

City of Kalamazoo
PLANNING COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
November 7, 2024
FINAL

Members Present: Mitchell Curtiss; Gregory Milliken, Chair; Ian Smith, Wendell Tolber; Brian Pittelko; Michelle Audette-Bauman; Jennifer Swan; *Christine Dascenzo

Members Excused: Shardae Chambers

City Staff: Bobby Durkee, Assistant City Planner; Beth Cheeseman, Executive Administrative Assistant; Charlie Bear, Assistant City Attorney

A. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Commissioner Milliken called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Planner Durkee proceeded with roll call and determined there was a quorum.

B. ADOPTION OF FORMAL AGENDA

Commissioner Swan, seconded by Commissioner Curtiss, moved approval of the November 7, 2024 Planning Commission agenda as presented. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

*Commissioner Dascenzo entered the meeting at this time.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Swan, seconded by Commissioner Curtiss, moved approval of the October 3, 2024 minutes as presented. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

D. COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

E. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

F. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

1. P.C. #2024.10 – 2025 Capital Improvement Plan – Request by Community Planning and Economic Development Department to review the 2025 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Director James Baker, Public Services Director and City Engineer, came forward to present the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). He shared that many departments are part of the CIP. The CIP covers general

fund, parking, local and major streets, water, and wastewater. Director Baker said they use the Master Plan and community goals to align project focus. He explained how that works within utilities. They are required to submit strategic asset management plans to the State of Michigan. Factors such as infrastructure, criticality, reliability, and risk/likelihood of failure all go in a matrix to decide the projects. Director Baker said the township submits their Master Plan to them so the City water and wastewater work can also reflect township Master Plan goals. He said that focus elements are guided by Master Plans, Imagine Kalamazoo plans, and asset management plans.

Director Baker explained that the first couple of years of projects in the CIP are very solid and likely to happen. As the years go out, there may be a shift in the priority of projects. He indicated that they have a CIP execution rate of 70-80%. Director Baker shared some of the reasons there may be delays in projects: taking longer to get through the permitting process, getting easements, purchases falling through, or a change in priority. Director Baker shared how to read the CIP.

Director Baker reviewed projects included in the CIP in each of the following areas: General Fund, Parking, Streets: Major & Local, Water, and Wastewater. He noted that the City had taken over the parking system, and that stormwater is a part of the streets projects. Director Baker also said that water and wastewater are true utilities. He stated that no taxpayer dollars go to support these projects – they are all paid by rates. Director Baker reviewed a bar chart of CIP funds for 2025. Some of the projects he spoke about included the Farmers Market multipurpose building, Crosstown Facilities (where Community Planning and Economic Development is scheduled to move), two-way street projects, the tertiary treatment system, lining pipes, possible biosolids alternatives, and lead service line replacements.

Commissioner Pittelko asked about the full water main construction projects scheduled for the next year. Director Baker mentioned that full water main reconstruction projects will occur on Burdick Street from Reed to Vine, on Porter from Kalamazoo Avenue to Ransom, and on West Main from Drake to 131. He said there would be two other projects in Richland. The area in and around Edison will have some construction saturation with water projects and Consumer's gas line replacements.

Commissioner Audette-Bauman asked if there was a map of all the projects on the City's website. Director Baker affirmed that they are working on a single-layer map that will include City projects, Consumer's gas projects, developers' projects, and fiber projects. He said it is in beta test form now. They are hoping to have it go public before the construction season next year (April/May timeframe).

Commissioner Audette-Bauman asked about the revenue from parking. She noticed that sources of funding for parking say bond/working capital reserve. Director Baker stated that the current revenue received from parking is not enough to support the parking fund.

Commissioner Dascenzo wondered what to make of the projects with no funding associated. Director Baker said those could be projects that have already been completed or are funded out for more than 5 years.

Commissioner Milliken thanked Director Baker for the background and details. He thought it was unusual to see this level of continued investment in infrastructure. The link and alignment to the Master Plan is rare. Commissioner Milliken explained that the Planning Commission reviews the CIP to make sure there is alignment with the Master Plan. He asked Attorney Bear if the Commission needed to make a motion recommending approval, or do they just receive the information. Attorney Bear responded that the Planning Commission was just receiving the information.

G. REPORTS:

1. City Planner's Report

Planner Durkee stated he would have the tentative 2025 Planning Commission meeting dates available at the December meeting. He requested they look at the July dates.

Planner Durkee thanked the Commissioners for their responses regarding a joint training meeting. The training meeting is scheduled for December 11, 2024 at 7pm in the City Hall Community Room. He said the topic would be economic development and planning.

Planner Durkee shared that they were nearing the end of the Imagine It phase of Imagine Kalamazoo. The Plan It phase will start in February. There are book reads scheduled for November 20, and December 10.

H. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Commissioner Milliken gave information on how to offer public comment.

Ms. Montoya Sims came forward and spoke about Policy 10.1 and Policy 10.6. She spoke about injustice and unlawful practices through the Kalamazoo court system and police department. Ms. Sims stated that she does not have a criminal background. She felt there was retaliation against her for a civil case she won. She indicated that crimes were being committed by the courts and officers. Ms. Sims requested that the Mayor investigate the situation.

No phone comments.

I. CITY COMMISSION LIAISON COMMENTS

Commissioner Praedel thanked the City Clerk office team for how hard they worked on the election. He shared that there were two Imagine Kalamazoo 2035 survey opportunities for the public. They can participate in the Strategic Goal Survey and the Imagine It! Survey. Both can be found at the following location: <https://www.kalamazoocity.org/Government/Programs-Initiatives/Imagine-Kalamazoo>.

J. MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS BY PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Milliken encouraged everyone to enjoy the month of November.

K. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Milliken adjourned the meeting at 7:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "C. Anderson", is positioned above a horizontal blue line.

Christina Anderson,

City Planner

Community Planning & Economic Development