

City of West Branch Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting
November 26, 2024
West Branch City Council Chambers, 110 North Poplar Street

Chairperson John Fuller called the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
Commission members present: John Fuller, Ryan Bowers, Matt Van Scoyoc and Max Kober.
Absent: Brad Bower and Madison Conley
City Staff present: City Clerk Leslie Brick and Zoning Administrator Terry Goerdts.
Public present: Jon Marner, MMS Consultants

APPROVE AGENDA/CONSENT AGENDA/MOVE TO ACTION.

Motion by Bower, second by Van Scoyoc. Motion carried on a voice vote.

PUBLIC HEARING/NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Review and approve draft Ordinance language for Prosperity Pathway Interim Development Overlay District – Amending Chapter 165 – Zoning Regulations. / Move to action.

The Planning and Zoning Commission unanimously recommended council to pass the first reading of the ordinance. Though certain sections prompted lengthy discussions. Concerns were raised that the ordinance might overreach, potentially impacting business owners and risking the city's reputation as business-friendly. While some members struggled with the idea of prohibiting gas stations, others fully supported Main Street's recommendation to exclude them.

The Commission emphasized the need to reference nonconforming uses in the ordinance, as its current wording might suggest inflexibility and deter property owners from making improvements. They also urged the City Council to consider offering a 25% tax rebate for newly constructed buildings in the district to offset added costs.

Additionally, the board recommended clarifying the definition of "substantial improvement," particularly concerning elements like new roofs or façades. Some members expressed concerns that the ordinance could complicate efforts to rebuild the fire station, recognizing, however, that its location in the floodway poses challenges and might necessitate relocation in the future, given the high cost of maintaining equipment in a flood-prone area

West Branch Overlay Zone Limitations:

- It does not apply to single-family residential properties.
- It applies to new construction and major building modifications but not to routine repair and replacement.
 - An awning or window replacements would not apply. (Unless windows are deemed historic).
- It has a limited three-year life until a new comprehensive plan is in place.
- It also contains a list of prohibited uses that are seen as incompatible with the character of the service-oriented downtown.
- Buildings may use brick-like and stone-materials since real brick and stone is costly.
- Reinforces unified sign requirements already in WB Code of Ordinances.

Motion by Fuller, second by Conley to recommend approval of the Prosperity Pathway. Motion passed unanimously.

Review and approve Bedrock Industrial – Part 1 final plat. /Move to action.

Brian Boelk from Axiom Consultants spoke on behalf of the property owner.

Commission members asked questions about the future use of the area, drainage, and driveways. Boelk could only minimally explain the potential uses as its ultimately up to the property owner. Boelk described the drainage, flood plain regulations, and street infrastructure properly.

Motion by Conley, second by Bowers to approve Bedrock Industrial Part I Final Plat.

Waiving the right to a formal review of an extra-territorial jurisdiction (development occurring within 2 miles of city limits) Slach-Vikel Subdivision. / Move to action.

There are no reported comments as the farmstead simple split was a simple and straight forward request.

Motion by Van Scoyoc, second by Bower waive the right to a formal review for the Slach-Vikel Subdivision.

City Staff Reports

None

Comments from the Chair and Commission

None

Adjourn

Motion by Bowers, second by Van Scoyoc to adjourn the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. Motion carried on a voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Submitted by:

Adam Kofoed

City Administrator