

City Of Hart

407 S. State St

Hart, Mi 49420

Planning Commission

Thursday, October 2nd, 2025

Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jim Cunningham, Cynitha Fout, Diane LaPorte, Andrew Mullen, and Betty Root

ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Interim City Manager Nichole Kleiner, and City Clerk – Karla Swihart and Lisa Clark

- C. Fout called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.
- A. Mullen motioned to accept Gale Goldberg resignation from the Planning Commission board, and was supported by D. LaPorte
 - Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Absent: 0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

- A. Mullen motioned to approve the agenda and was supported by D. LaPorte
 - Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Absent: 0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- B. Root motioned to approve minutes from September 4th, 2025, and was supported by B. Root
 - Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Absent: 0

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

- NONE

PUBLIC HEARING:

- B. Root motioned to open the Public Hearing on items A-D at 4:06 pm and was supported by A. Mullen
 - Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Absent: 0
- Public hearing on adopting proposed amendments to the A-Residential Zoning District Chapter 1245
- Public hearing on adopting proposed amendments to the A1-Residential Zoning District Chapter 1246
- Public hearing on adopting proposed Food Truck Zoning Ordinance – Proposed Chapter 870
- Public hearing on adding definition of “Tiny Home” to Ordinance 1241.04

With no public present public hearing was closed at 4:10 pm.

- A. Mullen motioned to close the Public Hearing at 4:10 pm and was supported by D. LaPorte
 - Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Absent: 0

ACTION ITEMS:

- Consideration of a Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment to 1243.22 (Landscape Regulations) to incorporate new green infrastructure standards, as required by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

1243.22 LANDSCAPE REGULATIONS.

(a) The intent of this section is to set forth minimum standards for landscaping. Landscaped areas are intended to maintain or improve air quality, stabilize soils, increasing groundwater infiltration, decrease wind velocity, reduce noise, and create zones of privacy.

(b) For site plans required Planning Commission review, buffer strips shall be required where an industrial use abuts any other nonindustrial use or where any parking lot exceeding fifteen parking

spaces abuts residential, public, or religious use. Where landscaping buffer strip or greenbelt is required, the following minimum landscape requirements shall be observed.

1. Two trees plus one additional tree for each twenty-five feet in length of the buffer strip measured along the outer periphery of the required landscape area.
2. One shrub for every twenty feet in length of the buffer strip measured along the outer periphery of the required landscape area
3. All plantings in the buffer strip shall be maintained in a neat and orderly manner. Dead plant materials shall be replaced within a reasonable period of time, but no longer than one growing season.

(c) Landscaping shall be located so it does not obstruct the vision of drivers or pedestrians entering or leaving a site.

(d) Parking area landscaping.

1. All parking areas more than 5,000 square feet in area, except those parking areas for industrial uses which are located in the rear yard, shall be landscaped with one canopy and one evergreen tree for every ten parking spaces, with a minimum of two trees shall be planted adjacent to the parking area.
2. Landscape islands or peninsulas shall be installed at the end of those parking rows which are more than twenty spaces long. Within such rows, a landscaped island shall be installed every twenty spaces.
3. Landscape islands or peninsulas at the end of parking rows shall be a minimum of ten feet in width by the length of the parking space or spaces, with an appropriate curb radius. Islands within parking rows shall be a minimum of six feet wide by the length of the parking space or spaces. Islands shall be separated from the parking area by a rolled or stand-up curb.
4. Each island or peninsula within a parking area shall contain a minimum of one canopy tree.
5. Landscaping in and adjacent to parking areas shall be of a height and location which will not block the vision of drivers or pedestrians.

(e) Landscape modifications. The landscape requirements of this section may be modified by the Planning Commission or Zoning Administrator in consideration of existing trees on site, proposed building setbacks, existing and proposed uses on adjacent lands, topographical elevations on a site and on adjacent lands. In deciding whether to modify the landscape regulations of this section the Planning Commission or Zoning Administrator shall determine that the intent of the regulations will still be met if modifications are allowed.

(f) Green Infrastructure Standards.

1. All development or redevelopment projects requiring site plan approval shall incorporate at least one (1) green infrastructure practice from the list below. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to integrate multiple practices when feasible.
 - a. Permeable pavement in parking lots, driveways, or walkways.
 - b. Rain gardens, bioswales, or infiltration areas to manage stormwater on-site.
 - c. Native or drought-tolerant landscaping that reduces irrigation needs.
 - d. Tree preservation and/or new street tree plantings consistent with 1243.22.
 - e. Green roofs or blue roofs where structurally feasible.
2. Acceptable practices include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Permeable pavement in parking lots, driveways, or walkways.
 - b. Rain gardens, bioswales, or infiltration areas to manage stormwater on-site.
 - c. Native or drought-tolerant landscaping that reduces irrigation needs.
 - d. Tree preservation and/or new street tree plantings consistent with 1243.22.
 - e. Green roofs or blue roofs where structurally feasible.
3. The Planning Commission or Zoning Administrator may grant flexibility in how green infrastructure is provided, provided the intent of this section – to promote sustainable, low-impact site design – is met.
 - o A. Mullen motioned to recommend to the Hart City Council approval of a Zoning Ordinance text amendment to 1243.22 (Landscape Regulations) to add subsection (f) Green Infrastructure Standards, as presented to meet MEDC requirements and support sustainable development practices, and supported by D. LaPorte
 - Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Absent: 0
 - Establish a public hearing date for Green Infrastructure zoning amendments to Section 1243.22(f) Public hearing is scheduled for the next Planning Commission meeting on November 6th, 2025

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- Board Openings – Bylaws state, “membership shall consist of seven (7) persons who shall be appointed by the City Council. Members of the Planning Commission shall be residents of the City of Hart. At least one (1) of the seven (7) persons shall be a member of the City Council as an ex officio member, but not more than two (2) members shall serve on the Planning Commission. Ex officio members shall have full voting privileges but shall not serve as an officer of the Planning Commission. An employee of the City shall not serve as a member of the Planning Commission. Planning Commission members shall be representative of the various interests and characteristics of the City, as well as geographically representative.
- Planning Commission Officers
- Review Board Application – Lisa Clark
- Bylaws Review
- Planning Commission Training Opportunities

OTHER BUSINESS:

- NONE

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:

- NONE

ADJOURN:

- There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, the meeting adjourned upon a motion by D. LaPorte and supported by A. Mullen. The next meeting scheduled will be held on November 6th, 2025.

Karla Swihart

Karla Swihart
City Clerk