CITY OF ROCHESTER
400 SIXTH STREET
ROCHESTER, MI 48307

PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
May 5, 2025

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1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

A meeting of the City of Rochester Planning Commission (PC) was called to order on May 5, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Gassen.

PRESENT: David Gassen, Chairman
Christian Hauser, Vice Chairman
Nancy Salvia, Mayor
Dan Bachmann, Commissioner
Jessica Clauser, Commissioner
Richard Kendziuk, Commissioner
Laura Murphy, Commissioner

ABSENT: David Hardin, Commissioner
Matt Stone, Commissioner

quorum was present.

Also Present: Nik Banda, City Manager
Jeff Kragt, City Attorney
Vidya Krishnan, McKenna Planner (Zoom)
Jeremy Peckens, Planning and Zoning Administrator
Rose McKinney, Planning Clerk (Zoom)

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Gassen led the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Jeff Russell of 326 Albertson thanked the commission for setting up the office hours for the zoning map. Questions were asked about the next steps in the process. John Jackson of McKenna will address the steps Via phone call.

Jane Turner of 712 Parkdale spoke about the apartment complex at Walnut and First street. City Manager Nik Banda they had to go through many steps and will be having a preconstruction meeting next week to kick off the project construction could be in about sixty days.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Consideration of the Minutes of the Planning Commission Meeting of April 7, 2025.

MOTION by Hauser supported by Murphy to approve the minutes of April 7, 2025.

Ayes: Gassen, Hauser, Salvia, Bachmann, Clauser, Kendziuk, Murphy
Nays:
Absent: Hardin, Stone

MOTION Carried.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Notice of Public Hearing: 203 E. University – Request for Special Exception for outdoor dining and payment in lieu of parking requirements.

Vidya, McKenna Planner gave her an overview of this project. The space will be used to sell refreshments and sell artisan chocolates. The space will also be for private rentals for special events with outdoor dining. A wooden screen will be placed to make the trash receptables nonvisible. Lighting is already existing with the current DDA lighting. Boxwoods are noted on the plan and will be replaced with flowering shrubs. The large tree on the property will be replaced. It is recommended that the planning commission approve the special exception and site plan with the following stipulations.

1. Parking in lieu of two spaces.
2. Boxwoods to be replaced with flowering shrubs.
3. Release the city easement or terminate city easement to applicant to maintain.

The large tree that is on the property has needle cast disease and will die in the near future.

Grant Koche the petitioner was present and gave a brief overview of the plans with chocolate and event space. Small private functions, lectures. Flowering Hydrangeas will be placed in the landscaping. Outdoor tables will be shaded maybe sail shade type of structure. Shade structures are not on the plan and will need to come back for an amendment.

Chairman Gassen opened the public hearing at 7:29 p.m.

There was no public online or in person that wished to be heard.

Chairman Gassen closed the public hearing at 7:30 p.m.

Motion by Murphy supported by Salvia to approve the Special Exception with the three stipulations noted in McKenna letter dated April 25th.

Jeremy Peckens, Planning Administrator, gave an overview of the parking in lieu of for this space requesting two spaces.

Motion by Salvia, supported by Bachmann, to approve payment in lieu of parking for two spaces.

Ayes: Gassen, Hauser, Salvia, Bachmann, Clauser, Kendziuk, Murphy
Nays:
Absent: Hardin, Stone

MOTION Carried.

6.CONSIDERATIONS

A. Consideration of 406 S. Main – Request to set public hearing for Site Plan Approval, Façade change and payment in lieu of parking requirements.

Vidya McKenna Planner gave her overview of the proposed project. A preliminary review was done, and items need to be addressed before they come back to the planning commission. The petitioner is asking for eight spaces parking in lieu of. New brick, metal canopy and limestone windows are proposed. Illumination at the back of the building will be needed for safety. Wall signage and trash removal will need to be noted on the revised plans. It is recommended to add this request on the next available agenda for a public hearing.

Eric, the architect for the project, was present along with Tom Kalaj Owner. The landscaping will be replaced, and the rooftop unit will be screened. Lighting is addressed. The brick has been repainted and that is why they would like to replace it with a new brick front. The two apartments above will be replaced with offices for the cocktail lounge below. New windows will also be installed. Tom spoke about the cocktail lounge the lounge will be an English style manor with craft organic cocktails, like a modern classy old English lounge.

Brief discussion ensued discussing using anything historic to reuse in the project. There is no plan to keep the units above residential. If there is a way to bring in recycled materials and energy efficient items, it will be looked into.

Motion by Hauser supported by Bachmann to move this request to a public hearing with revised drawings for façade change and parking in lieu of at the next available meeting.

Ayes: Gassen, Hauser, Salvia, Bachmann, Clauser, Kendziuk, Murphy
Nays:
Absent: Hardin, Stone

MOTION Carried.

8.MISCELLANEOUS

There will be a meeting in early June with the parking committee, and they will be coming forth with parking information at a later date.

Brownstones are graded and cleaned up and digging will start when the other unit is sold. Alley will be repaved.

The 210 Diversion project will be coming back for a modification.

Brief discussion ensued on the proposed zoning ordinances/map. John Jackson of McKenna was here and met with residents on the proposed zoning changes. Next month in June we should have another update in John's report.

9.PUBLIC COMMENT

Jane Turner of 712 Parkdale spoke and stated it would be nice to have planning commission updates of ongoing projects. The City Manager stated there is a banner on the City's website in January and June.

10.ADJOURNMENT

Hearing there is no further business to discuss, the meeting was Adjourned at 8:22 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rose McKinney, Building and Planning Clerk