



PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING PACKET CONTENTS

Thursday, June 12, 2025 – 6:00pm

PACKET UPDATED 06/12/25

NEW ITEMS ARE HIGHLIGHTED

1. Notice of Meeting Location Change – Howard Miller Community Center – 14 S Church St
2. Agenda
3. Staff Memo – June 12th Planning Commission meeting agenda
4. Notice of Public Hearing – 605 & 633 E Main Ave – Rezoning Application
5. Rezoning Application with Narrative – 605 & 633 E Main Ave
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7. Planning Consultant Memo – 605 & 633 E Main Ave Rezoning Application
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9. Correspondence - June 10, 2025 letter from Ann Query of 520 E Central Ave.
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11. Correspondence - June 10, 2025 letter from Ryan Gamby of 11 S Division St
12. Correspondence - June 12, 2025 letter from Josh Campbell of 23 S Division St
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15. Correspondence - June 12, 2025 letter from Planning Commission Vice Chair Dan Klompaker

NOTICE OF

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING LOCATION CHANGE

Zeeland City Planning Commission

TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED IN THE
JUNE 12TH, 2025
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

TAKE NOTICE that the Zeeland City Planning Commission whose chambers are located at City Hall, 21 S Elm Street, Zeeland, Michigan, and whose telephone number is 616-772-0872, has scheduled a meeting to occur on:

Thursday, June 12th, 2025

at

The Howard Miller Community Center

Main Floor Banquet Room

14 S Church Street, Zeeland, MI 49464

- 6:00pm – Meeting called to order

Tim Maday

Zoning Administrator / Community Development Director

The City of Zeeland will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting, to individuals with disabilities at the meeting/hearing with a need for an accommodation, upon being provided with a notice to the City of Zeeland three days prior to the public hearing. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the City of Zeeland by writing or calling the City Clerk's Office 616-772-6400.

**CITY OF ZEELAND
PLANNING COMMISSION
AGENDA
JUNE 12, 2025
HOWARD MILLER COMMUNITY CENTER
14 S CHURCH ST
LESTER HOOGLAND BANQUET ROOM
MAIN FLOOR**

6:00PM

- Meeting called to order
- Roll Call
- Excuse absent members
- Additional agenda items

VISITORS/PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Public comment

COMMUNICATIONS/REPORTS:

-

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- 6:00pm – Rezoning Application – Mead Johnson & Company – Application to rezone 605 & 633 E Main Ave to I-2 – General Industrial District

ACTION:

- Planning Commission meeting minutes of June 5, 2025

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

-

NEW BUSINESS:

-

OTHER:

- Consider any other business which may lawfully come before the Planning Commission



21 South Elm Street • Zeeland, Michigan 49464 • (616) 772-0872 • (616) 772-0880

MEMORANDUM

DATE: Tuesday, June 10, 2025
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Tim Maday, Community Development Director
RE: **June 12, 2025 Special Planning Commission meeting agenda**

This memo is being sent to provide an overview of the agenda of the June 12th Planning Commission meeting.

Meeting location & Information – Howard Miller Community Center

The June 12th Planning Commission meeting will be held at the Howard Miller Community Center in the Lester Hoogland Banquet Room on the main floor.

This is a single application, special Planning Commission meeting to hear a Rezoning Application for the parcels at 605 and 633 E Main Ave. On June 5th, a conceptual presentation was made to the Planning Commission related to an expansion that is being planned at the Mead Johnson facility on East Main Avenue. The presentation was intended to provide context to the City's residents, boards, and commissions as they begin hearing the individual applications associated with the project.

Public hearing – Rezoning Application for 605 & 633 E Main Ave

The first application to be heard for this project seeks to have the parcels at 605 & 633 E Main Ave rezoned to I-2 – General Industrial Zone District, so they can be incorporated into the adjacent Mead Johnson site for use in their project.

As is common for applications involving substantive or potentially complex issues, staff has obtained a report from the City's Planning Consultant to support the Planning Commission's review of the application. That report is included in this meeting packet. The City Planning Consultant will be present at the meeting to assist with any questions Commissioners may have.

Public Comment – Rezoning Application for 605 & 633 E Main Ave

Following the presentation of the application by the applicant, public comments will be accepted regarding the application.

In advance of the meeting, staff has received two written communications regarding the application:

1. A June 5, 2025 letter from Ryan Baas of 28 S Sanford St.
2. A June 10, 2025 letter from Ann Query of 520 E Central Ave.

These two communications are included in the meeting packet.

Action on Rezoning Application

Following the public hearing at the June 12th Planning Commission meeting, an initial action on the application will be needed from the Planning Commission. That initial action may occur on June 12th, if the Commission is satisfied that sufficient information has been provided, or at a later date if additional information or time to discern is needed.

In the City of Zeeland, rezoning is a three-step process:

1. Following a public hearing an initial decision is made by the Planning Commission through approval of a motion to rezone or not to rezone.
2. At a later meeting, a resolution affirming the Planning Commission's initial decision, and recommending that City Council approve/not approve the rezoning application comes before the Commission for consideration and action.
3. City Council takes final action on the rezoning application after considering the recommendation of the Planning Commission.

I hope this memo is helpful in explaining the agenda of the June 12, 2025 Planning Commission meeting. Please do not hesitate to contact with me questions you may have regarding any items referenced in this memo, or anything else.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
CITY OF ZEELAND
PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING**

Take notice that the Planning Commission whose chambers are in the Zeeland City Hall at 21 South Elm Street, Zeeland, Michigan, and whose telephone number is (616) 772-0872, will meet:

Thursday, June 12, 2025

6:00 P.M.

At 14 S. Church Street

**in the North Activity Room of the Lower Level of the
Howard Miller Library and Community Center**

in regard to the following matters and requests:

First Request: The rezoning of property at 605 E. Main Avenue, Zeeland, Michigan, that is owned by Mead Johnson & Company, LLC, from R-3, the Two-Family and Multiple-Family Residential District to I-2, the General Industrial District.

The property for which rezoning is requested is legally described as follows:

PART OF SW 1/4 OF SE 1/4 COM ON S SEC LI S 89D 55M 52S W 1310.09 FT FROM SE SEC COR, TH ALG S SEC LI S 89D 55M 52S W 161.08 FT, N 03D 04M 59S W 222.4 FT ALG E LI OF DIVISION ST, TH N 86D 57M 32S E 176.2 FT ALG S LI OF LOT 4 OF NAGELKERK ADD & ITS EXTENSION, TH S 0D 43M 15S W 231.25 FT ALG E LI OF W 1/2 OF SE 1/4 TO BEG. SEC 18 T5N R14W. CITY OF ZEELAND, OTTAWA COUNTY, MICHIGAN. PPN: 70-17-18-471-008.

Second Request: The rezoning of property at 633 E. Main Avenue, Zeeland, Michigan, that is owned by Mead Johnson & Company, LLC, from R-2, the Single-Family and Two-Family Residential District to I-2, the General Industrial District.

The property for which rezoning is requested is legally described as follows:

PART OF SE 1/4 COM S 89D 55M 52S W 1099 FT FROM SE SEC COR, TH S 89D 55M 52S W 211.09 FT, N 0D 43M 15S E 304 FT ALG E LI OF W 1/2 OF SE 1/4, TH N 89D 55M 52S E 212.47 FT, S 0D 58M 53S W 304.02 FT TO PT OF BEG. SEC 18 T5N R14W, CITY OF ZEELAND, OTTAWA COUNTY, MICHIGAN. PPN: 70-17-18-471-045.

A map of the property may be obtained in the Zoning Administrator's Office from 8:30 to 12:00 A.M. and from 1:00 to 5:00 P.M. on any day not a holiday from Monday through Friday. The public or anyone receiving this notice may present their written or oral comments at the said hearing.

The City of Zeeland will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting, to individuals with disabilities at the meeting/hearing with a need for an accommodation being provided upon a notice to the City of Zeeland by the Monday preceding the meeting by 5:00 p.m. With advance notice of seven calendar days, the City will provide interpreter services at public meetings, including language translation. Individuals requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the City of Zeeland by writing or calling the City Clerk's office 772-6400.

Dated: May 23, 2025

*PAMELA HOLMES
CITY CLERK*



REZONING APPLICATION
Planning Commission
City of Zeeland
MAY 16 2025

Community Development Department
 21 S ELM ST - ZEELAND, MI 49464
 Phone 616-772-0872 - Fax 616-772-0880
buildinginspector@cityofzeeland.com
www.cityofzeeland.com

Received by _____ Date Received _____ \$350 Fee _____ Check No _____

The City of Zeeland will not discriminate against any individual or group because of race, sex, religion, age, nation origin, color, marital status, handicap or political belief.

Please submit this application with related documents at least 30 days prior to the requested Planning Commission meeting (usually 1st Thursday of the month). Please note that additional fees for professional services may be incurred and billed to you if necessary. The applicant or a representative is required to present the application at the Planning Commission meeting.

I. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Property address 633 E Main Ave and 605 E Main Ave	Parcel number 70- 17-18-400-045 and 17-18-471-008		
Property size (acres) 1.48 and 0.88	Frontage	Depth	
Current zoning Residential - R-2 & R-3	Requested zoning Industrial - I2		
Adjacent zoning North <u>I2</u> South <u>C2</u> East <u>I2</u> West <u>R2</u>			
Master Plan Land Use I2 for 633 & R-2 for 605	Is request consistent with Master Plan Land Use? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		
Proposed use of property Property will be used to support the existing Mead Johnson Factory.			

II. CONTACT INFORMATION

Property owner Mead Johnson & Company	Contact Art Pike		
Phone (812) 568-8917	Email Arthur.Pike@reckitt.com		
Applicant Art Pike	Company Mead Johnson & Company		
Address 725 E Main Ave	City Zeeland	State MI	Zip 49464
Phone (812) 568-8917	Email Arthur.Pike@reckitt.com		
Applicant's interest in property Property will be used to support the existing Mead Johnson Factory.			

III. SIGNATURES

The undersigned hereby certifies that the information given in the application and supplementary materials is true and correct to the best of their knowledge. It is also understood that any information requested, and not included with the application, as well as major revisions and/or additional reviews could delay placement on the agenda or action by the Planning Commission.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:  Electronically signed by: Arthur Pike
Reason: I approve this document.
Date: May 16, 2025 11:04 CDT Date: **16-May-2025**

Signature of property owner (if other than applicant) _____

SIGNATURE OF OWNER: _____ Date: _____

City of Zeeland

MAY 16 2025

Received



Request for Rezoning of Residential Property to Industrial Property for Mead Johnson

May 15th, 2025

Dear Mr. Maday,

I am writing regarding the request for rezoning of the residential properties located at **633 E Main Ave** (currently zoned R-2) and **605 E Main Ave** (currently zoned R-3) in Zeeland, Michigan, from Residential and Public Facilities districts to I-2 Industrial. This request is made on behalf of Mead Johnson, a company committed to contributing toward the economic growth and industrial development of the community.

Background and Justification:

The City's Master Plan, both the 2011 version and its 2020 amendment, serves as a guide for future land use decisions. While the Master Plan emphasizes the importance of adhering to planned zoning boundaries, it also acknowledges that conditions may change, and unanticipated opportunities may arise. As stated in the Master Plan:

"Change is constant and usually unpredictable, and there may be circumstances that warrant changes to the zoning boundaries that are not consistent with the Master Plan. If and when this occurs, the Master Plan should be updated to conform to the changed circumstances." (2011 Master Plan, p. 63)

"Although this plan is a comprehensive guide for land use planning over the next 20 years, there is no way to predict what changes may occur that were not contemplated at the time this plan was created." (2011 Master Plan, p. 63)

"It is important to understand that the Master Plan is a guide and should be an integral part of decisions related to zoning, land development, and capital investment. However, conditions change; unanticipated opportunities may arise; and new challenges may emerge. The Plan should be kept current. Deviating from the Plan should not occur without sound rationale. When



such a departure is warranted, the reasons for that action should be clearly stated. If the circumstances are widespread, the Plan should be amended to reflect the change and ensure that it remains consistent with prevailing conditions." (2020 Master Plan, p. 32)

The properties in question are currently surrounded by industrially-zoned land on one or more sides. Rezoning these smaller parcels to I-2 Industrial would align them with the adjacent larger industrial properties, facilitating consolidation and industrial development. This approach is supported by the Master Plan's designation of these areas as Inconsistent Land Use Areas, which are intended to be redeveloped into surrounding non-residential uses over time. As described in the 2011 Master Plan:

"The land use designation underlying each of the identified inconsistent land use areas represents the recommended future land use in each area. Most of these residential uses are proposed to be redeveloped into the surrounding non-residential use, and most are already zoned for the dominant use. However, this will likely only occur over time. The existing houses should be preserved until the market demands redevelopment." (2011 Master Plan, pp. 52-53)

Community Benefits:

1. **Economic Growth:** Rezoning these properties will enable Mead Johnson to expand its operations, creating new job opportunities and contributing to the local economy.
2. **Industrial Development:** The Master Plan supports the expansion of industrially-zoned land to eliminate land use conflicts and promote industrial growth. This rezoning aligns with the goals and policies outlined in the Master Plan, including:
 - o Encouraging future land uses to be compatible with one another through ongoing review and modification of the Master Plan and zoning map. (2020 Master Plan, Goal 1, p. 13)
 - o Eliminating land use conflicts over time through zoning land to be consistent with the Future Land Use Map. (2020 Master Plan, Policy 1A, p. 13)
 - o Providing for continued industrial growth in the City, using appropriate local tools and mechanisms. (2020 Master Plan, Goal 4, p. 16)



- Encouraging new industrial development only in areas where there will be minimal negative impact on other land uses. (2020 Master Plan, Policy 4A, p. 16)
- Evaluating areas of inconsistent land uses and determining the best long-range use of these areas, consistent with the Future Land Use Map. Where appropriate, rezone accordingly. (2020 Master Plan, Action 14, p. 30)

Public Support:

The desire for expanded industrial opportunities was clearly expressed in the public opinion survey conducted in conjunction with the 2011 Master Plan. Over 78 percent of respondents agreed that more industrial employers are needed, and 67 percent supported the expansion of the industrial park. (2011 Master Plan, p. 79)

Conclusion:

In light of the above points, I strongly urge the City to consider rezoning the residential properties at **633 E Main Ave** (R-2) and **605 E Main Ave** (R-3) to I-2 Industrial. This change will not only support Mead Johnson's growth but also align with the community's vision for industrial development and economic prosperity.

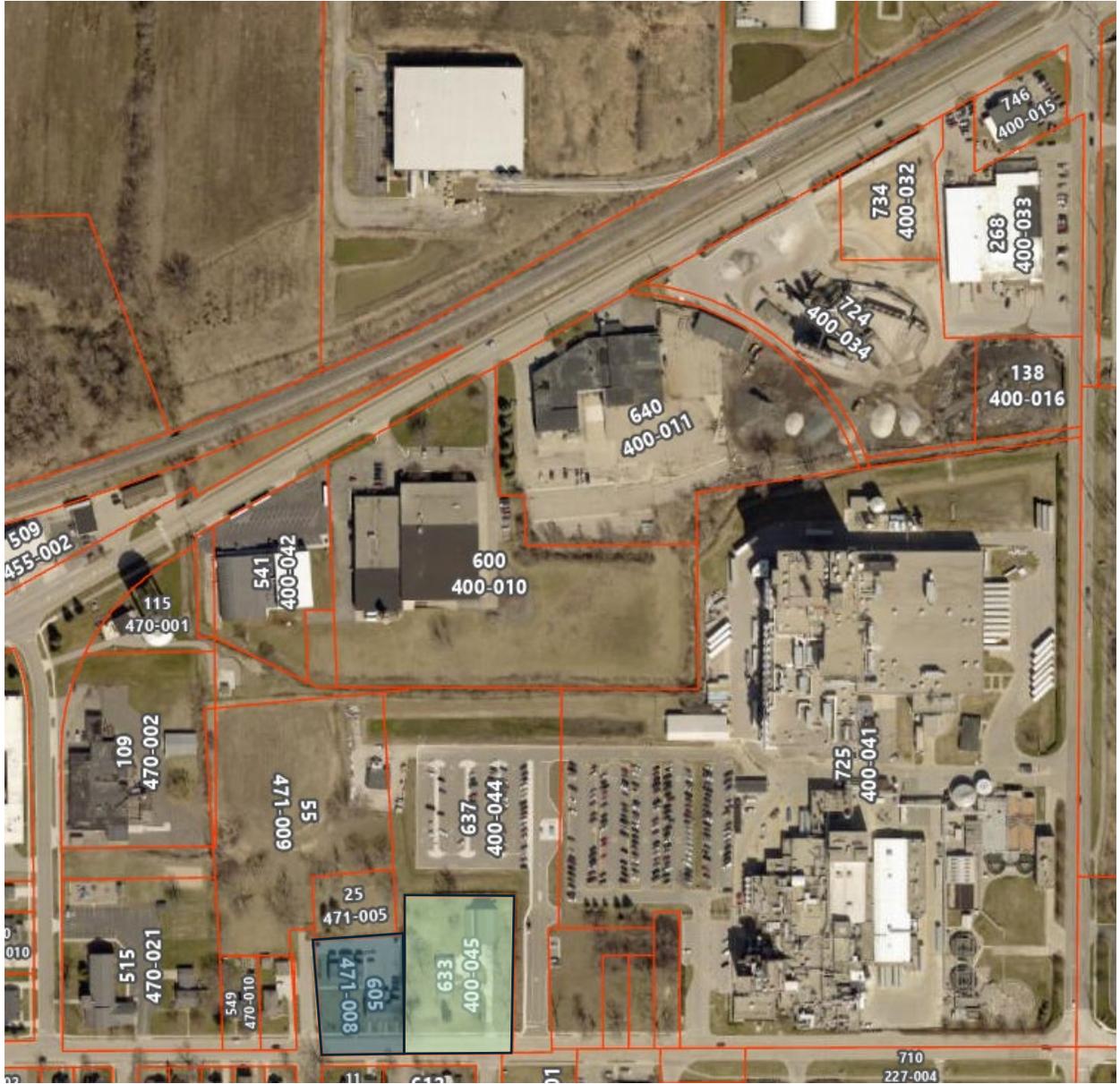
Thank you for your consideration.

Arthur Pike
Vivid Program External Affairs Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'APike'.

*Electronically signed by: Arthur
Pike
Reason: I approve this
document.
Date: May 16, 2025 11:14 CDT*

Aerial Image – 605 & 633 E Main Ave



TO: Tim Maday
FROM: Paul LeBlanc, AICP
DATE: June 9, 2025
SUBJECT: Mead Johnson Rezoning

Request

This is a request to rezone two properties from R-2, Single and Two-Family Residential, and R-3, Two-family and Multiple-Family Residential, to I-2, General Industrial.

Existing Conditions

The parcels comprise approximately 2.4 total acres and abut E. Main Street. Both properties are occupied by residential uses including 8 townhomes on the west parcel and a home and barn on the east property.



Land to the north and east of the subject properties is zoned I-2, General Industrial. The subject parcels and two lots immediately west of S. Division St. are the only residentially zoned properties within the confines of E. Main, E. Washington, N. Fairview, and N. Carlton. The remaining land in this “block” is nonresidential and predominantly zoned I-2, General Industrial.

On the south side of E. Main St., most of the lots are zoned R-1, Single-Family Residential, though two properties immediately south of the subject parcels are zoned for nonresidential uses. One is C-2, Central Business, and the other is I-1, Light Industrial. A second I-1 parcel is located further to the east.



Considerations

• Zoning vs. site plan

The applicant has provided a conceptual layout of the proposed development for the overall site and comments have been made regarding setbacks, access, truck traffic, and building design.

However, it is important to understand that none of those specifics is relevant to the rezoning of this property. The focus must be limited to the appropriateness of I-2 zoning on these parcels. If the

property is eventually rezoned, a detailed site plan will be required and the Planning Commission will be charged with reviewing that plan based on the specific criteria listed in Section 8.100(f). That would be the time to examine building scale, circulation, traffic impact, landscaping, stormwater management, and the many other details relevant to the project and its relationship to its surroundings. Neither the Planning Commission nor City Council can attach conditions to this rezoning. Therefore, any graphic depiction of what might be developed is a potential distraction from the rezoning issue and should not be considered.

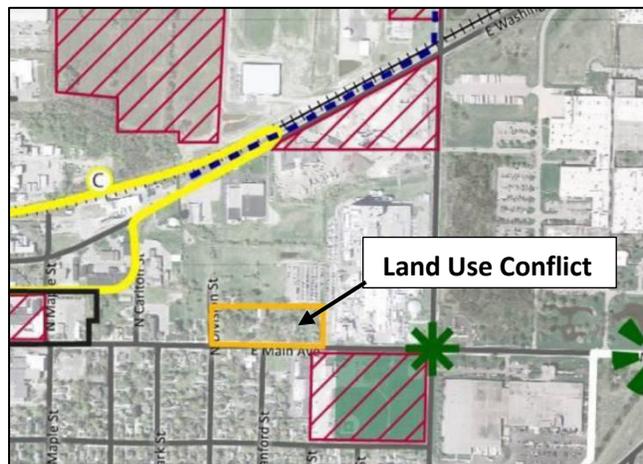
- Master Plan

The Zeeland Zoning Ordinance does not provide specific criteria for rezoning decisions. However, the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act does stipulate an essential consideration at Section 203 (1):

“A zoning ordinance shall be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare...”

Both the 2011 Master Plan and the 2020 amendments to that Plan offer guidance regarding industrial zoning in the City and specifically the area encompassing the subject parcels. For example, the map on page 27 of the 2011 Master Plan identifies the cluster of residential uses along Main Street as a land use conflict. Page 30 of the Plan describes these and other land uses as inconsistent with the predominant surroundings:

“There are several areas around the city where established single family homes are surrounded by intensive industrial or commercial uses. Many of these homes are actually zoned industrial or commercial and are, therefore, considered nonconforming uses. While recent changes to the zoning ordinance allow continuation and limited expansion of these homes, they are still faced with the noise and activity impacts related to the adjacent uses.”



The desire for expanded industrial opportunities was expressed in the public opinion survey conducted in conjunction with the 2011 Master Plan. In response to question #5 on page 79, over 78 percent of those expressing an opinion either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that more industrial employers are needed and 67 percent agreed or strongly agreed that the industrial park should be expanded. Likewise, when asked in question #6 how much effort should be directed toward attracting manufacturing to the City, 82 percent of those offering an opinion indicated either great effort or some effort. Only 18 percent cited little effort or no effort.

Increasing the availability of industrially-zoned land is also supported by the 2020 amendment to the Plan, as follows:

“Provide for continued industrial growth in the City, using appropriate local tools and

mechanisms.” [Goal 4, p. 16, 2020 Master Plan]

“Evaluate areas of inconsistent land uses and determine the best long-range use of these areas, consistent with the Future Land Use Map. Where appropriate, rezone accordingly.” [Action 14, p. 30, 2020 Master Plan]

Both the 2011 and the amended 2020 Master Plan also recognize the need for flexibility in the face of changing conditions or unexpected opportunities. Page 63 of the 2011 Master Plan emphasizes this point:

“Change is constant and usually unpredictable, and there may be circumstances that warrant changes to the zoning boundaries that are not consistent with the Master Plan. If and when this occurs, the Master Plan should be updated to conform to the changed circumstances.”

“Although this plan is a comprehensive guide for land use planning over the next 20 years, there is no way to predict what changes may occur that were not contemplated at the time this plan was created.”

These statements are further reinforced in the 2020 Master Plan on page 32:

“It is important to understand that the Master Plan is a guide and should be an integral part of decisions related to zoning, land development, and capital investment. However, conditions change; unanticipated opportunities may arise; and new challenges may emerge.

The Plan should be kept current. Deviating from the Plan should not occur without sound rationale. When such a departure is warranted, the reasons for that action should be clearly stated. If the circumstances are widespread, the Plan should be amended to reflect the change and ensure that it remains consistent with prevailing conditions.”

In the case of the area in question, the vast majority of the parcels (which are of substantial size) are currently zoned I-2 and are occupied by industrial uses. Only a half dozen or so much smaller parcels are zoned and used for residential, commercial, or church use. It would appear that these properties, despite being adjacent to and incompatible with the industrially-zoned land on one or more sides, were not planned or zoned for industrial use in order to accommodate their established use and not render them nonconforming. Their size may also have been considered insufficient to accommodate a building and the required setbacks, parking, landscaping, etc. for any allowed I-2 industrial use.

However, if a buyer purchased some or all of these properties with the intent of consolidating them with an adjacent larger industrial property, rezoning them accordingly would not be inappropriate,

as noted in the above quotes. The 2011 Master Plan further reinforces this in designating the subject property as an Inconsistent Land Use Area which is described on pages 52 and 53 as:

“The land use designation underlying each of the identified inconsistent land use areas represents the recommended future land use in each area. Most of these residential uses are proposed to be redeveloped into the surrounding non-residential use, and most are already zoned for the dominant use. However, this will likely only occur over time. The existing houses should be preserved until the market demands redevelopment.”



It is clear from both Master Plans that industrial development is important to the community. Several goals and policies reflect this; the public opinion survey supports this; and both documents acknowledge that unforeseen challenges and opportunities will inevitably arise. When this occurs, decisions can be made that are not in strict conformance with the future land use map if they are otherwise supported by the vision, goals, and policies that serve as the foundation of the Plan, as well as sound planning principles.

Zeeland’s residential character is also one of its prized attributes. The City’s prominent tree-lined grid-street pattern contributes to the quaint character and walkability of the many neighborhoods. Preservation and maintenance of those neighborhoods is among the City’s planning priorities. However, the four homes and two townhome structures lining Main Street between Carlton and Fairview do not constitute a “residential neighborhood” as referenced throughout both Master Plans. Not only do all these properties already abut the I-2 zoning district, the parcel at 633 E. Main (included in the rezoning request) is designated “Industrial” on the future land use map.

It is understandable that home owners along the south side of Main St. are concerned about potential industrial development across the street. However, if the property is rezoned, the City still retains control through the site plan process to address and mitigate potential issues and concerns. Adhering to the ordinance’s site plan review criteria gives the Planning Commission the ability, if necessary, to require changes to the plan and attach conditions to its approval to ensure that the resulting development benefits the community and is compatible with its surroundings.

Ryan Baas

28 Sanford St.

Zeeland, MI 49464

Email: ryanebaas@gmail.com

Phone: 708-846-8744

Date: June 5th, 2025

To: The Honorable Planning Commission of Zeeland at 21 S Elm St, Zeeland, MI 49464

Subject: Urgent Concerns Regarding Reckitt (Mead Johnson) Proposed Expansion and Rezoning Request – Preservation of Neighborhood Integrity, Property Values, Community Amenities, and Future Educational Support

Dear Honorable Planning Commission Members,

I am writing to you today as a deeply concerned resident of Zeeland to express my serious apprehension regarding Reckitt (Mead Johnson)'s proposed expansion and their request for rezoning of properties located in the direct vicinity from my home at 28 Sanford St. This expansion, if approved in its current form, poses an unacceptable threat to the character, livability, and financial stability of our cherished neighborhood.

Our community is united in its opposition to this proposed development, as evidenced by the collective efforts of the "Neighborhood First" project. We understand that economic development is important, but it must not come at the expense of established residential areas, the well-being of long-term residents, and the vital amenities that define our community. My primary opinion is that the rezoning requests be rejected.

If, however, the rezoning request is approved, my primary concerns, shared by many of my neighbors, include:

- **1st: Loss of Neighborhood Character and Decline in Property Values:** The prospect of a large industrial or commercial tower being constructed in the heart of our residential neighborhood is deeply unsettling. Such a development would undoubtedly alter the aesthetic appeal and residential nature of the area, leading to an evident decrease in property values for homes like mine and those of my neighbors. I urge that **any new buildings constructed be significantly set back away from Main Avenue**, maintaining a respectful distance from our homes and the main thoroughfare.
- **2nd: Critical Need for Green Space:** To mitigate the impact of any industrial presence and to preserve the residential character of our community, there must be a **heavy emphasis on robust green space and landscaping, particularly along Main Ave**. This is vital not only for aesthetics but also to help maintain our neighborhood's quality of life and, consequently, property values. Adequate green buffers are essential to prevent our neighborhood from being overwhelmed by industrial expansion.
- **3rd: Preservation of Public Playgrounds:** I am particularly concerned that one of the properties Reckitt has already purchased contains a public playground, the "Blue Park", as everyone calls it. This playground is a valuable asset for our community, especially for families with young children like mine. If this existing public playground is to be removed, it is absolutely essential that **Reckitt's new plans include a public**

playground of equivalent or superior quality. Furthermore, as a parent with young children who would directly benefit from such a facility, I strongly request the opportunity to be involved in the design and planning of this new public playground to ensure it meets the needs of our families.

- **4th: Mitigation of Traffic Impact – Protecting Sanford Street:** Our street, Sanford Street, already experiences significant traffic volume from vehicles going to and from Reckitt's current facility. There are cars constantly sitting directly outside my home, and it is a safety concern and disruption to our daily lives. Having an 8 year-old son with special needs and two other younger daughters, I instill safety lessons into them about playing outside, but a big part of why we moved where we did was the confidence that they would be able to ride their bikes and scooters around the neighborhood freely. Any expansion must include a comprehensive plan to **steer all associated traffic away from Sanford Street.** We cannot tolerate an increase in industrial traffic on our residential roads, and we demand solutions to alleviate the existing burden on our street.
- **5th: Precedent for Future Unsuitable Development:** Approving this rezoning request without stringent conditions could set a dangerous precedent, opening the door for further industrial or commercial encroachment into our residential zones. We must protect our zoning regulations to ensure the long-term integrity of our neighborhoods.
- **Lastly: Genuine Community Benefit and Educational Investment:** It is vital that any corporate expansion in our community brings tangible, long-term benefits to its residents, not just to the corporation. To demonstrate a true commitment to the well-being and future of our neighborhood, I propose that Reckitt establish a **scholarship fund specifically for educational support for children living within a certain radius of their facilities.** This fund would provide invaluable assistance to our youth, directly benefiting the families most impacted by the company's presence and fostering goodwill within the community.

We implore you to consider the voices of your constituents and the long-term ramifications of this decision. We urge you to demand that any rezoning requests and potential future development adheres to stringent conditions that protect our neighborhood's character, property values, community amenities, traffic flow, and includes meaningful community investments. We believe that sustainable development must prioritize the existing community and protect the sanctity of our residential areas.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical matter. I am available to provide any further information or to participate in discussions that may help you understand the depth of our concerns.

Sincerely,



Ryan Baas

JUN 10 2025

ZEELAND: UNITY IN COMMUNITY

Received

As a long-time resident of Zeeland, I salute the efforts of governmental leaders and involved citizens in focusing on community development that finds the best-balanced use of property, services and all the aspects that make a community a great place to live and to work. Our unity in community includes a need to provide good commercial and retail services, jobs in industry and supporting businesses, and opportunities for a good quality of life for residents who live in the area. Sometimes though, there is a “crossroads event” which demands needs to be weighed and a solution found that is the best possible.

Mead Johnson has been a part of Zeeland for 101 years. They have been good partners in providing well-paying jobs and creating difficult to manufacture milk-based products that are in demand for infants and for critically ill patients who need very specially crafted food products to survive. At this time there are approximately 450 people employed in Zeeland, at an average entry wage of \$ 63,000. They are the Zeeland BPW’s second largest customer for water and are in the top five users of electricity in our service area. Their annual property taxes are in excess of \$1,000,000 annually.

Why does this matter to residents of Zeeland who are not employed by the company? Our water, electric and clean water utilities are a component of support for city services, which along with property taxes provide police and fire safety, city staff to manage government and care for our community, pay for street projects, downtown development, events and activities for residents, and so much more. Employees who work in Zeeland shop and eat and recreate in our community, supporting the market for retail and service businesses that we all enjoy. Some live in the city that we call home.

In reviewing the drawings and plans provided at the June 5, 2025 Planning Commission meeting regarding information about Mead Johnson’s request for rezoning of residential properties necessary for their expansion in Zeeland, I see lots of visual and street/intersection safety improvements to the Reckitt Mead Johnson facility. Promises have been made to continue to seek measures to ensure less odor with new processing protocol. Additional jobs will be provided as the modernization plan continues. A playground and planting area is being looked at, hopefully in an accessible spot on the south side of Main Avenue which will increase safety for young families and older adults. A public green space/park area at the Main and Carlton corner will create visual appeal for neighbors and passers-by. All of these improvements will add screening and beauty to the area, and they may even escalate neighborhood property values as the improvements are realized.

If the company is not able to expand in their current location with the addition of frontage on Main Avenue to allow for safer property access, appropriate parking for employees and the addition of new and improved employee and production facilities, we would likely lose Mead Johnson which has been a part of our industrial community for over a century. Zeeland would lose the current employee base as well as property taxes and utility usage that supports many services in our city. The industrial property may become abandoned and unusable or be acquired by businesses that may not maintain the same level of responsibility and productivity as Mead Johnson has demonstrated for 101 years.

Please consider all of the aspects of this “crossroads event” decision as a determination is made about the future use for this large parcel of property at our eastern gateway to Zeeland. The remaining parcels along the north side of Main Avenue are a key component to whether we experience job growth, beautification, and street/intersection safety ... or risk a property which is on largely industrially zoned acreage that is unsuitable for anything BUT other industry which may not be as responsible as Mead Johnson has proven to be.



**CITY OF ZEELAND
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
CITY HALL – 21 SOUTH ELM STREET
JUNE 5TH, 2025
5:45PM**

-5:45PM – Chairman Elhart called the meeting to order and requested a roll call of Planning Commissioners.

Present: Commissioners Rebecca Perkins, Bob Blanton, Sheri Holstege, Glenn Kass, Kevin Klynstra, Tim Klunder, Dan Klompmaker, and Chairman Bill Elhart.

Absent: Commissioner Amanda Cooper

Also Present: City Attorney Jim Donkersloot, Planning Consultant Paul LeBlanc, Zoning Administrator Timothy Maday, and Recording Secretary Nadine Hopping.

Staff Liaison Tim Maday informed Commissioners that the presentation regarding rain gardens, and the 791 Case Karsten Public Hearing on the agenda had been postponed to occur at later meetings.

Chairman Elhart opened public comment.

Thomas Humbert of 532 E Main Ave explained that he would like to highlight several concerns regarding Mead Johnson's rezoning application that will be heard on June 12th. He stated that the rezoning application highlights language pulled from the City of Zeeland Master Plan. Humbert stated that he agreed that plans should be flexible at times. However, he felt that turning residential property into industrial property is not what the City of Zeeland needs.

Humbert stated that Reckitt's entire 'public support' section of their application uses statistics pulled from a citywide survey conducted in 2011, where he identified some of the inconsistencies he found between Mead Johnson's application and their report. Additionally, Thomas noted that the employment rate in 2011 was 8.9%, more than double of last year's rate of 4%.

Ericka Humbert of 532 E Main addressed the Commission. She explained that her primary concern is not with industrial expansion in Zeeland, but rather residential property being converted to industrial use. Humbert then referenced statistics from the citywide survey that was conducted in 2011, related to housing. Humbert stated that people in the room have family or friends who would love to live in Zeeland but cannot find a home. She noted that the 605 E Main Ave parcel that is proposed to be rezoned contains eight dwelling units.

Humbert explained that she does not find it reasonable to sacrifice or compromise residential property. She added that she, her husband, and a neighbor met with City Manager Tim Klunder, and Mead Johnson in March, where Mead Johnson reiterated that this was not an expansion, but instead modernization. She stated that Mead Johnson told them only temporary jobs such as constructions and transition jobs would be created. Humbert questioned if things have changed since their conversation, as the application states "Rezoning these properties will enable Mead Johnson to expand its operations, creating new job opportunities, and contributing to the local economy."

Ryan Baas of 28 Sanford St read a letter that he prepared for this meeting. The letter is attached with these minutes.

Sue Vanden Beldt of 40 S Division shared her concerns about the proposed expansion, noting that she lives just five houses away and that she and her neighbors already struggle with noise, odor,

and traffic—issues she fears will worsen if the rezoning is approved. She urged Commissioners to consider the impact on residents' property values and quality of life.

Vanden Beldt noted that 605 and 633 E Main were purchased at high prices despite being zoned residential and expressed doubt that approving the rezoning would serve Zeeland's best interests. She cited 25 violations and over \$1 billion in penalties incurred by Mead Johnson since 2000, referencing data from *Violation Tracker – Good Jobs First*. These included violations from agencies such as the EPA, OSHA, and the SEC, though none occurred in Zeeland.

She also referred to the April 3, 2025 Planning Commission Meeting, where Commissioners supported an ordinance amendment requiring that any demolished home on residential property be replaced, to avoid the loss of residential housing. Sue emphasized that since Mead Johnson now owns residential property, they should be held to the same standards. She closed by reminding the commission that their decision will have long-term consequences for the city, and concluded with a reading of Philippians 4:8.

Ryan Gamby of 11 S Division shared that he helped form the Neighborhood First group and lives directly across from the proposed project site. He expressed concern about how quickly the project is moving and urged both staff and Commissioners to slow down and allow for more thoughtful consideration and public input.

Gamby stated that Commissioners should focus on the core issue—whether it is appropriate to rezone two residential properties to I-2 General Industrial. He anticipated that Commissioners will likely see a presentation later that evening that details the company's background, importance of the work they do, site plans, and renderings that showcase the intended development. Gamby discussed how green spaces can be touted as a selling point, even though many residential homes, apartments, and parks already afford green space.

He stated that I-2 zoning can significantly impact surrounding properties and noted that Mead Johnson has not offered any voluntary restrictions on future use or development. Therefore, Commissioners must weigh all potential uses permitted under I-2 zoning. Gamby concluded by urging Commissioners to consider the long-term impact of their decision on the community.

Ryan Vandam of 16 S Park acknowledged the value of economic growth but urged Commissioners to carefully consider whether the proposed project aligns with Zeeland's long-term community interests. He pointed out that the Future Land Use Map in the City's 2020 Master Plan Update designates the north side of Main Street, between Division and N. Carlton St. for residential use, not industrial. Vandam referenced several sections of the Master Plan that emphasize the importance of preserving neighborhood character and integrity. He argued that the proposed expansion conflicts with these goals and could ultimately undermine neighborhood appeal, reduce livability, and decrease property values.

Vandam acknowledged that increased property tax revenue may be a motivating factor for the proposal but urged caution, noting that Mead Johnson would likely qualify for a tax abatement lasting up to 12 years. He added that it's common for companies to appeal their property assessments once the abatement ends. He also expressed concern that nearby homeowners, if negatively impacted by the expansion, may pursue reassessments of their own, potentially placing a greater financial burden on the city and its residents.

He stated that the City's long-term planning priorities should not be compromised due to a private company's lack of foresight. He pointed out that Reckitt has owned Mead Johnson and its current facility since 2017 and should have anticipated future growth needs and secured properly zoned land in advance. Vandam expressed that development must be consistent with the community's shared vision, not in conflict with it. He further added that he believes Reckitt should be able to grow, but it should do so with the community, not at its expense.

Jessie Foster of 550 E Main told the Commission that I-2 zoning is not required to create greenspace. She explained that green or open space can exist within residential zoning and that specific zoning options already allow for such use. As a Zeeland Public Schools teacher, she expressed concern about rezoning 605 and 633 E Main to industrial, questioning whether it's appropriate to place industrial development directly in front of children's ballfields.

Chairman Elhart asked the public if anyone else would like to make a public comment prior to Mead Johnson's presentation. No further comment was given from the public.

Jennifer Owens, President of Lakeshore Advantage—the regional Economic Development Organization for Ottawa and Allegan Counties shared a brief overview of the Mead Johnson's history. She then introduced Art Pike of Mead Johnson to speak further.

Art Pike of Mead Johnson explained that they will provide Commissioners and the public with an initial overview of the proposed project to modernize their equipment and facilities at their Zeeland Facility. He explained that normally they would finalize their master plan first, then should share with the local officials. But given the situation, they thought they would share their current thinking on where they are at with their plans.

Pike explained that Mead Johnson's assets are approaching the end of their useful lives and require ongoing upgrades to meet both internal standards and evolving global regulatory expectations. He highlighted the 2002 infant formula shortage, during which employees at the Zeeland facility—some of whom were present at the meeting—worked around the clock to help ensure that infants worldwide continued to receive the nutrition they needed. Pike then introduced Justin Griner to present the current factory plans and outline their modernization efforts.

Justin Griner of Mead Johnson expressed gratitude to the Zeeland community for supporting the company for over a century. He emphasized Mead Johnson's ongoing commitment to the highest standards of quality and safety in their infant formula products. He also highlighted that the Zeeland facility plays a vital role in both domestic and global supply chains, particularly as a production hub for Nutramigen—their specialized hypoallergenic formula developed for infants with cow's milk protein allergies.

He stated that Mead Johnson has been a responsible corporate citizen for over a century and is committed to building on that legacy as they modernize their supply chain to continue serving parents both in the U.S. and globally for the next 100 years.

Griner stated that Mead Johnson hears the community and acknowledged that it is both unfortunate and understandable that a lack of information has resulted in speculation and assumptions that have generated concern to the community members and possibly even the commission. He added, however, that their modernization efforts represent a significant undertaking—the largest investment in the company's greater than 100-year history. Griner explained that plans of this complexity take time, and their team has been working diligently. He mentioned that they are excited to share more with the community and hope that this facilitates a more focused, and fact based discussion.

Griner affirmed that all of Mead Johnson's infant formula products are safe and nutritious, and clarified that none are classified as hazardous materials. He stated the company's strong compliance record with the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), the EPA, and other state and federal regulatory agencies. He further stated that both the current facility and the proposed expansion will meet—and exceed—all environmental and regulatory requirements.

Griner stated that Mead Johnson met with community members in March, where they identified key concerns including site appearance, odor, noise, and the impact on Main Avenue. He reiterated that the company views their planned investment as a “win-win-win”—a benefit for the City, the residents, and Mead Johnson itself. Griner noted that Mead Johnson has their best engineers and scientists working on new technologies that will greatly reduce or eliminate odor coming from their facilities. He explained that the project will address each of the concerns raised, noting enhanced curb appeal with landscaped green spaces and a modernized facility design. Additionally, he highlighted that advancements in technology will help significantly reduce site noise.

Lori Sprague of Mead Johnson discussed the company's longstanding partnership with the Zeeland community, highlighting that most of their employees are actively involved locally. She emphasized that Mead Johnson's commitment to the community spans over a century and is founded on building trust, preserving resources for future generations, and nurturing the community. Lori also noted Mead Johnson's support through sponsoring local events, making donations, and volunteering.

Art Pike of Mead Johnson stated that their redevelopment plan aligns with the East Main Avenue beautification initiative. He shared that Mead Johnson has been working to relocate the playground at 515 E Main Avenue, noting that this move has been part of their plan from the start. The company is actively collaborating with Zeeland Public Schools to find a suitable nearby location. Additionally, Pike explained that Mead Johnson is working with the City to identify a potential site for a community garden. Art noted that this is not meant to be all that they are doing, but that they wanted to address those concerns.

Aaron Holder of Mead Johnson presented their preliminary site master plan, emphasizing that it is still in development and represents a long-term vision for the facility. He explained that the plan aims to support the factory's future growth by retaining top talent and attracting leading manufacturing professionals to Zeeland, thereby strengthening the community. Holder highlighted key features, including a new front office called the “flagship building,” modernized manufacturing spaces designed for efficient workflows, enhanced automation to boost employee safety and product quality, and improved site logistics to better separate personnel and truck traffic. He concluded by stating that the purpose of the meeting was to share Mead Johnson's vision for the community's future. Holder also noted that Mead Johnson has since bought 605 and 633 E Main Ave and are seeking that they be rezoned from residential to industrial and that they believe this rezoning request is in line with the City of Zeeland Master Plan published in 2011 and updated in 2020.

Art Pike of Mead Johnson presented the renderings of the proposed park on the corner of E Main Ave and N. Carlton St, as well as the proposed moved & enhanced playground “blue park”. Pike stated that they are considering two different locations for the park and are working with Zeeland Public schools to find the best spot. He added that the park on the corner of E Main Ave and N. Carlton St would be a public space for the entire community to enjoy, not just Mead Johnson employees. Pike added that he believes Zeeland to be a wonderful place and that the Mead Johnson / City of Zeeland partnership was established over 100 years ago. He noted that not many communities and businesses have that legacy.

Chairman Elhart asked Commissioners if they had any comments or questions they would like to add?

Commissioner Blanton questioned if the entire flagship building would have a complete setback of 150ft. Holder responded that yes, the entire south wall is proposed to have approximately 150 feet of setback.

Commissioner Perkins asked if the playground would be located on Mead Johnsons facility. Art Pike clarified that the playground would not be located on their facility and explained that Mead Johnson is working closely with Zeeland Public Schools to determine the best location for the park. He added that the schools currently have ongoing activities that will take a few months to complete before finalizing a solution. Afterward, Mead Johnson plans to coordinate with the church, the City of Zeeland, and local residents.

Commissioner Perkins then asked if the "flagship" building height would be 4 stories. Holder clarified that the plans and renderings presented during the meeting are part of the preliminary master plan. He stated that the envisioned height of the building is currently being considered as either three or four stories. However, he emphasized that this detail remains under review, as the plan is still in the planning stages.

Commissioner Klompmaker asked if the primary parking lot for employees would be along E Main Ave in front of the "flagship" building, and if the parking area shown off Washington Ave on the preliminary plan would be used for overflow parking. Holder responded that the primary parking will be along East Main Ave, with the idea that employees would enter through the "flagship" building and then head to their individual work areas across the campus. He added that the parking area off Washington Avenue is planned for contractors and also for overflow parking, which may be needed during shutdowns, construction, or similar activities. Art Pike also noted that this setup would help reduce traffic on Main Avenue.

Commissioner Klynstra asked if the entrance would stay the same, or if they would be putting in a new entrance. Holder replied that their team does not have that information at this time, as the appropriate location for the entrance has not yet been determined. Art Pike added that the team is open to feedback and willing to consider different options as the planning process continues.

Commissioner Blanton asked what the future facility would look like in comparison to the current facility, and asked what happens to the facility space after everything has been shifted. Pike responded that when new assets are introduced, they are subject to significant review by regulatory agencies, and depending on the country, there is an extensive qualification process. He explained that once the facility has passed regulatory review and is actively producing, the team can begin assessing the footprint and determining how to potentially scale it down or repurpose the space.

Commissioner Perkins asked what happens if this is not approved, and if Mead Johnson would still be able to operate. Pike responded that their assets are aging, and that they will not be able to use them forever. He explained that new assets need to be built because both industry and regulatory requirements continue to evolve. He also emphasized that Mead Johnson has internal standards that must be met. Pike noted that the existing assets will not remain fit for purpose much longer, which is why the need for this project has been identified and why they are here today.

Staff advised Commissioners and the public that on June 12th, 2025 at 6:00PM a special Planning Commission will be held to hear the rezoning applications for 605 and 633 E Main Ave. Commissioner Klunder added that all information presented tonight, including updates on this project, will be located on the City of Zeeland's website.

Commissioner Klynstra thanked the residents of Zeeland for attending to express their concerns and thanked the Mead Johnson team for their presentation.

-Moved by Commissioner Klompmaker to approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes from the April 3rd, 2025 meeting. Supported by Commissioner Holstege. All Commissioners voted aye.

-6:38PM Moved by Commissioner Klompmaker to adjourn. Supported by Commissioner Klynstra.
All voted aye.

Respectfully submitted,

Nadine Hopping
Recording Secretary

JUN 11 2025

Received

June 10, 2025

City of Zeeland Planning Commission
21 S Elm St
Zeeland MI 49464

RE: Written Statement Opposing Mead Johnson's Application to Rezone 633
and 605 E Main Avenue

Dear Chairman Elhart:

Please accept my written statement opposing Mead Johnson's application to rezone 633 and 605 E Main Avenue from residential to I-2 General Industrial. As the owner and resident of 11 S Division St, I live directly across the street from the proposed rezoning and contemplated development.

Mead Johnson's rezoning application is arbitrary and does not serve the public health, safety, welfare, and prosperity of the City of Zeeland. The Zoning Enabling Act (ZEA), 2006 PA 110, requires a zoning ordinance *be based upon a plan* that promotes enumerated criteria, including the health, public safety, and the general welfare. MCL 125.3203(1); see also *Baker v City of Algonac*, 39 Mich App 526 (1972) (whether the rezoning serves the public interest is the essential question in rezoning). While each zoning case must be analyzed in the light of the applicable facts, there are a variety of factors to consider when analyzing the reasonableness of a rezoning application. Zoning regulations only constitute a valid exercise of the police power when they have a rational relation to the public health, safety, welfare and prosperity of the community and are not such an unreasonable exercise of power as to become arbitrary, destructive or confiscatory. *Biske v City of Troy*, 381 Mich 611, 616 (1969), citing *State v. Hillman*, 110 Conn. 92, 100, 105, 147 A. 294.

**Rezoning 605 E Main Avenue is Contrary to the 2011 and 2020 City of Zeeland
Master Plan and Future Land Use**

The ZEA governs zoning ordinances whereas the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA), 2008 PA 33, governs the creation of a master plan. Under the MPEA, the general purpose of a master plan is to guide and accomplish development and must satisfy enumerated statutory criteria, including being coordinated, adjusted, harmonious, efficient, and economical. MCL 125.3807(2)(a). Plans must also, in

accordance with present and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare. MCL 125.3807(2)(c).

Developing a master plan is an extensive and detailed process. The planning commission must make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies on the present conditions and future growth within the planning jurisdiction; consult with representatives of adjacent local governments; and cooperate with state and federal departments, public transportation agencies, and other public agencies. MCL 125.3831. Notice must be provided to the regional or county planning commission. MCL 125.3839(2)(d)-(e). Before approving a master plan, a planning commission must hold at least one public hearing on the proposed master plan. MCL 125.3843(1). Approval requires a 2/3 affirmative vote of all members of the planning commission. MCL 125.3843(2). A proposed master plan must be transmitted to City Council for review and comment. MCL 125.3841(1).

Given the extensive planning process associated with a master plan, Michigan courts have understandably given it weight when reviewing rezoning decisions. Whether a zoning classification advances a city's master plan is a factor in determining reasonableness. *Troy Campus v Troy*, 132 Mich App 441 (1984). "A master plan serves as a general guide to future development . . . and is a factor in determining the reasonableness of a particular zoning classification." *Inverness Mobile Home Cmty v Bedford Twp*, 263 Mich App 241, 248-249 (2004). If a zoning decision allows uses for specific land that are inconsistent with the overall plan, the courts will apply greater scrutiny. *City of Essexville v Carrollton Concrete Mix, Inc*, 259 Mich App 257 (2003).

There is good reason for this. As the Michigan Supreme Court explained in *Raabe v City of Walker*, 383 Mich 165 (1970), this is particularly true in the context of contradictory rezoning after years of original zoning upon which concerned persons have come to depend. In quoting from McQuillin, *Municipal Corporations* (1965 Rev Vol.), §§ 25.06 and 25.68, the Court explained that:

Amendment or repeal of zoning laws should be just as carefully considered and prepared, perhaps more so, since private arrangements, property purchases and uses, the location of business in commercial or industrial zones, and the making of homes in residential districts, occur with reasonable anticipation of the stability of existing zones. Consequently, procedure in the amendment of zoning ordinances ordinarily embraces safeguards similar to or greater than those of the original zoning, against unreasonable, capricious, needless and harmful rezoning or changes of use classification, including petitions, notices, protests, hearings, study by

commissions or committees, and initiative and referendum of amending measures.

* * *

Since the purpose of zoning is stabilization of existing conditions subject to an orderly development and improvement of a zoned area and since property may be purchased and uses undertaken in reliance on an existing zoning ordinance, an amendatory, subsequent or repealing zoning ordinance must clearly be related to the accomplishment of a proper purpose within the police power. *Amendments should be made with utmost caution and only when required by changing conditions; otherwise, the very purpose of zoning will be destroyed. In short, a zoning ordinance can be amended only to subserve the public interest.* (emphasis added).

The City’s master plan largely reflects this sentiment noting that “[d]eviating from the Plan should not occur without sound rationale.” City of Zeeland Master Plan Revisited- 2020 (July 6, 2020), p 32.

Mead Johnson’s application to rezone 605 E Main Avenue is contrary to the City’s master plan. The property’s future use was designated as residential in the City’s 2011 Master Plan. Consistent with the designation, the property was acquired by Cityside Townhouses LLC in 2016, and the property was rezoned to R-3 Two-Family and Multi-Family Residential sometime in 2016 or 2017. The current Townhouses were constructed shortly thereafter. The City’s 2020 Master Plan Revisited similarly contemplates the future use of the property to be medium density residential.



Figure 1: Townhouses under construction, 605 E Main Ave, July 28, 2017.

McQuillin and the *Raabe Court* are prophetic to the current situation in Zeeland. I purchased my residence in 2015 and, like so many neighbors, did so with the

understanding that the neighborhood's future land use would be residential. In reliance on the City's master plan and future land use, many neighbors have made considerable investments in their homes with the intent to remain permanent residents in the City. I would not have purchased my residence or invested in it if the property directly across the street was zoned I-2 General Industrial.

Mead Johnson's rezoning application relies extensively on the concept of "changed circumstances" to justify their rezoning and deviation from the master plan. Mead Johnson, *Rezoning Application* (May 16, 2025). Yet they fail to acknowledge that, to the extent there are any changed circumstances, it is one entirely of their own making. The neighborhood on E Main Avenue is thriving with many residents now owning their homes. The single family residential properties Mead Johnson purchased, or is attempting to purchase, have been owned and occupied by their current residents for decades.¹ These were not vacant lots or a systemic retreat of the neighborhood that would warrant changed circumstances and rezoning. If anything, the residential rezoning and construction of the Townhouses in 2017 is evidence of the neighborhood *expanding*. The only reason the rezoning application exists today is because Mead Johnson paid a significant amount of money to these homeowners at a price they could simply not refuse. These are not changed circumstances to warrant deviation from the master plan.

The Rezoning Application is Not Based on a Plan

The proposed rezoning application is shockingly inadequate for a project of this magnitude, especially when attempting to contravene a carefully considered master plan. In total, it appears the record before the Planning Commission is comprised of a four-page rezoning application and a half hour PowerPoint presentation. The application timeline is as concerning as its lack of detail. Mead Johnson purchased 605 E Main Avenue on May 15, submitted a rezoning application on May 16, and apparently requested a special rezoning hearing to expedite their application. The public and Planning Commission were first made aware of their intentions on June 5 and the public hearing is scheduled on June 12. These actions reflect ad hoc, arbitrary planning rather than careful and comprehensive zoning consideration.

The Application is Premature

Mead Johnson's rezoning application is also premature—it only seeks to rezone 633 and 605 E Main Avenue despite a contemplated development of all parcels north of

¹ 633 E Main Avenue owned by Craig and Lila Meyer since 2006; 549 E Main Avenue owned by Kyle and Camaal Murray since 2004; 553 E Main Avenue lived in by Margie Klein for 52 years.

Main Avenue between Fairview Rd and N Carlton St. The Commission should be aware that Mead Johnson does not yet own all the properties necessary to effectuate their intended development and might very well be unable to do so. As noted in a recent Wood-TV interview, Earl and Margie Klein have not sold their property at 553 E Main Avenue—a home of 52 years.² Ms. Klein is quoted in the interview as saying:

We love our place, but we don't want to sell to Mead Johnson because they are pushy and demanding . . . this has nothing to do with the money, it's the whole principle of the thing. We have lived here for decades, been so involved in the City of Zeeland, Chamber of Commerce back in the day, and we love this town.

The Planning Commission should deny Mead Johnson's application because they have not yet acquired all the properties necessary for this development. Furthermore, Mead Johnson should submit their rezoning applications as a comprehensive whole, so the Planning Commission has the benefit of reviewing the entire project plan. A piecemeal approach to rezoning is speculative and does not promote rezoning that is based on a comprehensive plan.

Lack of Comprehensive Planning Reports and Studies

There are no comprehensive planning reports or studies on this development or its impact on the surrounding neighborhoods. With projects of this scale, it is not uncommon to have professional reports from engineers, traffic consultants, noise consultants, or other experts. Through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, I obtained a February 11, 2025, memorandum from a consultant to Tim Maday, Community Development Director for the City of Zeeland. In it, the consultant reviewed the City's 2011 and amended 2020 version of the Master Plan and opined that "if a buyer was to purchase some or all of these properties with the intent of consolidating them with an adjacent larger industrial property, rezoning them accordingly would not be inappropriate[.]" Mead Johnson appears to have drawn heavily upon this memorandum when drafting their current rezoning application. However, this memorandum is misleading on certain substantive components.

First, the memorandum does not cite applicable case law or relevant statutory provisions the City should consider with rezoning applications, except for a general

² Kolker, *Some Zeeland neighbors want to block Mead Johnson expansion* (June 6, 2025) <https://www.woodtv.com/news/ottawa-county/some-zeeland-neighbors-want-to-block-mead-johnson-expansion/>.

reference to the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act. The only cited authority is the language in the Master Plan itself.

Second, the memorandum appears to rely on a cluster of residential uses along Main Avenue between N. Division Street and N Farview Rd that the 2011 Master Plan identified as a land use conflict.



Figure 2: Identified Inconsistent Land Use, 2011 City of Zeeland Master Plan

The 2011 Master plan notes that “[m]any of these homes are actually zoned industrial or commercial and are, therefore, considered nonconforming uses.” City of Zeeland Master Plan 2011, p 30. This is accurate and the residences located at 701 and 658 E Main Avenue have since been purchased and demolished by Mead Johnson. However, the opposite is true for 605 E Main Ave (Townhouses), which had a future land use designation as residential and was rezoned as such. *Supra*, pages 3-4. Additionally, the remaining properties Mead Johnson seeks to develop (553, 549, and 515 E Main Avenue) were not identified as inconsistent land use and have never been identified as industrial use on the future land use map.

Third, the memorandum selectively quotes goals from the 2020 Master Plans that support industrial growth, but does not identify any of the goals associated with Housing and Neighborhoods. *Infra*, pages 9-10

Finally, the memorandum is misleading regarding the reported level of public support for industry from a public opinion survey conducted in conjunction with the 2011 Master Plan. The memorandum states that “over 78 percent of those expressing an opinion either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that more industrial employers are needed and 67 percent strongly agreed or agreed that the industrial park should be expanded.” (emphasis added).

In the survey, respondents were asked whether they “strongly agreed,” “agreed,” had “no opinion,” “disagreed,” or “strongly disagreed” with the statement that “[m]ore industrial employers are needed in Zeeland.” Out of a total of 489 responses, 166 expressed no opinion on this question. The memorandum excluded these 166 responses from percentage calculations, resulting in 78 percent. But when those who expressed “no opinion” on the question are included in the analysis, **only 51.9 percent** of all respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement.

The same is true regarding the statement that “[t]he existing industrial park needs to be expanded.” When the 301 respondents who expressed “no opinion” are considered, the percentage of those supporting expansion of the industrial park drops from 67 percent to **25.4 percent**.

In any event, the data cited is 14 years old at a time when the unemployment rate in Ottawa County was more than double what it is today (7.8 percent in 2011, 3.8 percent in 2024). Ottawa County Dashboard, *Average Annual Unemployment in Michigan and Ottawa County* <<https://miottawa.org/dsi/statistics/>>. The respondents were also only asked about expanding the industrial park in general. The question is not location specific and does not ask respondents if they agreed with expanding the industrial park on Main Avenue while demolishing four homes, the Townhouses, and Bethel church. It stands to reason that, if surveyed today, the percentage of respondents agreeing with these statements would be much lower than it already is.

The Planning Commission should use caution when considering this memorandum for the purposes of making a rezoning decision on the current application.

Diminution in Property Value

The City has not completed a comprehensive review of the potential reduction in property values associated with the proposed rezoning and development.

In a March 19, 2025, one-page email obtained through FOIA, Tim Maday reported the results of his neighborhood sales trends analysis to Tim Klunder, City Manager. The analysis appears to have compared the increase in sale price per year for a group of residences south of Main Avenue between 104th Ave and Plainfield Ct, and an area of residences located within four blocks of industrial sites in the area during a time that Mead Johnson had construction projects.

While I appreciate Mr. Maday’s preliminary efforts to analyze the potential reduction in property values, he readily acknowledged it was a “simple, high level review.” Additionally, the facts as they existed at the time of the analysis are not remotely analogous to the expansive project Mead Johnson is currently considering. Today,

there are adequate buffer zones between Mead Johnson's factory and most residential properties. But the contemplated expansion will be just a stone's throw away from our front doors—there are no natural barriers or buffer zones. As City residents, we deserve a more comprehensive assessment regarding the potential reduction in our property values before any rezoning decisions are made.

There is No Identifiable Public Need to Rezone Residential Properties to I-2 General Industrial

In the context of rezoning decisions, courts will occasionally consider whether there is a need for additional land to be rezoned into the proposed classification. See *Raabe* (rezoning to industrial invalidated where other land available in the city for industrial expansion); see also *Baker v Algonac*, 39 Mich App 526 (1972) (rezoning to multiple-family residential upheld where rise in housing costs forced to rent rather than to buy).

Mead Johnson's application asserts a need to modernize their facilities; however, they do not assert a public need or rationale to demolish and rezone four residences, two Townhouses housing up to eight families, and a church to I-2 General Industrial. Zeeland has a significant industrial base and a sizeable portion of the City's northeast side is already zoned industrial. Mead Johnson's own actions indicate they can acquire other industrially zoned properties for their development—their proposed renderings suggest they have acquired the 5.49-acre lot at 640 E Washington Avenue owned by Highpoint Leasing, LLC. The acquisition of additional properties north of Mead Johnson's current facility and development along N Fairview Avenue or north of E Washington Avenue would be ideally suited for this development.

One Planning Commissioner asked a particularly insightful question at the end of Mead Johnson's presentation on June 5, 2025, which is captured below.

COMMISSIONER: What happens if this is not approved? Are you able to still operate?

MR. PIKE: Yeah, um . . . our assets are aging, we will not be able to use those assets forever. We have to build new assets because requirements change, regulatory requirements change, we have internal standards that we have to meet as well so the assets will not be fit for purpose for much longer, and so we need to, and that's why you have an active project, we've identified that, we know that we need to do that, and that's why we are spending a very large sum of money that we know we

need to build new assets, the one's that we have are nearing the end of their shelf life.

Again, there was no asserted need to rezone residential properties contrary to the City's Master Plan. However, there *is* an identifiable public need and emphasis on maintaining housing and neighborhoods. According to the City's 2020 Master Plan, the City of Zeeland's population declined by 5.2 percent between 2000 and 2010, from 5,805 to 5,504. The following stated goals in the 2020 Master Plan reflect the planned priorities and needs for the City of Zeeland.

Housing and Neighborhood

Goal 1 is particularly relevant, stating that “[r]ecognizing that Zeeland’s physical character is largely a result of its existing residential neighborhoods, preserve and improve the existing housing stock and supporting neighborhood facilities.” City of Zeeland Master Plan Revisted – 2020, p 18. This includes initiating “efforts to improve and protect houses and their properties so that a balance is maintained against the exposure of non-residential uses.” *Id.*

Similarly, Goal 2A is to “[p]reserve housing that is still viable, even if it is situated in a sensitive area, such as abutting industry or busy streets.” *Id.* at 19 (emphasis added). This is directly applicable to Mead Johnson’s attempt to rezone 605 E Main Avenue. The Townhouses are certainly viable, house up to eight families, and are abutted to industry. Demolishing the Townhouses would require the relocation of these families, possibly outside of the City.

Land Use: Goal 2A is to “[p]lace a priority on preserving the integrity of Zeeland’s neighborhoods,” which *includes identifying and monitoring land use in neighborhoods where there are potential threats to the preservation of housing.* *Id.* at 13 (emphasis added). Furthermore, Goal 4 is to “[e]ncourage future development to occur in accordance with the Master Plan.” This includes providing buffer areas as transitions between incompatible land uses. *Id.* at 15.

Commercial and Industrial: As it relates to industrial development, the City is committed to encouraging new industrial development, but “only in areas where there will be minimal negative impact on other land uses.” *Id.* at 17. This includes restricting the construction of facilities of new industries to the industrial districts. *Id.*

Many Zeeland Residents Oppose Mead Johnson’s Contemplated Development

In their rezoning application, Mead Johnson infers public support for their proposed development by pointing to a public opinion survey conducted in conjunction with the

2011 Master Plan. These are the same misleading figures originally contained in the previously mentioned memorandum.

However, a much better—and more recent—barometer of public sentiment involves reviewing public comments offered during City Council and Planning Commission meetings, comments offered on the City’s social media webpage regarding this proposed development, and the prevalence of Neighborhood First yard signs throughout the City. The first stated goal on the Neighborhood First website is to Preserve Existing Zoning.³ More specifically, “No rezoning of residential or public facilities district classes on E Main Ave between Fairview Rd and N Carlton St. Ensure neighborhoods remain residential to maintain the community’s character and quality of life.”⁴

Figure 3 below maps each residence in the City of Zeeland that requested or is currently displaying a Neighborhood First yard sign as of June 8, 2025. Figure 4 is a more detailed area map of Neighborhood First yard signs in the area most directly impacted by this proposed rezoning and development.



Figure 3: Neighborhood First Yard Signs, City of Zeeland, June 8, 2025.

³ Neighborhood First, *What We Stand For*, < <https://neighborhoodfirst.org/what-we-stand-for> > (accessed June 10, 2025).

⁴ *Id.*

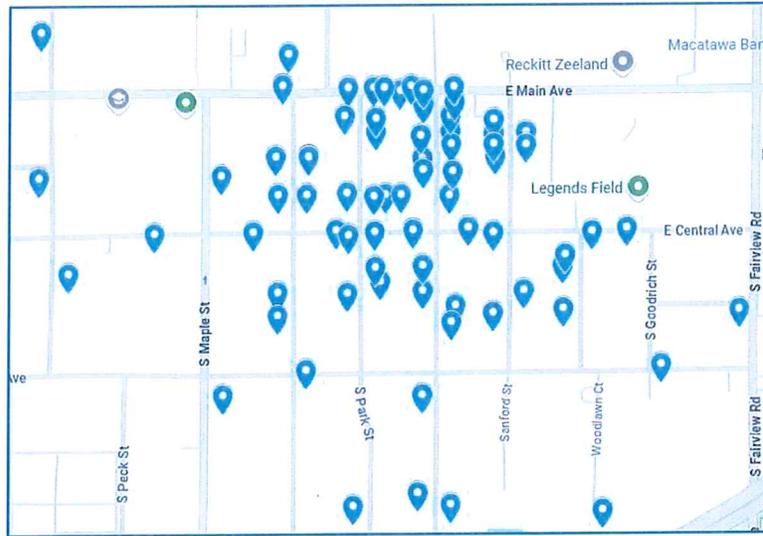


Figure 4: Neighborhood First Yard Signs, City of Zeeland, Centennial to Fairview, June 8, 2025.

Both maps are indicative of strong city opposition to Mead Johnson’s expansion and rezoning of residential and public facilities properties along Main Avenue.

Effect on Surrounding Property

Courts may also consider the effects of the uses that would be allowed by the zoning ordinance amendment on surrounding property. See *McLain v Hazel Park*, 357 Mich 459 (1959) (close proximity to residential neighborhoods and light, air, and traffic safety issues considered in upholding denial of rezoning); *Mr. Don’s, Inc v Battle Creek*, 39 Mich App 325 (1972) (fast-food restaurant would operate into late hours and increase traffic, litter, noise, and odors).

The current rezoning application represents one of the most extreme forms of rezoning—residential to I-2 General Industrial. I-2 General Industrial is intended to accommodate wholesale, general manufacturing, storage, and other industrial-related uses which have a greater potential to impact surrounding properties than light industrial⁵. Although the contemplated development would be subject to special land

⁵ Permissible land uses in I-2 General Industrial include, body shops; commercial kennels; lumber and planing mills; metal plating, buffing, and polishing; commercial storage warehouses; the manufacture, compounding, processing, packaging, or treatment of products requiring stamping or punch press operations; planned industrial parks; recycling centers; adult bookstores, adult live entertainment theaters, adult motion picture theaters, and massage parlors; junkyards; truck terminals; outdoor storage, display area, and sale of farm implements and commercial construction equipment; manufacture of corrosive acid or alkali, cement, lime, gypsum, or plaster of Paris; petroleum or other inflammable liquids, production, refining, or storage; connector corridors; antennas and towers for antennas; indoor recreational and indoor public assembly uses; medical offices and buildings used for

use approval under City of Zeeland Zoning Ordinance § 3.1502, the development would unmistakably alter the fundamental character and appearance of our neighborhood. Mead Johnson's current employee parking lot is located approximately 260 feet from Main Avenue, is mostly to the east of many residential properties, and is partially obscured by trees. In contrast, the current proposal seeks to place the primary employee parking lot mere feet from Main Avenue, directly across from residential homes, with their building only set back approximately 150 feet. Mead Johnson claims this will reduce traffic because contractors will be required to park off Washington Avenue. Yet in their presentation, they noted that contractors only represent a small portion of their overall workforce.

Developing a parking lot of this size so close to a residential neighborhood will invariably disrupt the enjoyment of neighborhood properties—light pollution, the starting and stopping of vehicles for a factory that operates around the clock, vehicles speeding out onto Main Avenue, and snow removal in the early morning hours of winter.

Additionally, Mead Johnson has a reputation in Zeeland for their odor and noise. Mead Johnson claims to be working on a new manufacturing process to reduce the odor associated with Nutramigen® Infant Formula production, but offered no guarantees and explained that regulatory approval of new processes take time. The use of fans or blowers on the tower in the *current* location can easily be heard from several blocks away. The risk of neighborhood disruption is simply too great to permit rezoning to this zoning classification.

Conclusion

For the previously mentioned reasons, the Planning Commission should deny Mead Johnson's rezoning application. This vote is not about whether Mead Johnson should modernize their facilities. A "no" vote on the rezoning application is not a referendum on Mead Johnson, the importance of the work they complete, or their contribution to the City. A "no" vote is *not* a vote against development or Mead Johnson's investment in the City. And a "no" vote is certainly *not* a vote against the hard-working employees of Mead Johnson. Instead, a "no" vote simply reflects the fact that rezoning residential properties along Main Avenue to I-2 General Industrial is not in the public's interest. It is an instruction for Mead Johnson to reconsider their project and construct it on industrially zoned properties away from residential neighborhoods.

medical purposes; rooming houses; light vehicle repair facilities; large vehicle repair facilities. City of Zeeland Zoning Ordinance, § 3.1502.

I remain convinced there is still a way to facilitate this development in the City that does not involve demolishing and rezoning homes, Townhouses, and a church. Please continue striving for a true “win-win-win” for the neighborhood, City, and Mead Johnson by voting down this application.

Respectfully

Ryan P. Gamby

Ryan P. Gamby
11 S Division St
Zeeland, MI 49464

City of Zeeland

JUN 12 2025

June 12, 2025

City of Zeeland Planning Commission

21 S Elm St
Zeeland MI 49464

Received

Written Statement Opposing Mead Johnson's Application to Rezone 633 and 605 E Main Avenue

Dear Chairman Elhart:

I am the owner and resident of 23 S Division Street, and I live 3 houses down from the proposed rezoning and contemplated development. I've been a resident of Zeeland for nearly 7 years, born in Holland, growing up in Hamilton, going to college at U of M Ann Arbor, serving my country in the US Air Force as a Flight Test Pilot before finally returning home and settling here in 2018. My Father worked at Herman Miller for over 30 years, so I remember the changes that Zeeland has gone through over the years, some good and some bad. I have put nearly \$150,000 worth of work into my home in the last 7 years. Siding, windows, stamped concrete patios, and a new garage. I would not have gone through this effort if I did not want to live here or improve the look of the block. I have a lot of pride in my house. Once all the renovations were done, I even put my house into the Zeeland Historic Society being that it was built in 1919. Now given all that, what would make sense about putting a MASSIVE chemical plant right across the street from so many houses like mine?

Residents have been opposed to this rezoning and development plan since we discovered it through word of mouth and then FOIA requests. The city was hiding this from us, and they did not inform the public as they should. They never did and still have not taken a stand on what their opinion is. People are losing their homes because the city council did not take an opinion. Why could they say there will not be any re-zoning regardless of what properties Mead Johnson purchases? Like we have said over and repeatedly in council meetings, nothing that is taking place on the east side of Zeeland fits in the Master Plan. How will this affect our property value? If you had to live next to a massive factory, would you not be upset? We bought houses in Zeeland to be in a quiet, historic community for our spouses and children. Every resident and I in this community honestly can't believe that this has gotten this far or that the city has not immediately shot it down based on the feedback from the residents. It is incomprehensible, and it is not something we should have to think about as residents. If my kids can play in the street now with the smell and added traffic or if my house value will go down \$70,000 instantly. The ideas and words that Mead Johnson uses are lies. They do not have a complete plan and yet we are talking about giving them everything they want and rezoning Residential to Industrial...during a housing crisis!! Once they have their zoning, they can do whatever they want. I will likely leave Zeeland if I'm forced to stare at a massive parking lot and massive building across the street that once housed 8 families, had a beautiful big red barn with Christmas lights, and a Church. What this Commission does will determine the future of Zeeland.

There is no reason that Mead Johnson can't develop a plan to expand north (into the actual industrial park). Whether in Zeeland or Zeeland Township. This is an obvious win-win. I have so much anger (as do all my neighbors) but I really hope and pray that you will make the right decision to vote down this rezoning application and future applications by Mead Johnson that encroach into our community. I have prayed this to God and now I look to the Commission to do what is right.

Very Respectfully,



Josh Campbell
23 S Division Street
Zeeland, MI 49464



City of Zeeland

JUN 12 2025

Received

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

DR. TIM BORING
DIRECTOR

June 11, 2025

Mayor Kevin Klynstra
City of Zeeland
21 S. Elm Street
Zeeland, MI 49464

Dear Mayor Klynstra:

The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) is committed to the growth and attraction of business opportunities in the food manufacturing and agribusiness sector and stands ready to support Project Vivid. This initiative aligns with our mission to promote a strong, safe and resilient agricultural and food economy across the state.

Expanding infant formula production in Michigan represents a critical opportunity to strengthen our local food supply chain, improve access to safe and reliable nutrition for infants, and support working families across this state and beyond. Recent national shortages have highlighted the vulnerability of our infant formula supply and the need for increased regional manufacturing capacity. FDA's [Long-Term National Strategy to Increase the Resiliency of the U.S. Infant Formula Market](#).

Moreover, the project will bring meaningful economic benefit to our state. By investing in new infrastructure, creating high quality jobs, and supporting Michigan's agricultural sectors, this expansion directly contributes to economic vitality, a core component of MDARD's strategic priorities.

Michigan is well positioned to lead in this area, with its diverse agricultural base, advanced food processing sector and a strong commitment to food safety and innovation. The project will additionally support Michigan farmers with increased purchases of Michigan soy-based products. Supporting this project reflects our shared goal of ensuring food security, nurturing our youngest citizens, and fostering economic resilience.

Sincerely,


Tim Boring
Director

Tim Maday

From: Hugh Bartels <hughbartels@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 12, 2025 1:37 PM
To: Tim Maday
Subject: [External] Message to ZPC

City of Zeeland

JUN 12 2025

Received

Attention: This email was sent to City of Zeeland / Zeeland BPW from an external source. Please be extra vigilant when opening attachments or clicking links.

Rezoning

Tim,

Thank you for accepting written input for the decision regarding the rezoning of property on Main.

If the request tonight is a limit to three minutes then I will summarize this message.

My name is Hugh Bartels and my address is 10091 Switchgrass Ln. but i spend a lot of time at Bethel Church on 515 East Main where I'm the clerk of council. I'm a former resident of 241 N State and 505 E Central.

I appreciate your role in the community, it's an important one. I'm here to encourage you to approve the applications for rezoning.

Certainly you have your own criteria for making a decision based on the risk and the benefit of this change. I think one of the questions you might have is "can we trust Mead Johnson to follow through on the plans they are showing?"

I'd like to share the highlights of Bethel's experience with Mead Johnson since February. I call it "Trust, but verify"

But first, some context from last week at the meeting I heard many object to the plans from Mead Johnson because they fear for the worst potential outcome of more property being zoned as Industrial. Why do we fear for the worst?

Why can't we imagine the best? To me the best is

Mead Johnson and the City and the neighbors working together for the Best possible outcome of these plans!

But working together takes trust.
Building trust takes time, communication, understanding.

When Mead Johnson first knocked on the door of Bethel Church we heard much of what you heard last week, but without pictures.

They wanted to buy our property but said they didn't need it for the project to be completed.

But then why buy it? The answer:

To make this project something special. Something Mead Johnson employees and the city could be proud of for years to come.

A big surprise, a big project and a big decision.

BUT

There wasn't much trust

Plenty of Skepticism

several concerns and

We had a couple months to decide.

We dove deeper into the 40 days of prayer we had scheduled before the offer.

We talked with our members.

Skepticism was high there too.

We talked with our neighbor.

Why did Bennett Wood Specialties sell?

The timing was right

The price was right

It seemed an answer to prayer. We were happy for them.

But why would a church sell?

Our answer:

If God could use this opportunity to do more for His Kingdom in selling than in staying - then we should sell.

But it was time to Verify:

We talked to the city: where were the plans, what did they know?

We researched the city plans and the zoning.

(It was getting personal and I started to resent 'them' wanting to remove 'my' church from the corner. But it wasn't about me. It wasn't about just Bethel Church.)

Bethel and Mead Johnson kept talking.

We worked with Jason Webb of Cushman Wakefield and Art Pike of Mead Johnson. Two men I've come to highly respect.

They promised to move the playground and even enhance it.

They raised their offer.

We had regular communication

They listened and responded to our concerns.

Trust was building
We, as a church, stayed in discussion & prayer

Our skepticism was being eroded by facts.

Then Bethel's proposed relationship with another church stalled and we needed more time.
They gave us more time.

Trust was building.
We stayed in discussion & prayer.

We needed more verification.
What would the corner look like?
What would the playground look like? Where would it be?
Are you sure you can mitigate the concerns of the neighbors?

They shared the renderings
They shared what they could at the time
They never pressured us to sell.
It was always about Win-Win.
Trust was building.

But they needed to know our answer soon to complete their Master Plan.

And God provided a new potential relationship with a church and two weeks ago our council with congregational approval decided to sell.
We are scheduled to close by June 30.

Our decision to sell has little bearing on your decision tonight.

Our journey in building trust with Mead Johnson has much to do with your decision.

But the trust doesn't end there.
We are also trusting that the city will do all it can to keep the verification in place. We expect Mead Johnson to be held accountable to the guidelines you put forth.

In closing, I was recently reminded how good we have it in Zeeland. A recent trip to Laurel, MS reflected a town that died twice as its single pillar industry boomed and busted.

Zeeland has been blessed beyond measure with a diversity of industry. Many large companies with integrity and character demonstrated for decades.
Most cities long for just one of these pillars.
We need to value each one.

In summary,
I believe working together can achieve the best for all involved.

I was resentful of the plans at first but my attitude has changed completely.

Yes it's discouraging to lose any residential property in Zeeland.
But I am grateful that Mead Johnson is ready to cut a ribbon for a new project instead of cutting out of town and moving to Kentucky.

Yes, there will be plenty of noise and mess during construction.
But I am grateful they're ready to invest nearly a \$1 billion into one city block instead of letting their assets quietly rust away.

Yes, it's sad to lose the Bethel church building, but we believe there are good days ahead for Bethel church members. And a bundle of blessings for our ministry partners.
So I am grateful Mead Johnson is buying extra property for breathing space on the project instead of getting by with the bare minimums.

Yes there are still concerns.
But I am grateful they listened to our concerns and are taking steps to mitigate them.

Please approve the applications.
Thank you for listening.

Hugh

Tim Maday

From: Dan Klompmaker <dan.j.klompmaker@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 12, 2025 3:11 PM
To: Tim Maday
Subject: [External] Planning Commission Meeting June 12

City of Zeeland

JUN 12 2025

Received

Attention: This email was sent to City of Zeeland / Zeeland BPW from an **external source**. Please be extra vigilant when opening attachments or clicking links.

Hi Tim,

I won't be able to make the meeting tonight and wanted to share my thoughts and a potential question for the applicant.

In general, I am in favor of the site development that Mead Johnson is proposing. They have been a solid employer in the Zeeland area for over 100 years and could be for another 100 years. I would like to see us do what we can as a city to keep them. Our city does not exist without employer partners like this. I would urge Mead Johnson to be far more aggressive on mitigating the noise, odor, traffic, and other such concerns as expressed by Zeeland residents.

In regard to the rezoning of the residential spaces, were I present, I would be hesitant to approve the rezoning request without first fully understanding the need for it. It seems that these sites are proposed to be parking lots. I am having a hard time reconciling that use with both our future land use map and the continued housing shortage in the Zeeland Area. My question would be: Is it possible to preserve these residentially zoned lots and have sufficient employee parking in other locations on site?

Blessings on your deliberations and voting.

Warmly,

Dan Klompmaker