

Village of Onekama Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
5283 Main Street, Onekama, MI 231-889-3171
October 10, 2023

Members present: Chair Christopher Forth, Vice Chair Deborah Storms, Tom Foster, Susan Halloran, Wendy Kamaloski. Also present: John Wemlinger.

Meeting called to order at 6:03 pm.

Motion to accept the agenda as presented by Storms, seconded by Kamaloski. All in favor, motion carried.

Motion to accept the meeting minutes of September 12, 2023 as presented by Storms, seconded by Foster. All in favor, motion carried.

Old Business: Continuing discussion on the issue of mixed-use in the Village.

Chair Forth stated it is important that Village leaders understand the issues faced by developers and investors as they consider (re)development activities in the Village. Forth summarized some of these issues contained in an article he previously sent to Commission members.

Wemlinger discussed the current capacity of the sewer system and how it would affect future development activities in the Village. The proposed improvements to separate storm water from wastewater will increase capacity, but not enough to support a significant increase in development. Wemlinger also suggested people log into MDOT's website and comment on the 2025-2028 Main Street Improvement Project survey, with suggested topics being sidewalk repair and placement, ADA compliant sidewalk corners, crosswalks with signage. It was also suggested that people recommend the speed limit through the Village be lowered.

Foster mentioned that it might be a good idea to move the sanitary sewer lines to follow Main Street rather than going through lots as it currently does, which limits development on those lots.

Member Susan Halloran arrived at 6:42 pm.

Chair Forth asked the members if the decision is made to allow mixed use, are there certain geographic areas where mixed-use buildings should be located or along the entire length of Main Street. Forth emphasized the importance of walkability and business synergy. Forth suggested that perhaps mixed-use should be located along the west end of Main Street between Baker Street and Lake Street where there is an existing concentration of businesses and the Village Park, which is an important amenity for people living and working in the immediate area. After further discussion, the Commission members tentatively agreed upon a

mixed-use district that would extend from Lake Street to 8 Mile Road and include only parcels that front onto Main Street, with the understanding that more area can always be added in the future if the need arises. If there is a parcel(s) contiguous to and under the same ownership with a parcel that fronts onto Main Street, this parcel(s) can also be included in the mixed-use district.

The Commission members also discussed preferences in building style to be included in the ordinance. There was consensus that new development should be consistent in appearance to what's already in the area. The ordinance should include requirements such as building shape, size and number/shape of windows, roof appearance from street level, and back side entrance to the upper level. There would also be requirements regarding building materials and color pallet.

Parking for the downtown area was also discussed. Off-street parking should be provided for the residential units. Off-street parking for nonresidential uses should not be required.

Chair Forth said the Commission should also consider minimum square footages established for the residential units, minimum/maximum width for commercial tenant spaces and outdoor spaces where people can gather.

Chair Forth will write a draft proposal to be presented to the Village Council meeting in November summarizing the mixed-use recommendations of the Commission.

New Business: none

Additional public comment: none

Motion to adjourn by Kamaloski, seconded by Storms. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.

Submitted by Michelle Swanson, Recording Secretary