**Village of Grass Lake**

**Planning Commission Annual Report**

*Covering activity from 01/01/2023 – 12/31/2023*

**Introduction**
The [Michigan Planning Enabling Act](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-Act-33-of-2008.pdf) (MPEA) allows for the establishment of local Planning Commissions, master plans, and other associated activities. The Village of Grass Lake’s Planning Commission is established in local ordinance 30.02 and consists of 5 members. The Planning Commission is responsible for:

* Developing the community’s master plan which provides a framework for orderly growth and redevelopment.
* Creating a zoning ordinance to translate master planning goals to land use regulations.
* Reviewing and approving site plan requests
* Drafting a capital improvements plan.

This report contains a record of the Planning Commission’s activity over the past year

**Membership**

Planning Commission members for this reporting period were:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Meetings Attended** | **Member Since** | **Term Expires** | **Voting Member** |
| Richard K. Rabeler, Chair | 10/10 | 9/1/1993 | 12/31/2024 | Yes |
| Sabrina Edgar, Village Manager, Ex Officio | 9/10 | 1/10/2022 |   | No |
| Diane Deboe, Member | 7/10 | 4/6/2023 | 12/31/2025 | Yes |
| Susan Cobb-Sterrett, Member | 8/10 | 10/20/2015 | 12/31/2025 | Yes |
| Kevin Caldwell, Member | 10/10 | 6/3/2021 | 12/31/2023 | Yes |
| David Keener, Member – Council Liaison | 9/10 | 11/15/2022 | 11/15/2026 | Yes |

**Meetings**The MPEA requires that local Planning Commissions meet at least four times a year. The Village of Grass Lake Planning Commission usually meets at least quarterly; the commission met ten times this year. A summary of meeting activity is below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Meeting Date** | **Summary** |
| February 2 | Discussion of five proposed text amendments |
| March 2 | Public Hearing on five text amendments; discussion of additional amendments |
| April 6 | Discussion of proposed text amendments, recodification of zoning ordinance |
| June 1 | Discussion of proposed text amendments  |
| July 6 | Discussion of proposed text amendment |
| August 3 | Discussion of proposed text amendments |
| September 14 | Discussion of new Zoning Code (Chapter 154) |
| October 12 | Public Hearing on new Zoning Code; discussion of three proposed text amendments, short-term rental ordinance and capital improvement plan. |
| November 2 | Approval of capital improvement plan and discussion of short-term rental ordinance |
| December 7 | Public hearings to consider 3 text and 2 map amendments; discussion of short-term rental ordinance and proposed rezonings in Master Plan; approval of 2023 Annual Report; selection of officers for 2024 |

**Master Plan Status**The Planning Commission is responsible for regularly reviewing and updating the master plan to ensure it continues to be relevant to the community’s needs. The community’s current master plan [https://villagegrasslakemi.documents-on-demand.com/document/83fadedc-d076-eb11-a32d-000c29a59557/21.PDF](https://villagegrasslakemi.documents-on-demand.com/document/83fadedc-d076-eb11-a32d-000c29a59557/21.PDF%20) was adopted on 12/15/2020. The MPEA requires a formal review (and update or reaffirmation) occur at least every five years. The Commission resumed reviewing suggested action items in 2023 with a subcommittee of the Commission including the DDA director formed to concentrate on that review.

**Zoning Ordinance Amendments & Rezoning**Zoning is the legal mechanism which turns planning goals into reality via development regulations. It is imperative that a community maintain an up-to-date zoning ordinance which aligns with those goals and addresses emerging trends. The Planning Commission discussed eight amendments during 2023, with one rejected by the Commission and seven of them finalized and recommended for adoption by the Village Council.

The Planning Commission is also responsible for making recommendations on rezoning requests. Such requests must align with the master plan’s future land use map. There were two requests initiated by the Commission during 2023.

**Site Plan Reviews & Variances**
Site plan review is a primary role of the Planning Commission and helps ensure that new development in the community aligns with the zoning ordinance requirements. Prior to Planning Commission review, staff conducts an internal review process as well. When needed, variances are considered by the Zoning Board of Appeals. No requests for a site plan review were received by the Commission in 2023.

**Training Update**
Redevelopment Ready Communities Best Practice 4.6 supports the creation of training plans for community officials. Training is essential to providing the community with the tools needed to achieve local goals. One commissioner completed the Rules and Responsibilities of a Planning Commission course offered by Michigan State University.

**In Closing**The Planning Commission had a more active year than in 2022, completing work on several text amendments and resuming work on the action items in the Master Plan.