

**CITY OF ESCANABA
PLANNING COMMISSION
Official Proceedings – Thursday, September 14, 2023**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

A meeting of the Escanaba Planning Commission was held on Thursday, September 14, 2023 at 6:00pm in Room C101 at City Hall, 410 Ludington Street, Escanaba, MI 49829.

Chair Hellermann called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

ROLL CALL

Chair James Hellermann:	Present	Commr. Kasja Nelson:	Present
Secretary Roy Webber:	Present	Commr. Christiana Reynolds:	Absent
Commr. Patrick Connor:	Present	Commr. Mark Sadowski:	Present
Commr. Michael Harris:	Absent		

With five in attendance, a quorum of the Planning Commission was present.

ALSO PRESENT

City Administration:

Tyler Anthony, Planning & Zoning Admin.

Others:

Paul Ammel, Delta Sanitation Inc.

No other unnamed individuals were present.

MINUTES

**A motion was made by Connor to approve the August 10, 2023 as presented.
Supported by Webber. MOTION PASSED.**

AGENDA

**A motion was made by Connor to approve the agenda as presented. Supported
by Webber. MOTION PASSED.**

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS**NB1: Site Plan Review—1500 3rd Avenue North**

Anthony introduced the site plan, which was for an accessory commercial building larger than 5,000 square feet. At the Commission's request, he read from the staff report.

Paul Ammel, representative for Delta Sanitation Inc., was invited by Chair Hellermann to speak on behalf of the proposed project. He noted that he was to be a contractor for the project. Connor asked Ammel whether Delta Sanitation would have any problem meeting the green space requirements. Ammel reported that they would not have any issues. Connor then asked whether that portion of the property occupied by dumpsters and other solid waste receptacles was to be screened from public view. Ammel responded, explaining that the entire property is screened with a privacy fence.

Webber noted that he once lived on the 300 block of North 16th Street, more or less adjacent to the Delta Sanitation property. He then remarked that the area was always an abrupt residential-to-industrial transition area, and that it had struggled to shed its somewhat blighted status. Hellermann seized on this point, noting that the Commission should address this transition problem in the future; Commissioners briefly pursued this tangent. Connor then sought clarity from Hellermann that there were no real concerns with the site plan, and Hellermann agreed.

A motion was made by Connor to approve the site plan as presented for 1500 3rd Avenue North. Supported by Sadowski.

A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

Yes: Hellermann, Webber, Connor, Nelson, Sadowski.

No: None.

MOTION PASSED.

Hellermann thanked Ammel and Delta Sanitation for contributing to the community.

NB2: BOARDS & COMMISSIONS UPDATES**a. Delta County Planning Commission**

Connor reported that the Delta County Planning Commission cancelled their meeting for a lack of agenda items. This was their third cancellation in a row.

b. Zoning Board of Appeals

Anthony reported that the next ZBA meeting was scheduled for October 3, 2023. No variance or appeal applications had yet been received, so staff expected to arrange for a training session.

c. Zoning/Land Use Permits

Commissioners reviewed the report. Anthony noted that permit activity had risen a great deal since the month before. Hellermann asked whether this was still due to right-of-way permits for the laying of fiber-optic cable; staff explained that it was instead fences, sheds, and other zoning-related activity.

NB3: TRAINING UPDATES

No recordable training was reported. Anthony reminded Commissioners that they were required to record at least four training hours per calendar year; at that time, no Commissioner had met this requirement. Connor asked whether the Master Citizen Planner course through the MSU Extension was still available; Anthony believed that it was. Anthony then noted that the pre-recorded training sessions obtained earlier in the year were still available, and that he would share it with Commissioners to watch in their own time. Sadowski noted that he was researching form-based code's impacts on communities. He was then to share the results and time spent with staff when done.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

COMMISSIONER/STAFF COMMENT & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Staff and Commissioners discussed the road conditions at the 300-400 blocks of Ludington Street. Connor noted that this did not present to visitors a favorable view of Escanaba. Hellermann noted that the Public Works Department's new chipseal paving machine should help the situation city-wide; Anthony agreed, noting that it already had made a large impact.

Webber called attention to rampant jaywalking on Ludington Street, asking Nelson to pose the idea of mid-block pedestrian crossings at the next Traffic Safety Advisory Committee meeting. Anthony noted that there were only four controlled crosswalks on Ludington Street: Stephenson, 14th Street, 10th Street, and 5th Street. Staff and Commissioners discussed this at some length.

Anthony announced that he had established contact with the Form-Based Code Institute. He and the FBCI were working in tandem to develop a draft scope of work to replace the City's Euclidean/traditional zoning code with a form-based code. Once that draft was completed, it would be brought before the Commission. Sadowski expressed concern over whether the demand for a form-based code existed in Escanaba. Hellermann offered more clarity on the aims of such codes, noting that the intent was less on creating a market and more on creating a more flexible built environment for markets to exist within.

Anthony announced that the Central UP's Regional Housing Partnership had developed a Draft Action Plan based on the Michigan Statewide Housing Plan. This draft plan was available for review and public comment until September 29, 2023. Staff and Commissioners discussed housing stock amount and quality at some length.

ADJOURNMENT

**A motion was made by Connor to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Webber.
MOTION PASSED.**

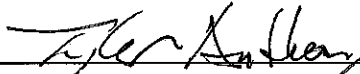
The meeting adjourned at 6:53 pm.

APPROVAL

These minutes approved at the October 12, 2023 meeting. ~~11~~



James Hellermann, Chair
Escanaba Planning Commission



Tyler Anthony, Planning & Zoning Admin.
City of Escanaba