CITY OF ZEELAND
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
CITY HALL – 21 S ELM ST
MAY 7TH, 2026
5:45 PM

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

Present: Commissioners CJ Otteman, Rebecca Perkins, Daniel Klompmaker, Rick VanDorp, Tim Klunder and Chairman Bill Elhart.

Absent: Commissioners Bob Blanton and Sheri Holstege.

Also Present: City Attorney Jim Donkersloot, Zoning Administrator Timothy Maday, Master Plan Planning Consultant from Williams and Works Tanya DeOliveira, and Recording Secretary Nadine Garza.

- Moved by Klompmaker, Supported by Klunder to excuse absent members. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Maday noted that Commissioner Cooper's term has recently expired and that she has advised she will not be seeking reappointment. He further reported that the City has released the RFP for 303 E. Main Avenue, formerly the "Main Street Auto" building, and noted that at least one prospective developer is hoping to submit an application.

Maday also shared that the projects at 17 E. Main Avenue are beginning to wrap up, with El Rancho currently awaiting its liquor license approval from the State, the beauty salon preparing to open, and a small retailer anticipated to occupy the remaining available space.

Request to vacate North Division St – Mead Johson & Company, LLC
Maday stated that the Commission took action at its previous meeting directing the City Attorney to draft a resolution for the vacation of North Division Street. He further explained that, if adopted by the Commission, the resolution would then be forwarded to City Council for consideration.

Maday also noted that the City's traffic engineer did not identify any concerns with vacating the street, as North Division Street is bordered by properties owned by Mead Johnson & Company, LLC.

Motion 2026.06
Moved by Klompmaker to adopt the resolution recommending the vacation of North Division St. as requested by Mead Johnson & Company, LLC.

Supported by Perkins

Roll Call Vote on Motion 2026.06
Ayes: Otteman, Perkins, Klompmaker, VanDorp, Klunder and Chairman Bill Elhart.
Nays: None.
Absent: Blanton and Holstege.

Motion Passes.

Maday noted that staff had no new updates regarding roadside food stands.

He then introduced the City's new Master Plan planning consultant from Williams & Works, Tanya DeOliveria. Madya explained that Tanya will serve as the primary contact and lead consultant for the City's Master Plan rewrite. He also noted that she is currently leading Zeeland Township's Master Plan rewrite.

Tanya introduced herself and expressed her enthusiasm for working with the City of Zeeland on the project. She shared her strong ties to West Michigan and explained that the purpose of the meeting was to review the project timeline, provide an overview of the process, and gather feedback from Commissioners regarding their goals, priorities, and concerns for the Master Plan update.

Additionally, Tanya designated Tim Maday as the staff liaison who will coordinate communication between herself and the Planning Commission throughout the process. She then provided an overview of the Master Plan rewrite process, noting that completion of the project could take approximately 18 months. She explained that the timeline reflects the extensive review process with the Planning Commission, required public review periods pursuant to state statute, and the number of goals and objectives the City hopes to accomplish through the updated Master Plan.

Tanya added that her goal is to keep the project moving efficiently by meeting once per month or less, while also noting that the timeline remains flexible if Commissioners require additional time to review or discuss certain topics. She explained that she, along with another planner, will be responsible for preparing draft chapters of the Master Plan. These draft chapters will first be submitted to Tim and then included in the Planning Commission packets distributed the week prior to regularly scheduled meetings.

Tanya also reviewed what Commissioners can expect to see within the draft chapters and explained that Commissioners will have the opportunity to review the materials, provide comments, and discuss the information during their regular Planning Commission meetings.

Furthermore, Tanya highlighted that community engagement efforts will begin in the fall. She explained that this phase of the process will provide Commissioners with the opportunity to engage with, listen to, and communicate directly with members of the community. She noted that the City has elected to conduct an online survey, which will be reviewed by Commissioners prior to being distributed to the public.

Additionally, Tanya stated that two visioning workshops will be held as part of the engagement process. Commissioners will be responsible for determining which topics will be discussed and identifying who should be invited to participate in one or both meetings, whether stakeholders, residents, or members of the general public.

Once the engagement activities are completed, a draft report summarizing the findings will be prepared and incorporated into the Master Plan appendix. Tanya then continued reviewing the project timeline and procedural steps with the Commissioners. She also assured the Commission

that she and her team will ensure the Master Plan process and documentation remain in compliance with all applicable state requirements and the City's zoning code.

Once Tanya and her team have compiled all necessary information, they will prepare a formal draft document for the Planning Commission's review. If approved by the Planning Commission, the draft Master Plan will then be recommended to City Council for approval to release the document for the required sixty-three (63) day public review period.

Tanya further explained the review process to the Commissioners, noting that following the public comment period, the Planning Commission will have an additional opportunity to review the material and consider any feedback received from the public. The Commission will then conduct a final review of the Master Plan prior to making a recommendation to City Council for final adoption.

Maday noted that staff is supportive of Tanya's role with the City and emphasized the importance of creating a strong future land use map that clearly reflects the City's long-term vision, especially in areas where land use interpretations have varied throughout the community.

Tanya added that Zeeland Township is currently going through a similar Master Plan update process and expressed interest in exploring potential opportunities for collaboration with the City. She noted that there may be mutual benefits from both a land use and planning perspective if the two communities work together on certain aspects of the process. Tanya explained that any future collaboration would ultimately be determined by both municipalities, including what that partnership may look like moving forward.

Commissioners discussed a previous time when the City and Zeeland Township met annually to discuss shared topics and planning efforts. Over time, however, the meetings became lengthy and less productive, which eventually led to them no longer taking place. Commissioners expressed interest in restarting those conversations with Zeeland Township moving forward. They also discussed the possibility of reaching out to other neighboring municipalities to see if there may be interest in similar collaborative partnerships or ongoing planning discussions. Tanya confirmed that she would work with staff to help facilitate future conversations between the municipalities.

Tanya asked Commissioners to share any major concerns, challenges, opportunities, or goals they hope to address or explore throughout the Master Plan process.

Otteman noted his interest in the upcoming community workshops, explaining that he is eager to hear the public's vision for the Master Plan and see how those perspectives align with the vision of the Commission and the City.

Elhart added that he hopes the updated Master Plan will serve as a useful tool for staff moving forward. He also emphasized the importance of staff involvement throughout the process and expressed that he values staff input and perspective. Tanya and Maday confirmed that staff will remain actively involved in supporting both the Commission and the Master Plan process. Maday also noted that Abby DeRoo, Marketing Director and Shopping Area Redevelopment Board Staff Liaison, will be involved in the process as well, but was unable to attend the meeting due to a scheduling conflict.

Tanya also discussed the "Implementation Chapter," which is included at the end of the Master Plan process. She explained that throughout the process, she will be taking note of the topics, priorities, and concerns identified by Commissioners, including areas they feel should be addressed or explored further. These items will ultimately be incorporated into the Implementation Chapter as a type of action-oriented "to do list" intended to clearly outline the goals and priorities the Commission envisions for the future of the City of Zeeland.

Elhart noted that he would like to ensure the Zeeland Board of Public Works, along with the Zeeland Police and Fire Departments, have an opportunity to review the Master Plan and provide input throughout the process so that all departments are aligned in their understanding and goals.

Klompmaker then discussed how transitions between different land uses can sometimes create tension within neighborhoods, particularly when there is a lack of clear buffering or boundaries between use types. He further noted that he believes one of the Commission's current priorities is finding ways to create strong compatibility between neighboring land uses while continuing to address the ongoing need for housing. Klompmaker emphasized the importance of being intentional throughout the planning process and ensuring the City remains committed to the plans and goals it establishes

Staff and Commissioners discussed their excitement about the opportunity to collaborate with Zeeland Township and the potential benefits such a partnership could bring to both communities. The discussion included how working together may be especially valuable as much of the City of Zeeland is already developed, creating an opportunity to think more collaboratively about future planning efforts and shared goals.

VanDorp questioned whether there may be an opportunity to involve Zeeland Public Schools, as well as Zeeland Christian Schools, in the Master Plan process. Tanya responded that the community engagement phase would be a great opportunity for Commissioners to utilize their connections within the community and noted that it would be appropriate for the Commission to reach out to the schools to inform them about the Master Plan rewrite and encourage their participation and input.

Additionally, Tanya mentioned that staff had been provided with a formal distribution list, which may already include the schools. She further explained that some communities have partnered with local schools to help promote community surveys and encourage greater public participation throughout the planning process.

Perkins added that she agreed housing and land use are among the most important topics for the Commission to focus on and emphasized how impactful the Master Plan process can be for shaping the future of the community.

Commissioners then discussed a desire to explore the possibility of installing a pedestrian bridge over the I-96 Business Loop. Maday noted that staff is currently working collaboratively with the MACC (Macatawa Area Coordinating Council) and members of the community on related discussions and planning efforts. He added that he would follow up with Tanya further regarding the topic.

Commissioners and Tanya then revisited discussion surrounding how the Master Plan and future land use map had been interpreted over the past year, noting that they had heard and observed many differing interpretations throughout the community. Tanya explained that the Master Plan rewrite process will include multiple opportunities for review and input from both the Planning Commission and the public. She added that the process presents a valuable opportunity to help realign community understanding, expectations, and long-term goals between residents and the City.

Tanya concluded by outlining her next steps related to research and data collection, noting that the information gathered would be brought back to the Commission for future review and discussion. She again reminded Commissioners to direct any comments, questions, or concerns through Maday, who will coordinate communication and forward information to her as needed. Tanya also expressed her excitement about working with the Commission throughout the process and helping develop a Master Plan that will serve as a valuable resource for both the City and its residents.

Maday reminded Commissioners of the upcoming special Planning Commission meeting scheduled for Monday, May 11, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Howard Miller Community Center, Les Hoogland Banquet Room, located at 14 S. Church St., Zeeland, MI 49464, to review the site plan application submitted by Mead Johnson & Company, LLC.

-Motion by Klompmaker to approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes from the February 5, 2026 meeting. Supported by Perkins. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

6:52 PM – Moved by Klompmaker, supported by Perkins, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Nadine Garza
Recording Secretary