



Village of Laurium Planning Commission Annual Report

Covering activity from 01/01/2023-01/01/2024

Introduction

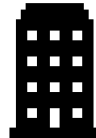
The [Michigan Planning Enabling Act](#) (MPEA) allows for the establishment of local Planning Commissions, master plans, and other associated activities. Laurium’s Planning Commission was established in the restated local ordinance 112, on March 15th, 2022, and consists of 7 members. The Planning Commission is responsible for:

- Developing the community’s master plan which provides a framework for orderly growth and redevelopment.
- Creating a zoning ordinance to translate master planning goals into land use regulations.
- Reviewing and approving development requests
- Drafting a capital improvement plan
- Studying special topics or conducting other special projects as requested by the governing body

This report contains a record of the Planning Commission’s activity over the past year. Highlights of the commission’s work include:



First Master Plan Passed
The commission passed the Village’s first Master Plan.



First Zoning Ordinance is Underway
The first Zoning Ordinance is in development. This will allow for clearer land development strategies.

Membership

Planning Commission members for this reporting period were:

Name	Member Since	Term Expires	Voting Member
John Sullivan, Village Council President	01/03/2022	N/A	Yes
Village Manager (Admin Officer)	1/16/23	N/A	Yes
Ian Raymond, Chairperson	03/16/2022		Yes
Kalen Carlson Chairperson*	03/03/2022	November 2024	Yes
Josh Harju, Member	12/28/2022	March 2025	No
Sam Stonelake, Member	5/5/2022	December 2022	Yes
Daniel Woirol, Secretary			Yes

*Kalen Carson resigned from the Planning Commission in October following the adoption of the Master plan, with Ian Raymond stepping in as the Chairperson.

Meetings

The MPEA requires that local Planning Commissions meet at least four times a year. The Laurium Planning Commission meets every second Monday at 6:00 pm at the Village Hall. They held 9 meetings in 2023. A summary of all meeting activity is below:

Meeting Date	Summary
January 30th	Regular Meeting-CEDAM fellow update, discussion of potential development grants, discussion of the Master Plan
March 13th	Regular Meeting- Laurium Businesses and resource gathering.
April 10th	Regular Meeting- Review of Master Plan draft, and website development.
July 13th	**
August 21st	**
September 12th	Regular Meeting-Zoning Ordinances
October 3rd	Regular Meeting- Public Hearing of the Master Plan
November 6th	Regular Meeting- discussion of zoning
December 1st	Special Meeting- Discussion of the Parks and Recreation Plan

** A few minutes and agendas are missing due to a computer hardware failure. To prevent any further losses, a file management plan was created and will ensure that there are multiple copies of each planning commission. Once passed, this plan will be available on the Laurium Village Website, under the Planning Commission tab.

For the full posting of Minutes and Agendas, please visit Laurium.net/planningcommission and click on the “Minutes and Agendas” tab.

A schedule of upcoming meetings can be found on the Laurium.net/planningcommission page, or on Laurium.net/events page, the Village Hall front door, or the Village Facebook Page.

Master Plan Status

The Planning Commission is responsible for regularly reviewing and updating the master plan to ensure it continues to be relevant to the community’s needs. [The community’s current master plan](#) was adopted on 10/17/23 The MPEA requires a formal review (and update or reaffirmation) occur at least every five years. Since it was so recently adopted, the master plan will be updated in 2028.

In addition to the MPEA-required five-year review, the community’s efforts to maintain alignment with the [Redevelopment Ready Communities](#) Best Practices, which is a program led by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to outline . One of the Best PracticesThis is a program which includes annual progress assessments to determine if the community is on track for meeting the plan’s goals and actions. The following is a table of actions planned for 2024 or currently underway.

2024 Master Plan Action Items Status Update				
Goal	Action Item	Lead	Target	Status
Housing	Enact the new zoning ordinance which codifies requirements for residential development; single family and multi-family.	Planning Commission Village Council	Expected:2023 New target: 2024	The zoning ordinance is still under construction.
Housing	2023 Public Act 237 of 2022 allows for the establishment of “Attainable Housing Districts” which provide owners exemption from property taxes for a period up to 12 years. Evaluate potential property in the Village for a potential district that could accommodate new housing.	Planning Commission Village Council	2023-2024	No Update
Housing	Provide information to property owners on appropriate restoration methods, coordinate promotion materials on the historic character and quality of the Village, and serves as a resources for the investment tax credits.	Village Council	2025	A guide to historic preservation credits (for commercial properties, state +federal) was developed, and is on the Village Website and in the Office.
Housing	Enact a rental inspection ordinance. Initial steps should include a registry program requirement to ascertain the number of rental properties. Next step would include an annual or bi-annual inspection and certification program to	Village Council Village County	N/A	Ordinance # requires the registration of all rental properties in Laurium. An inspection and certification

	ensure minimum safety and maintenance compliance.			program is in development.
Housing	Consider the use of accessory dwelling units (ADU's) to provide supplemental housing options for seasonal workers, family members, or new residents	Planning Commission	Target: 2023 Expected: 2024	The zoning ordinance is still under construction.
Downtown	Conduct an occupancy and vacancy inventory to determine the status of each of the buildings on Hecla Street between 3rd and Lake Linden. This information will be beneficial to determine what buildings are potentially available for sale and redevelopment.	Planning Commission	2023-2024	In development by Village CEDAM Fellow.
Downtown	Evaluate the opportunity to create either an informal or formal organization that brings property and business owners together to assist with downtown revitalization.	Planning Commission	2023-2024	Report in development by Village CEDAM Fellow
Economic Development	Become an Redevelopment Ready Communities® certified Essentials Status	Planning Commission	N/A	The Village has completed 3 best practices this year towards RRC certification.
Economic Development	Convene a meeting with regional economic development partners and MTU to discuss opportunities for economic development activities within the Village.	Planning Commission	March 12 2023	A business meeting was held on March 12 th , 2023 with the Planning Commission.
Economic Development	Explore the utilization of MCL 123,881; the Publicity Tax, to utilize funds for economic development. and promotion	Planning Commission, Village Council	2023-2024	No update
Economic Development	Conduct a Child Care Survey in conjunction with the The Keweenaw Economic Development Alliance (KEDA).	Planning Commission, KEDA	2024	No update
Economic Development	Inventory existing child care facilities including license type, number of children, and age of children.	Planning Commission	2023-2024	No update

Economic Development	Allow Family Child Care as a permitted use in all residential zoning districts, and allow Group Child Care as a Special Land Use with the conditions based on state licensing regulations.	Planning Commission	2024	The zoning ordinance is still under construction.
Public Administration	Prepare a Capital Improvements Program (CIP)	Planning Commission, Village Council	2024/2025	No update
Public Administration	Prepare a 5-Year MDNR Parks and Recreation Master Plan	Planning Commission	2024	Public input complete—In drafting stages.
Public Administration	Solicit within the community a volunteer who could assist with state and federal grant writing	Village Council	2024-2025	No update. Funding is a major concern.
Public Administration	Discuss with the Village of Calumet shared services for a zoning and blight enforcement professional, waste collection and public safety.	Village Council	2024-2025	A few informal conversations have been held, but

Laurium Highlights

Sidewalk Repair Program

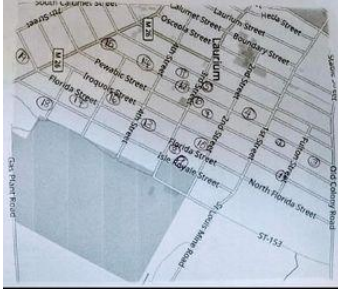


In the Master Plan Survey, the fourth largest challenge faced by the Village was reported to be street and sidewalk repairs. Starting in June of 2023, the Village began the sidewalk repair program. This allowed residents to have their sidewalks repaired for the cost of materials, with the rest covered by the Village. Nearly an entire block was redone. The program is anticipated to continue next year.

Village Building Repair

One of the largest priorities identified in the Master Plan survey was the need for maintenance and repair of public facilities. The Village of Laurium was awarded more than \$750,000 in funding from the treasury to provide much-needed maintenance repairs for the Village Hall, Public Works garage, Fire department hall, and police department hall.





Blight Community Conversation

The Master Plan survey found that the biggest challenge faced by the village was blight. To get additional insights, as well as inform the community about potential solutions, the Village of Laurium held a Blight Community Conversation on October 13th, 2023. This provided additional insights that have been used in the ongoing development of a blight Ordinance and action plan.

Zoning Ordinance Development. Amendments & Rezoning, Site Plan Reviews and Variances.

Zoning is the legal mechanism which turns planning goals into reality via development regulations. The current Zoning Ordinance is under construction. It is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2024. After the Zoning Ordinance is passed, the Zoning Board of Appeals will also be created.

Because of the lack of the Zoning Ordinance, there were no amendments, rezones, site plan reviews, or variances.

Training Update

Redevelopment Ready Communities Best Practice 4.6 supports the creation of training plans for community officials. Training is essential to providing the community with the tools needed to achieve local goals. The Planning Commission’s training plan calls for each member to complete at least 2 hours of training annually from a list of provided resources, or other proposed training. Training may be online or in person. If no external funding is identified, the Village will provide \$700 of training costs each year for the Planning Commission (in total, not per member). Priority for this year was the Michigan Economic Development Agency redevelopment ready summits hosted by the Keweenaw Economic Development Agency.

Below is a summary of training activity for members:

Member	Hours	Summary of Training
John Sullivan, Village Council President	4	Attended sessions 2&3 KEDA RRC Summit sessions. Attended annual
Village Manager (Admin Officer)	4	Attended sessions 2&3 KEDA RRC Summit sessions.
Ian Raymond, Chairperson	4	Attended sessions 1&3 KEDA RRC Summit sessions.
Kalen Carlson Chairperson*	4	Attended sessions 2&3 KEDA RRC Summit sessions.
Josh Harju, Member		N/A
Sam Stonelake, member	6	Attended all KEDA RRC Summit sessions.
Daniel Woirol, Secretary		N/A

In Closing & Looking Forward

The Planning Commission had an exciting first full year.

Looking forward to 2023, the Planning Commission aims to accomplish the following:

- Completing Laurium's first Zoning Ordinance
- Setting Up Laurium's Zoning Board of Appeals
- Completing Redevelopment Ready Community Goals
- Development of a Public Participation Plan