

March 17, 2009

Planning Commission Annual Report
to City Council—2008-2009

The Clawson City Planning Commission's Annual Report is intended to serve as a planning document that commissioners can use to outline their work plan for the fiscal year, and as a communication tool to express recent achievements and plans for future goals to the Clawson City Council.

City Council
City of Clawson
425 North Main Street
Clawson, MI 48017



March 3, 2009
Planning Commission Annual Report
to City Council—2008-2009

Honorable Mayor and City Council members,

Per the Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008) adopted by State legislature, the Planning Commission is required to present an annual report to City Council providing information on “operations, status of its planning activity, including recommendations regarding actions by the legislative body related to planning and development.” This requirement needs to be made part of the PC’s bylaws, and is one of the goals for the coming year. With the assistance of the City Planner and City Attorney, the information contained in this report is intended to comply with the necessary statutory requirements.

The year 2008, has been extremely productive for the Planning Commission. The change in the local, national and global economic climate has had a major impact on land development. Notwithstanding the downward change in the real estate and housing markets, **the Planning Commission has approved the following site plans for the creation of new and/or expansion of commercial/industrial development within the City:**

1st row, left

Site plan and special land use approval for ACE hardware outdoor storage area within Clawson Shopping Center

1st row, right

Site plan approval for Advanced Supply, 890 N. Rochester (reuse of Brewster Building Co. site)



Christina Gonzalez, Cory Smith, Dan Klepp (owner)



Russell Maloney (owner)

2nd row, left

Amended site plan approval for Crooks Plaza development, located at the NE corner 14 Mile and Crooks

2nd row, right

Site plan approval for AutoZone retail store to be located within Crooks Plaza at the NE corner of 14 Mile and Crooks



Not yet under construction (example only)

3rd row, left

Site plan approval for Da Nang restaurant, 1 S. Main Street (SE corner of Main and 14 Mile)

3rd row, right

Site plan approval for Doc Sweets Candy Co., 120 S. Rochester



David Sklena (owner), Kat Beauchamp, (supervisor)

4th row, left

Site plan approval for Due Venti Restaurant, 220 S. Main Street

4th row, right

Amended site plan approval for an expansion project proposed by Great Lakes Air Systems, 1238 Anderson Court



1st row, left

Site plan approval for MEDC approved, high-tech business: International Bancard, 1239 Anderson Court

1st row, right

Site plan approval for Modern Art Linens, 801 N. Rochester



Heather Hamama

2nd row, left

Ongoing discussions with Royal Kubo Restaurant, 27 E.14 Mile to conform with the approved site plan and improvements proposed by and agreed to by the applicant

2nd row, right

Site plan approval for retail center expansion, owned by Najib Bahura, 479 W.14 Mile



Many of the businesses noted above are landmark businesses that identify Clawson as a destination spot. From January 2008, the City Planner has been available at the City offices once a week, to facilitate development projects and promote interest for businesses wanting to locate within Clawson. Every one of the site plans noted above, had the applicants and their architects and/or representatives, meet with City Staff and planner to explain the site plan approval process, Land Development Regulations requirements and enable a smooth progression through the entire process to the extent feasible.

In addition to the approvals noted above, the Planning Commission has been extremely involved in the writing of new ordinances, amendments to existing ordinance language and other planning related tools that are key to orderly and vibrant growth within the City. **Following are the other issues worked on by the Planning Commission in 2008:**

- 1** Oversee rewrite of the sign ordinance in its entirety and recommending approval of the said ordinance to City Council.
- 2** Recommendation to City Council regarding approval of new standards for ZBA review of variance requests from Sign Ordinance.
- 3** Recommendation to City Council to adopt the Master Plan.
- 4** Oversee rewrite (including workshops) of the CMD-1/City Center District regulations and recommending approval of said ordinance to City Council.

In response to concerns from business owners in the community and the state of the economy, the Planning Commission simplified the procedure for handling approval of businesses within the downtown and increased flexibility in design standards to encourage re-occupancy of vacant spaces and creation of new businesses. Clawson has received recognition from Oakland County Economic Development Agency as a business-friendly community.

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In the coming year 2009, the Planning Commission has the following sets of goals that it would like to accomplish and items to work on:

- 1** Have a training workshop conducted by the City planner to provide critical information and insight into the role of the Planning Commission, for the benefit of Commission members who have joined this year.
- 2** Review ordinance language related to A-frame signs and drive-through voice boxes, and make appropriate changes and resend changes to Council for adoption.
- 3** Review and update Planning Commission rules and bylaws as required by State Law, and clarify membership and attendance requirements.
- 4** Adopt ordinance language to preserve larger lot sizes; regulate size of infill development to keep the character of the neighborhoods.
- 5** Adopt ordinance language to limit size of attached garages on single family dwelling. Consider limiting size based on the square footage of the vertical face of the principal dwelling.
- 6** Work on developing new language, requirements and standards for the "West Gate" and "Business Renewal" districts. This would be the implementation phase of the Master Land Use plan.
- 7** Initiate a City wide rezoning to convert all the parcels in the West Gate and Business Renewal area to a new 'zoning' designation. Will require extensive public meetings, forums and input from all affected property owners to ensure that all concerns are adequately addressed and that they understand the benefits of the new designations.
- 8** Work with City Planner and City Attorney to make changes to the LDR to conform to the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (MZEA) and Planning Enabling Act (PEA) of 2008. Address issues related to non-conformities, conditional rezoning, powers of ZBA, and powers of Planning Commission, etc.
- 9** Continue to work cohesively towards creating a business friendly climate in the community by being flexible, while not compromising on the quality of development.
- 10** Review the Master Plan at the end of the year to note any changes that may be required during the next overhaul of the Master Plan text.
- 11** Investigate SR2S (Safe Routes to School) program by collecting information on the program and consider working on the program details in the next year.
- 12** Once a response is received from Council approving this report or making suggestions of additional work, the Planning Commission will prepare a timeline of action items for the council to track progress during the 2009 year.

Per the PEA (Planning Enabling Act), this report may also include a Planning Commission budget for the year ahead. However, the budget is typically handled by the City Building and Planning Department, with the oversight of the City Council. Therefore, the Planning Commission would like to defer to the Administration to develop the appropriate budget that would be required to accomplish the goals set above, in the interest of the City.

The members of the commission look forward to the year ahead, and are hopeful that the efforts put into making Clawson a business friendly community with accessible facilities and manpower assistance will continue to spur growth within the City. The members of the commission also look forward to working with the City Council and other boards (ZBA, DDA etc.) towards developing a well planned community.

Sincerely,
The Clawson City
Planning Commission

Bob Blanchette (Chair), center front
Rocco Romano (Pro-Tem), 3rd from right
Tina Airriess, 3rd from left
Bill Tite, center back
Maureen Moore, 2nd from right
Richard Oudin, far left
Laurene Funk, far right
Tyler Dobson, 2nd from left



cc: City Manager	Rich Haberman
Director of Building and Planning	Jim Albus
City Clerk	Machele Kukuk
City Attorney	Jon Kingsepp
City Planner	Vidya Krishnan