

Planning Commission

Regular Meeting

April 20, 2022

6:30PM

Big Rapids City Hall
226 N Michigan Ave

Hybrid Meeting is also accessible via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88286179323?pwd=cko0aDVTZTNJRXI4NjVHSjhmWFQvdz09>

Meeting ID: 882 8617 9323

Passcode: 310955

Phone Login: Dial (312) 626-6799

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
4. Approval of Minutes
 - a. March 16, 2022
5. Public Comment Unrelated to Items on the Agenda
6. Public Hearing
 - a. Zoning Ordinance Map Amendment Application to Rezone 126 S Dekrafft Avenue from R-1 Residential to I Industrial
 - b. Request to Discontinue Two Alleys that Enter Maple Street Adjacent to Big Rapids Products
7. General Business
8. Unscheduled Business
9. Adjourn

CITY OF BIG RAPIDS
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
March 16, 2022
Unapproved

Chair Jane called the March 16, 2022 regular meeting of the Planning Commission, to order at 6:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENT Megan Eppley, Jacob Buse, Chris Jane, and Kate McLeod

EXCUSED Rory Ruddick and Sarah Montgomery

ABSENT Kasey Thompson

ALSO PRESENT Paula Priebe, Community Development Director
Emily Szymanski, Planning & Zoning Technician

There were 13 audience members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Jacob Buse, seconded by Megan Eppley, to approve the minutes of the February 16, 2022 meeting of the Planning Commission as presented, with no changes. Motion was passed with all in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT NOT RELATED TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

None heard

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Zoning Ordinance Amendment to Section 11.1:29(2)(e) to Remove the Prohibition on Curbside Sales and Dispensing for Commercial-type Marihuana Establishments

The Public Hearing was opened at 6:37 PM.

Staff Report

Priebe summarized the Staff Report stating that the majority of the proposed changes are to the City Code of Ordinances in Title 11 Chapter 116, where the authorizing and regulating Ordinances for marihuana businesses are found. One proposed change that is regulated in both

the City Code of Ordinances and the Zoning Ordinance is regarding the regulation of curbside sales and dispensing. This topic has been discussed at both the January 17, 2022 and February 16, 2022 Planning Commission meetings and is being brought back to the Planning Commission for a Public Hearing tonight. During previous meetings, staff provided three different options for changes to this Ordinance and presented feedback from local marihuana businesses and how other communities regulate curbside sales.

Those Who Spoke in Favor of the Request: None heard

Those Who Spoke in Opposition of the Request: None heard

Telephonic or Written Correspondence Received by Staff: None received

Chair Jane closed the Public Hearing at 6:41 and the Commission entered into Fact Finding.

- Jane asked if City staff already has the framework in place that would allow curbside designations for the marihuana businesses. Priebe stated that the curbside designation will be built into the existing permit process. Marihuana businesses in the City of Big Rapids that offer curbside will be required to identify specific parking spaces designated for curbside sales on a site plan and also have the proper security and lighting.
- Eppley asked if the on-street parking spaces in front of the downtown marihuana businesses would become curbside-only parking spaces. Priebe stated that because downtown marihuana businesses do not have their own parking lot, customers could use the on-street parking for curbside, however, on-street parking can be used by the general public as well.

Motion

Motion was made by Megan Eppley seconded by Jacob Buse to recommend that the Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment to Section 11.1:29(2)(e) to remove the prohibition on curbside sales and dispensing for commercial-type marihuana facilities be adopted as presented, as the amendment meets all of the Standards for Review found in Section 14.2:4 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Motion passed with all in favor.

Special Land Use Permit Application for a Marihuana Grower and Processor Facility at 1100 Maple Street

The Public Hearing was opened at 6:47 PM.

Staff Report

Priebe introduced the Staff Report, stating that the Applicant, Michigan Pipe Dreams LLC, is applying for a Special Land Use Permit for a Marihuana Grower and Processor Facility in order

to use the existing industrial building at 1100 Maple Street as a marihuana grower and processor facility. Due to the majority of changes happening inside of the building, and minimal changes occurring to the exterior, a formal site plan review was not required of the Applicant.

Christian Franke, CFO of Michigan Pipe Dreams LLC, stated that he has addressed the Planning Commission before for a Special Land Use for a Marihuana Grower and Processor Facility at 125 Howard Street. To expand their operations, Mr. Franke has purchased 1100 Maple Street with the intent of using the building for a small genetic grow and processing facility. Mr. Franke stated that he has been working with the neighboring business, Spectrum, to ensure that odor-mitigation is up to their standards. Having done so, Spectrum has signed another 5-year lease to stay at their current location.

Those Who Spoke in Favor of the Request: None heard

Those Who Spoke in Opposition of the Request:

Phil Neitzel of 115 DeKrafft Avenue stated that he has concerns regarding the number of children that live within a block of the current processing plant. With the proposed expansion of this grow and processing plant and with the daycare located down the street, the health and safety of the children should be taken into consideration. Mr. Neitzel stated that it seems as though Big Rapids is turning into a “Marihuana Mile” with all of the marihuana businesses open right now and the others on the way. He feels that any money the City receives from the marihuana revenues should go back into the community in ways that would benefit City residents such as park improvements, or building the farmer’s market pavilion.

Telephonic or Written Correspondence Received by Staff: None received

In response to the opposition voiced from a community member, Christian Franke, CFO of Michigan Pipe Dreams LLC, addressed some of the concerns:

- For concerns with safety and children being able to access the building, Mr. Franke stated that all marihuana facilities are required to follow State law and in doing so, have some of the best security compared to other types of businesses. The building will also be surrounded by a fence with several evergreen trees that will not only add additional safety measures, but also assist in beautification of the neighborhood.
- For concerns with smell, Mr. Franke stated that their business will use a type of o-zone machine system which will filter through any odor and microbials. In addition to the system, they will also have specific types of filtered exhaust that acts as a double-filtered system.

Chair Jane closed the Public Hearing at 7:03 PM and the Planning Commission entered into Fact Finding.

- Buse asked the Applicant to discuss the tentative timeline for this project. Mr. Franke stated that the project will take about 60 days to fund and about 60 days to improve the building and add the necessary exhaust system. After the 120 days and the inspection from both the State and City, the business should be up and running 90 days after that.

Motion

Motion was made by Megan Eppley seconded by Kate McLeod to move that the Special Land Use Permit Application for a marihuana grower and processor facility at Parcel # 17-11-454-001, street address 1100 Maple Street, be recommended to the City Commission for approval, because it meets the Standards set in Section 10.3:8 and Section 11.1.29(3) of the Zoning Ordinance.

Motion passed with all in favor.

Zoning Ordinance Map Amendment Application to Rezone 510 S Third Avenue from R-3 Residential to C-3 Commercial

The Public Hearing was opened at 7:10 PM.

Staff Report

Priebe summarized the Staff Report, stating that the Applicant recently purchased the property at 520 S Third Avenue, zoned C-3 Commercial, and is interested in purchasing the vacant lot at 510 S Third Avenue, currently zoned R-3 Residential. The requested Map Amendment is to amend the zoning of 510 S Third Avenue from R-3 Residential to C-3 Commercial to compliment the zoning of 520 S Third Avenue.

Shoran Williams, General Council representing Fluresh LLC, stated that the intent of the Applicant for 510 S Third Ave is to rezone the vacant lot as C-3 Commercial in order to construct a parking lot that would compliment the existing Commercial business at 520 S Third Avenue. The Applicants have no intent of building toward the Muskegon River, however, would like to mitigate any traffic issues on Third Avenue.

Those Who Spoke in Favor of the Request: None heard

Those Who Spoke in Opposition of the Request: None heard

Telephonic or Written Correspondence Received by Staff: None received

Chair Jane closed the Public Hearing at 7:17 PM and the Planning Commission entered into Fact Finding.

- Buse asked if the parking lot were to be constructed, would there be the existing one road access point or two? The Applicant stated that there would be two, so they would add

another curb cut. Priebe stated that a new parking lot does require a Site Plan Review so any development would come back to the Planning Commission for approval.

Motion

Motion was made by Jacob Buse seconded by Megan Eppley to move that the Rezoning Application for 510 S Third Avenue (Parcel # 17-14-204-007) from R-3 Residential to C-3 Commercial be recommended to the City Commission for approval, because it meets the Standards set in Section 14.2:4 of the Zoning Ordinance.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Training: Planning for Equity Policy Guide

Introduction

Szymanski stated that as part of the Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) program, staff will be providing Commissioners with more small-scale training opportunities in addition to the larger workshops and conferences. The resource attached was written by the American Planning Association (APA) and provides an excellent overview of the different types of equity in planning. Since Planning Commissioners have been working diligently on the Zoning Ordinance amendments to allow different types of housing, this resource identifies the need for housing diversity and provides steps and policies to ensure housing in our communities is equitable, among other topics.

UNSCHEDULED BUSINESS

None

There being no further business, Chair Jane adjourned the meeting at 7:28 PM with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Szymanski

Planning & Zoning Technician and Planning Commission Secretary

STAFF REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Paula Priebe, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: Zoning Ordinance Map Amendment Application to Rezone 126 S Dekrafft Ave
from R-1 Residential to I Industrial
DATE: April 20, 2022

Introduction

The property at 126 S Dekrafft Avenue, Parcel # 17-11-454-002, is currently zoned R-1 Residential. This vacant parcel is located on S Dekrafft Avenue, just south of Maple Street. The properties to the west, north, and northeast are Industrial, while the properties to the east and south are Residential.

The property is approximately 100 feet of frontage along S Dekrafft Avenue and 126.5 feet deep, totaling approximately 0.35 acres in size. This property is currently vacant with no known improvements on the site.

The Applicant who applied for this rezoning is Ms. Kimberly Yob on behalf of the company Michigan Pipe Dreams, LLC who own the property at 126 S Dekrafft Ave, as well as the three other parcels on the block.

Rezoning

The issue on the table is to consider rezoning this site from R-1 Residential to I Industrial. A rezoning, also called a Map Amendment, is a request to change the zoning of a property from one type to another type to permit a different array of uses on the site.

The R-1 Residential District is one of three residential districts in the City of Big Rapids Zoning Ordinance. This is the lowest density residential district, and it is intended for primarily single-family dwellings, as well as some public uses such as churches, schools, museums, and utility buildings.

The I Industrial District is intended to provide areas for industrial development for trades and light industries. This district permits primarily manufacturing and warehouse uses, as well as offices and other accessory uses related to a principal industrial use. Marihuana growers and processors are permitted in the I District as a Special Land Use.

The process of rezoning a property is circumscribed by the Zoning Ordinance in section 14.2. All Rezoning Applications require a Public Hearing. Notice was posted in the Big Rapids Pioneer on April 6, 2022, notice was sent to all property owners within 300 feet of 126 S Dekrafft Avenue, and notice was placed on a sign at the property. Any feedback received by Staff will be shared with the Planning Commission during the meeting.

Standards for Zoning Amendment Review

Section 14.2:4 of the Zoning Ordinance clearly lays out a series of standards for Zoning Amendment Review, stating as follows:

The Planning Commission and City Commission shall consider the request for an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance in accordance with the following standards:

- (1) The use requested shall be consistent with and promote the intent and purpose of this Ordinance.
- (2) The proposed use will ensure that the land use or activity authorized shall be compatible with adjacent land uses, the natural environment, and the capabilities of public services affected by the proposed land use.
- (3) The land use sought is consistent with the public health, safety, and welfare of the City of Big Rapids.
- (4) The proposed use is consistent with the City Master Plan or a determination that the plan is not applicable due to a mistake in the plan, changes in relevant conditions, or changes in relevant plan policies.

Planning Commissioners are encouraged to review the Application against the Standards in Section 14.2:4 to decide if they find it meets or fails to meet them. The attached maps and pictures are intended to provide context to assist the Commissioners in evaluating the request according to these standards. See the Applicant's attached written statement addressing the standards in his own words.

Staff Recommendation

Staff supports recommending adoption of the Zoning Ordinance Map Amendment to rezone the property at 126 S Dekrafft Avenue (Parcel # 17-11-454-002) from R-1 Residential to I Industrial as it meets the Standards set in Section 14.2:4 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Action

Three options lay before the Planning Commission regarding Rezoning Applications: Approval, Denial, or Table. Explanations and sample motions are included below.

Approval

An approval motion is appropriate when the Application meets the Standards of the Zoning Ordinance and sends the Application to the next step in the process where City Commission has final say in approving or denying the request.

“I move that the Rezoning Application for 126 S Dekrafft Avenue (Parcel # 17-14-454-002) from R-1 Residential to I Industrial be recommended to the City Commission for approval, because it meets the Standards set in Section 14.2:4 of the Zoning Ordinance. *[If any conditions on approval, list them here.]*”

Denial

A denial motion is appropriate when the Application fails to meet the Standards of the Zoning Ordinance and ends the application process.

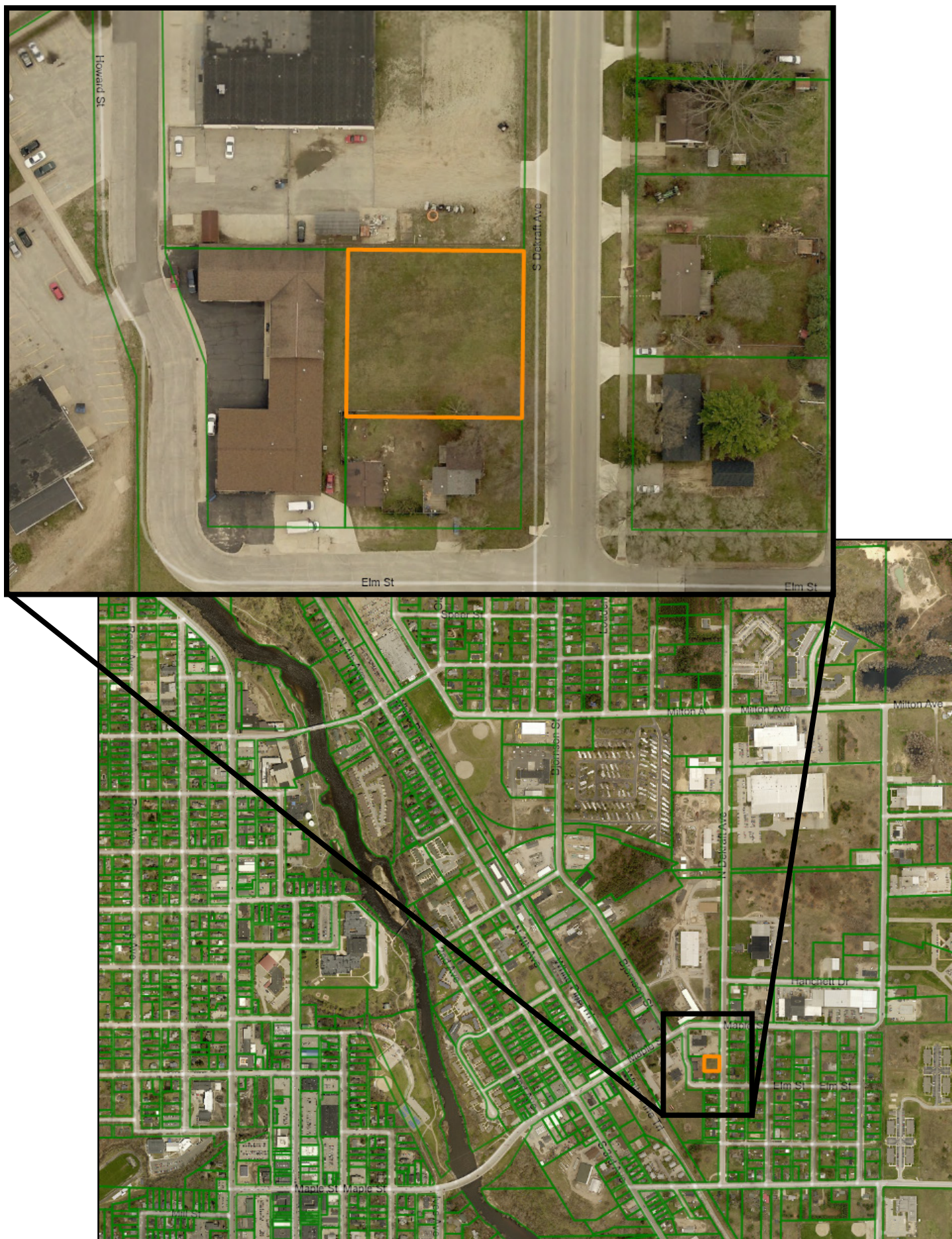
“I move that the Rezoning Application for 126 S Dekrafft Avenue (Parcel # 17-14-454-002) from R-1 Residential to I Industrial be recommended to the City Commission for denial, because it does not meet Standard 14.2:4 (X) of the Zoning Ordinance. *[Fill in the X with which number Standard the application does not meet.]*”

Table

A Table motion is appropriate when more information is needed before reaching a decision regarding the Application and pauses the process until a later date.

“I move to table a decision on the Rezoning Application for 126 S Dekrafft Avenue (Parcel # 17-14-454-002) from R-1 Residential to I Industrial until the May 18, 2022 meeting of the Planning Commission, because *[list your reason for tabling the decision here]*. ”

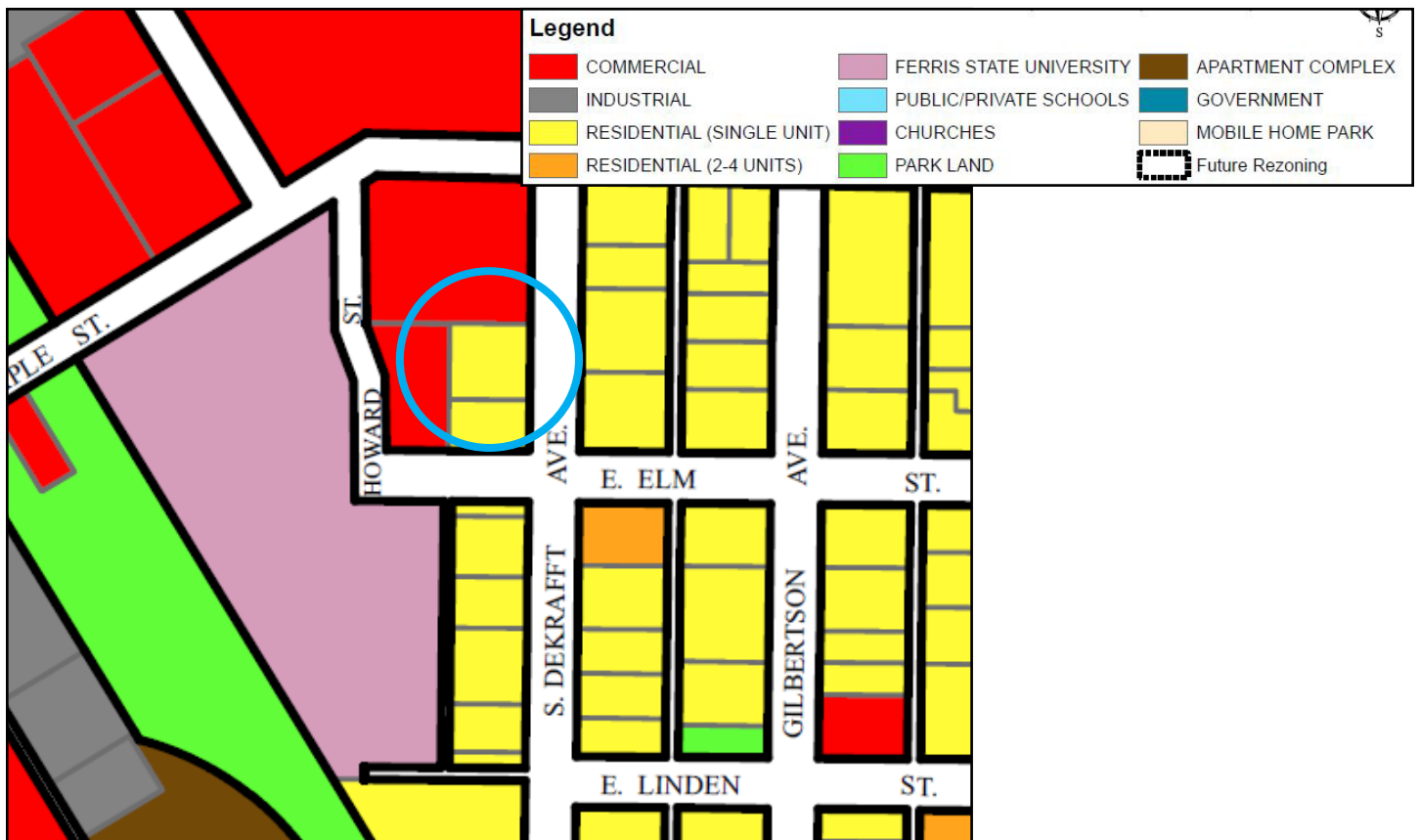
Location Maps



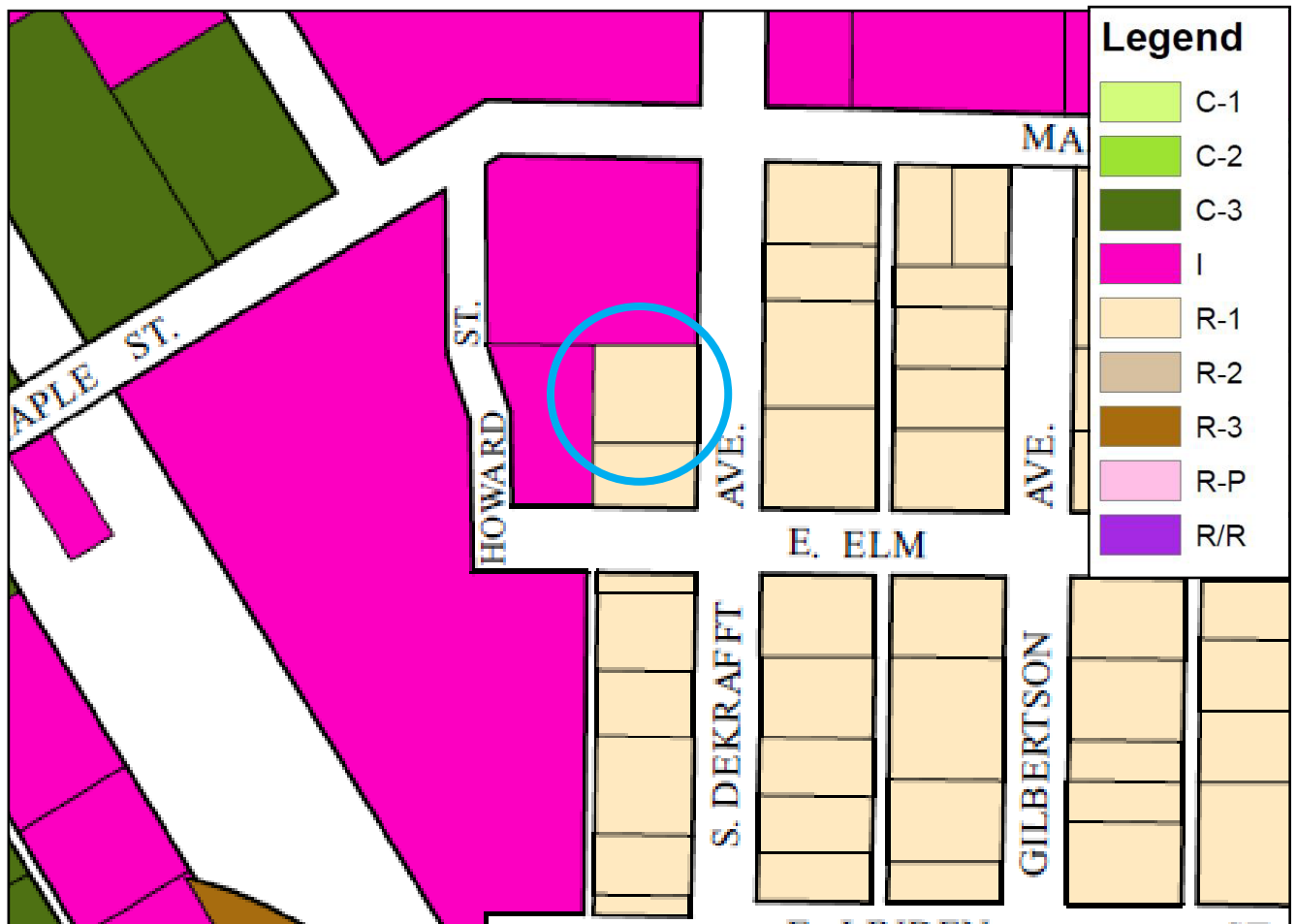
Aerial Imagery



Excerpt from Future Land Use Map



Excerpt from Zoning Map







City of Big Rapids

Department of Community Development Application to the Planning Commission for Zoning Request

Application Date: April 04, 2022

Applicant Information:

Name:	Michigan Pipe Dream, LLC		
Address:	125 Howard ST Big Rapids, MI 49307		
Phone Number:	616-540-3048	Property Zoning:	Industrial
Request Property Address:	126 S Dekrafft		
Explanation of Request:	Changing the zoning from Residential to Industrial		

Please check one of the following:

- ☐ Special Land Use Permit, Please include the following information
1. A legal description of the property.
 2. Twelve (12) copies of a site plan meeting the requirements of Section 9.4 of the Big Rapids Zoning Ordinance as amended.
 3. A written description of the use.
 4. A written statement addressing use standards set forth in Section 10.3:8.
 5. \$200.00 Application Fee
- ☐ Zoning Amendment Review, Please include the following information:
- ☒ Zoning Map Amendment (Rezoning)
1. A legal description of the property.
 2. A written description of reasons for rezoning and proposed new zoning classification.
 3. A written statement addressing the requirements set forth in Section 14.2:4.
 4. A location map.
 5. \$200.00 Application Fee
- ☐ Text Amendment
1. A written description of proposed changes and reasons why.
 2. Proposed new text.
 3. A written statement addressing the requirements set forth in Section 14.2:2.
 4. \$200.00 Application Fee
- Email: kim@pagline.com

eSigned via SeamlessDocs.com
Kimberly Yoo
Key: 10e77fd834513a64a4a1826a17f0788b

Signature of applicant or property owner

04/04/2022

(Date)

City of Big Rapids Zoning Ordinance Section 14.2:4
Standards for Zoning Amendment Review

The Planning Commission and City Commission shall consider the request for an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance in accordance with the following standards:

- 1) The use requested shall be consistent with and promote the intent and purpose of this Ordinance.

We believe that changing this property to Industrial zoning would be consistent with the properties it is connected to.

- 2) The proposed use will ensure that the land use or activity authorized shall be compatible with adjacent land uses, the natural environment, and the capabilities of public services affected by the proposed land use.

We own 125 Howard St, 1100 Maple St. which are adjacent properties to 126 S Dekrafft and they are industrial zoned. The purpose of rezoning this parcel is so that in the future we would have the ability to expand our business if and when necessary. This property that we own would never be developed for residential use. Residential use would not make sense on this property.

- 3) The land use sought is consistent with the public health, safety, and welfare of the City of Big Rapids.

This would not change the public health, safety or welfare of the City since the two adjacent properties are industrial zoned.

- 4) The proposed use is consistent with the City Master Plan or a determination that the plan is not applicable due to a mistake in the plan, changes in relevant conditions, or changes in relevant plan policies.

We would believe that this change would be consistent with the City's master plan.

Parcel # 54-17-11-454-003

The purpose of this request is to change this property from Residential to industrial zoning so that it will give us the opportunity in the future to expand our business if needed.

STAFF REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Paula Priebe, Neighborhood Services Director
SUBJECT: Alley Vacations –Two Alleys onto Maple St near Big Rapids Products
DATE: April 20, 2022

Introduction

The City Commission has received a request to discontinue two alleys that enter Maple Street adjacent to Big Rapids Products. See the attachments which include a Location Map and Resolution No. 22-26 from the City Commission. I was not able to acquire a statement from Big Rapids Products before finalizing this report.

Vacating Procedure

The City's procedure for vacating, discontinuing, or abolishing streets or public grounds is found in the City Code of Ordinances Chapter 36. First, the request is heard by the City Commission. If approved by at least three members, it is referred to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission holds a public hearing on the proposal and makes a recommendation back to the City Commission. The City Commission hears the proposal a second time and can approve the proposal by ordinance with at least four votes in favor of the vacation.

The request from Big Rapids Products for the City to vacate two alleys which enter Maple Street near Big Rapids Products facilities was received by the Mayor in late March 2022. The City Commission passed a resolution directing the City Planning Commission to review and consider a request to discontinue two alleys that enter Maple Street adjacent to Big Rapids Products at their regular meeting on April 4, 2022, and Resolution No. 22-26 is attached for review.

Per the City Code, notice of the Public Hearing was published in the Big Rapids Pioneer on three separate occasions, once per week for the three weeks prior to the public hearing. Calls and written statements received by staff will be presented during the Public Hearing. One letter from a member of the public was received and is included at the end of this report.

Note: vacating a street or alley does not mean the land automatically becomes issue of the adjacent property owner. The property owner must go to Circuit Court for that process.

Staff Reviews of the Proposal

Several departments in the City were consulted regarding the proposal, and their feedback is detailed below:

Public Works

The two alleys were reviewed. "There are no utilities for the City under the alleys. We would recommend a Miss Dig for other utilities. As for snow removal, we would request a ROW on private property in the amount of 60 feet to allow for proper maintenance. As we move towards eliminating gravel streets, the same is our plan for alleys over time. If paved, the cost would be approximately \$30,000 per alley, but can be accomplished with gravel at approximately \$10,000

per alley. There are ADA pads and alley approaches located on Maple that would need to be removed and replaced with continuous sidewalks and curbs, which is approximately \$5,000 per alley.” Statement from Heather Bowman, Public Works Director

Public Safety

“My first thought when the resolution passed was about the project’s need. I think, BR Products is the requestor and the original issue is that the traffic coming from the alleys is creating a dangerous situation for the trucks and traffic. I am not sure that I fully see the dangerous events from their point of view. I realize that there is a significant presence of traffic on Maple and the surrounding streets due to the factory but this can be attributed to the overall increase in traffic and not a contributing factor to the issue of the alleys. The more I have looked at the area, the more I am seeing that the alleys have limited use overall and that more issues could be present from the adjacent Maple St. off-street parking and the parking lot on the corner of Maple St / N Bronson.

“So, I reviewed the traffic crash data for the last 12 months. This does not provide any more evidence that the alleys are a traffic hazard. In the last 12 months, there was one crash and the crash was located at Maple St and N Dekrafft Ave. However, this also does not provide data that the off-street parking is an issue either. It appears that this area, in terms of traffic crashes, is less dangerous than other intersections. I also looked for N. Bronson Ave accidents and there have been zero on that road as well.

“The other concern would be the overall cost burden. If the requestor is not willing to fund the project then it falls solely on the City. I am not in support of spending City money on this issue that I cannot fully quantify in terms of need and data. However, I am not a traffic engineer and if the project is to move forward I would recommend an engineer view the area and provide the needed data so the Planning Commission can make a proper decision.

“As an alternative, I came from another police jurisdiction with significant traffic issues from major highways and people “cutting” through neighborhood roads. This led to the town implementing signage to control the flow of traffic. The signs dictated specific times that people were not able to turn off the side streets to the main road and times when people were not able to turn off the main road to the side streets. The prohibited times covered the rush hour timeframes (morning, lunch, and afternoon rush times). The same could be done with the alleys. Signage could outline what days and/or times a vehicle can turn off or onto the alleys. An example of the signage is attached to this email. If my explanation does not make sense I can also try to show you the roads on a map of the town. A counterpoint to this is that it creates an enforcement issue. The PD would be involved in enforcing these signs but this should not be considered a negative as we enforce signage all over the City as a part of our job. However, this enforcement would not be needed if the alleys were closed off.

“Also, in research I found this link, https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/congestion_report/chapter2.htm. It is deep analysis from the US Dept. of Transportation and not too old, March 2020. I skimmed it but wanted to provide it to you as well.” Statement from Sergeant Ryan Myers

Vacation Considerations

Streets and alleys were created for the benefit of the public and vacating them is likely to affect a segment of the public. The following questions can help guide the consideration process when considering a vacation:

1. Is the land proposed for vacation currently in use?

Land which is presently in use for important functions such as utility lines, streets, walkways, etc., should not be approved for vacation.

2. Is the land proposed for vacation involved in any future plans?

If the land in question is not currently in use but future uses are anticipated, vacation should not be granted.

3. Will the utilization of the abutting property be improved with the addition of the vacated land?

If the addition of the vacated land would enable to property owner to make better or increased use of the property, vacation should be considered favorable.

4. Would the granting of the desired vacation have an adverse effect on the surrounding property owners?

Potential problems for neighboring land resulting from a vacation are grounds for its denial.

5. What type of use is planned for the vacated parcel?

Be certain that any proposed construction on the vacated land adheres to the City's adopted Building Code and meets the requirements in the Zoning Ordinance.

Recommendation

Upon review of the proposal and in recognition of the feedback by the departments, staff encourages the Planning Commission to recommend **denial** of the request to discontinue use of two alleys that enter Maple Street adjacent to Big Rapids Products.

Action

Two options lay before the Planning Commission regarding a request to vacate streets and alleys: Recommendation of Approval or Recommendation of Denial.

Aerial Imagery





RESOLUTION NO. 22-26

Commissioner Andrews moved, seconded by Commissioner Eppley, the adoption of the following:

RESOLUTION DIRECTING CITY PLANNING COMMISSION TO REVIEW AND CONSIDER A REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE TWO ALLEYS THAT ENTER MAPLE STREET ADJACENT TO BIG RAPIDS PRODUCTS

WHEREAS, the City Commission has received a request to discontinue two alleys that enter Maple Street adjacent to Big Rapids Products, and

WHEREAS, the City Commission seeks public input regarding this matter, and

WHEREAS, the City Commission seeks a recommendation from the Planning Commission regarding how granting this request may or may not comply with Section 560.27 of the Michigan Land Division Act (pertaining to improving the health, welfare, comfort, and safety of citizens) and Chapter 36 of the City Code.

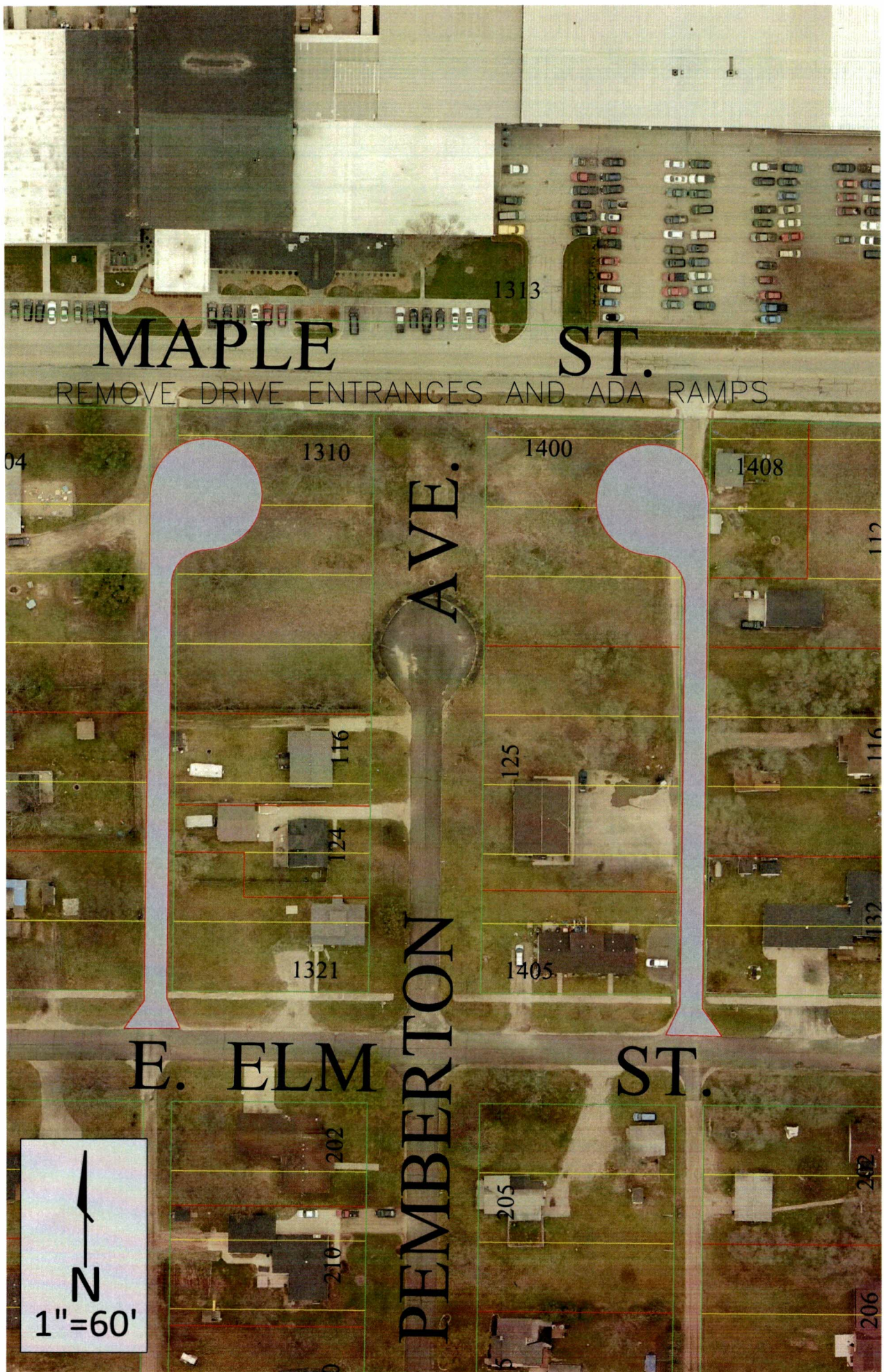
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Commission hereby refers said request to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation.

Yeas: Andrews, Cochran, Eppley, Guenther, Simmon

Nays: None

The Mayor declared the resolution adopted.

Date: March 21, 2022



MAPLE ST.

REMOVE DRIVE ENTRANCES AND ADA RAMPS

1310

1400

1408

PEMBERTON AVE.

116

125

124

1321

1405

E. ELM

ST.



1"=60'

March 28, 2022

City of Big Rapids
ATTN: Mark Gifford, City Manager
226 N. Michigan Ave
Big Rapids, MI 49307

REFERENCE: Use of alleys at Gilbertson Avenue and Pemberton Avenue

City Staff, Mayor and City Commissioners, and Planning Commission Members

An industrial park next to a neighborhood without a buffer zone was a zoning error and continues to have a negative impact on the small neighborhood on the south side of Maple Street across from the industrial park to the north. See Zoning Map from City's Website attached.

In an attempt to lessen the effects of traffic to and from the industrial park and the lack of a buffer zone, the City,

1. installed cul-de-sacs at the end of Gilbertson Avenue and Pemberton Avenue with sidewalks connecting the cul-de-sacs to the sidewalks on Maple Street,
2. installed extensive landscaped screens at each cul-de-sac (no longer maintained by the City),
3. implemented a truck route diverting truck traffic to Baldwin Street, turning onto Catherine Street, curving onto Milton Avenue, to the industrial park.
4. These roads were constructed in a manner, different than a typical city street, to bear the load of heavy truck traffic; the turn radius of the corners along this route were constructed for trucks with trailers.

This information is documented in the City's records at the onset of the development of the industrial park.

State trunklines in the City, which are truck routes, are US131 (State Street) and M20 (including Perry Avenue, Maple Street, S. Third Avenue). At the point where Maple Street crosses S. Third Avenue, Maple Street is no longer a truck route.

Most truck drivers entering the industrial park are doing so via Maple Street. The fact is, at the point where Maple Street meets Bjornson Street, truck drivers are directed to turn onto Bjornson Street, through a commercial area, and onto Milton Avenue (see attached photos). Note: the signs in the attached photos are the only remaining truck route signs in the City.

So, on the surface, the solution to the problem of the alley traffic from the neighborhood onto Maple Street is simple,

- a) entry points to the City must include signage directing truck drivers to the industrial park truck route,
- b) directional signage must be placed in a manner that provides truck drivers ample time to maneuver approaching turns,
- c) industries need to educate the truck drivers on the appropriate route,
- d) proper warning and enforcement to help resolve the issues truck drivers may be encountering.

There should also be signage for the M20 truck route that turns right onto S. Third Avenue continuing out of the City and M20 truck route coming into the City on East M20.

Designating the truck routes would greatly reduce the traffic traveling through the downtown intersection of Michigan Avenue and Maple Street (parked cars, pedestrians, traffic congestion, and narrower driving lanes).

Below the surface, this is how I see it.

Big Rapids Products/John Chaput/John JC LLC purchased several R1 zoned properties on the south side of Maple Street, adjacent to their industry, and demolished the older homes that were on these properties. The vacant property looks great, but those homes are no longer available to the neighborhood and these properties are now on the tax roll as vacant land.

Then, there was the request to vacate a portion of Pemberton Avenue that included the original cul-de-sac. The original cul-de-sac had a short sidewalk that connected the cul-de-sac to the sidewalk on Maple Street. The result of this request was to move the cul-de-sac to the south and extend the sidewalk on Pemberton Avenue from Elm Street to reconnect Maple Street and maintain the right of way.

Now, there is a concern from Big Rapids Products personnel regarding the safety of the traffic coming from the alleys on Gilbertson Avenue and Pemberton Avenue entering Maple Street.

I do not believe the intention to purchase this property was to provide a green space. If there is a desire for expansion, this should happen to the north of Maple Street in the industrial park. The only exception I would find beneficial to the neighborhood, if done properly, would be for an office building. It would provide a zoning buffer to a portion of the R1 area, and such a structure may absorb some of the thumping noise from Big Rapids Products that plagues the neighborhood. And, if there was an office building on this property, would they want the trucks constantly passing by?

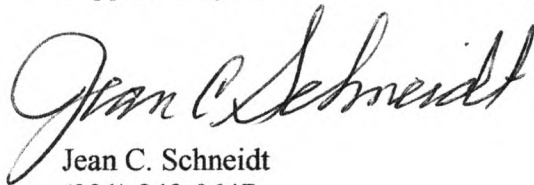
The residents that have alley access do actually use the alleys and this is THEIR R1 neighborhood. Snowplowing these alleys would become difficult because there would be no

room to maneuver a snowplow. There would not be enough area to build cul-de-sacs because there is not enough right-of-way. Public Safety access would become limited and should be a major concern.

City Commission members, Planning Commission members, and staff has changed over the years, and it seems that valuable history, such as planning decisions, visions, and intentions made by our predecessors, have been lost or disregarded. I am not confident that the City has a desire to preserve this neighborhood. It seems that industry holds all of the leverage when it comes to this R1 neighborhood due to their economic impact on the City. Additionally, the City continues to allow double-wide mobile homes outside of designated mobile home parks (at least until it affects the more affluent neighborhood(s)). We also have a business that, as I understand, will consume the entire west side of the 100 block of DeKrafft Avenue. So, two more residential parcels will be removed from the neighborhood. I believe these two residential parcels, and their value, were directly affected by the industrial-zoned neighbors to the west on Howard Street.

I have lived and worked in Big Rapids and the Big Rapids area most of my life. I have friends and family that have lived in this neighborhood and have visited this neighborhood for over 40 years.

I appreciate your time and would be happy to discuss any aspect of this letter with you.



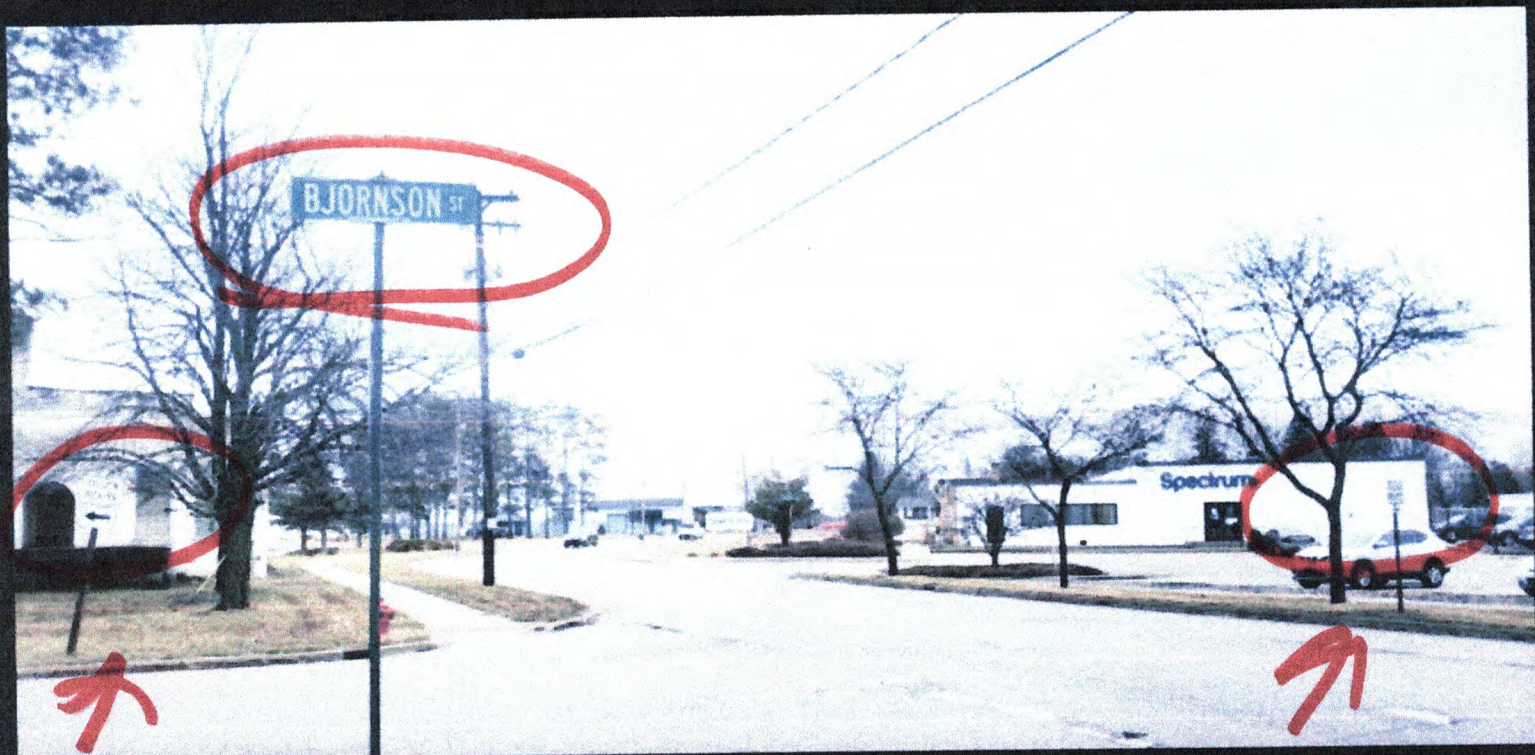
Jean C. Schneidt
(231) 349-0647

Cc: Paula Priebe, Community Development Director

Big Rapids City Commissioners: Mayor Fred Guenther, Commissioner Andrews,
Commissioner Eppley, Commissioner Simmon, Commissioner Cochran

Planning Commission: Chris Jane, Megan Eppley, Sarah Montgomery, Jacob Buse, Rory
Ruddick, Kasey Thompson

Enc: 2



City of Big Rapids Zoning Map

Date: 01/21/2020
Ordinance No. 755-01-20

Legend

- Zoning
- C-1
 - C-2
 - C-3
 - I
 - R-1
 - R-2
 - R-3
 - R-P
 - HR

