

Planning Commission 2022 Annual Planning Report and 2023 Work Plan to Township Board

Charter Township of Royal Oak

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

As required per the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) PA 33 of 2008, as amended, the Planning Commission shall submit a report of its 2021 activities:

“A planning commission shall make an annual written report to the legislative body concerning its operations and the status of planning activities, including recommendations regarding actions by the legislative body related to planning and development.”

In addition to fulfilling this requirement, the Annual Report increases information-sharing between staff, boards, commissions, and the governing body and allows for the anticipation of upcoming priorities. The Commission’s Annual Report is a summary and status report of planning activities over the past year and is a communication tool to share recent achievements and plans for future community goals.

MEMBERSHIP

We thank the following Commission members for their time commitment and contributions:

- Jerry Saddler, Chairperson
- Donna Squalls, Township Supervisor (Ex-Officio)
- Wanda Allen, Township Trustee (Ex-Officio)
- Pat Appling
- Chloe Ramey
- Ottist Flournoy III
- Roslind Kennedy

MEETINGS

The Royal Oak Township Planning Commission met twice in 2022. This does not meet the requirements of the MPEA, which requires a minimum of four meetings annually. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, one of the meetings in 2022 was held virtually (via Zoom Video Conferencing) in accordance with the Governor’s Orders and the Open Meetings Act, PA 267 of 1976.

The public is welcome to attend all Planning Commission meetings and the “hearing of the public” is an agenda item at every meeting.

1. May 2022
2. Wednesday, December 14, 2022

2022 in Review

The following tables outline the various development reviews (site plan, special land use, etc.), variances and Zoning Ordinance and map amendments (rezonings) that were considered by the Township in 2022.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS

Date	Project Type	Location	Description	Status
July 21, 2022	Site Plan	NW corner of Wyoming & Northend Avenues. 25-32-276-058 and 25-32-276-066	Review of updated site plans from developer and architect.	Pending
December 5, 2022	Site Plan	10550 8 Mile Road	Recommendation to Township Supervisor and Township Manager to deny approval of the site plan.	Pending

Looking Ahead: 2023 Work Plan

In the coming year, the following are projects for the Planning Commission to consider:

ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE

That there are several impractical and contradictory standards throughout the Zoning Ordinance which an update would alleviate. This includes approving a short-term rental ordinance and inspection at the point-of-sale ordinance, as well as updates to industrial district and mixed-use district regulations. The Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) also has several recommendations for text amendments as part of their certification maintenance.

REDEVELOPMENT READY COMMUNITIES (RRC)

Redevelopment Ready Communities is a voluntary, no-cost certification program, provided through Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), designed to promote effective redevelopment strategies through a set of best practices. This program involves planning for new investment and reinvestment, identifying assets and opportunities, and focusing limited resources. Benefits of this program include using RRC Technical Assistance match funding to help fund like developing a downtown/corridor plan, developing a capital improvements plan, updating the zoning ordinance, and board and commission training.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Royal Oak Township is working diligently to determine the appropriate pricing for the sale of vacant lots. It has been determined that lot prices should differ based on the type of development (i.e., side lots, small-scale development, and large-scale developments). The Township is in the process of developing procedures for the disposition of these lots in order to get them back on the tax rolls. The Township has documented inquiries from residents and developers received by the planning team and are contacting interested parties. There are several actions that can be taken next year, including distributing a residential development application and creating pre-designed site plans for a variety of homes.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/ACTIVATION STRATEGY

The Township created an Activation Strategy that focuses on specific sites in the Township that are strong candidates for redevelopment. Plans for a Key Site Area (the former school property, the existing recreation center, and vacant park area) include an expansion of the recreation center, adaptive reuse of the former school building into multifamily residential units, gardens, open greenspace, and other multifamily residential developments. Goals include promoting residential infill and rehabilitation, establishing design guidelines, creating civic and community spaces, and engaging community stakeholders. There are several action steps in the implementation process, including conducting a zoning ordinance audit, updating the parks and recreation master plan, and applying for funding at the state and federal level.

PARKS AND RECREATION PLANNING

In 2022, the Township received a \$300,000 Park Improvement capital grant from Oakland County for improvements at Mack-Rowe Park. These funds can be used to create, expand, or improve features within the park. Projects may include features such as: walking and hiking trails, universally accessible playgrounds, outdoor exercise and fitness equipment, athletic fields and courts, water and winter recreation facilities, natural resource restoration and preservation, and family and group gathering spaces. In addition to the planning involved in the implementation of the grant from Oakland County, the Township should also consider updating its Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The current plan was adopted in 2012 and projected into 2016. An updated parks and recreation master plan would ensure that the Township is eligible for certain Michigan Department of Natural Resources grants.