work of Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 was not done, and dialog with the public would continue. Planner Anderson explained the information gathered through Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 would be the foundation for updating a number of plans in the City including the zoning ordinance, the complete streets plan, and the climate action plan.

In response to remarks from Commissioner Milcarek, Director Kik agreed the City needed a housing plan, and she highlighted the relationship between the strategic vision, all other neighborhood plans, and a City wide housing plan. Director Kik stated the neighborhood plans developed from the Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 process would be incorporated into the Master Plan.

Commissioner Sykes requested a representative from the Fair Housing Center of Southwest Michigan be a member on the Strong Families Goal Team for Shared Prosperity Kalamazoo.

Mayor Hopewell reminded Commissioners there could be more than one Commission liaison serving on a board, and he encouraged Commissioners to work together.

Commissioner Urban requested that Commissioners share the goals of Shared Prosperity Kalamazoo with the boards and commissions for which they were liaisons.

Discussion of Draft
Master Plan and the
Built Environment
(cont'd)

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(cont'd)

In response to questions from City Manager Ritsema, Director Kik reported the draft Master Plan was scheduled for City Commission consideration at or before the October 16th business meeting, but if the Planning Commission requested any changes then the Master Plan may be delayed until November.

In response to questions from Commissioner Urban, Planner Anderson stated the majority of the comments received regarding the Master Plan had been very positive, and the questions had been more for clarification purposes. Planner Anderson reported no questions had been contradictory to each other. Director Kik stated a possible change to the Master Plan would be the use of the word "boulevard" in the street designation portion, because the way the term was being used in the Master Plan did not match up with the public's understanding of the term "boulevard." Director Kik stated another potential change would be to add more detail to the neighborhood plans being adopted into the Master Plan.

In response to comments from Commissioner Cooney, Director Kik reported Lovell Street would not need a continuous left hand turn lane if it was converted to a two-way street, so there would be no loss of on-street parking as feared by residents. Mayor Hopewell pointed out the topic of converting one-way streets to two-way streets downtown was a common request from the community during the Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 visioning process and was not a request that could be ignored.

Citizen Comments

When an opportunity was given for general citizen comments, the following people addressed the City Commission:

Mattie Jordan-Woods, City resident, questioned if the Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 neighborhood plans would be incorporated into the new Master Plan.

Zach Lassiter, City resident, expressed concerns regarding non-motorized transit contributing to gentrification in the City and commented on the need for a housing plan in Kalamazoo.

City Commissioner
Comments

Next, an opportunity was given for miscellaneous comments and concerns of City Commissioners.

In response to questions from Mayor Hopewell, Director Kik stated the 2010 Master Plan listed all neighborhood plans that were in existence at that time, such as the Edison Neighborhood plan, but the 2017 proposed Master Plan did not list any of the neighborhood plans.

Commissioner Sykes requested a future work session on the topic of policing, including the Group Violence Intervention initiative, the broken windows policy, citizen-led oversight of the Citizen Public Safety Review and Appeal Board, and the effects of policing on extreme displacement and gentrification.

Commissioner Urban questioned the meaning of gentrification, and he stated the City needed to have a clear definition of the term. Commissioner Urban shared an opinion from a citizen who felt the

Kalamazoo Promise was causing gentrification in the City because it had increased the demand for housing. Commissioner Urban expressed the need to look at the issue of housing from all sides and perspectives.

In response to a question from Mayor Hopewell, City Manager Ritsema stated the City no longer followed the broken windows policy.

Mayor Hopewell indicated the Bellevue Court Group from the Vine Neighborhood could be a model and resource for other areas of the City wanting to achieve the same goals. Mayor Hopewell requested information regarding the number of property owners appealing to the Board of Review. Mayor Hopewell recapped the importance of service delivery for all departments in the City. Mayor Hopewell requested information regarding any planned sidewalk improvements on Portage Street.

Commissioner Milcarek, seconded by Commissioner Knott, moved that the City Commission go into closed session to discuss labor negotiations and a litigation matter.

Prior to a vote on the motion, Mayor Hopewell indicated the City Commission would not return to open session.

With a roll call vote this motion passed.

AYES: Commissioners Anderson, Knott, Milcarek, Sykes, Urban
Vice Mayor Cooney, Mayor Hopewell

NAYS: None

The meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelby Moss
Deputy City Clerk

For City Commission approval on October 2, 2017

Approved by: _____
Bobby J. Hopewell, Mayor
Dated: October 2, 2017

City Commissioner
Comments (cont'd)

Closed Session

Adjournment