

**CITY OF HANCOCK
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
OF JANUARY 28, 2013**

The regular monthly meeting of the Hancock City Planning Commission held on Monday, January 28, 2013 was called to order by Chairperson Dan Lorenzetti at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall with the following members present: Dan Lorenzetti, Bob Wenc, Bill Baxandall, Dave Lucchesi, Bill Laitila, Lisa McKenzie, Deborah Mann and Glenn Anderson.

Absent: Tony Wilmers

Guests: Charles Johnson, P.E.

Chairperson Dan Lorenzetti welcomed Deborah Mann as a new commission member, replacing Terry Monson. Mann's term will expire February 15, 2016.

It was moved by Baxandall and seconded by Laitila to approve the agenda.

AYES; All

NAYES: None

Motion Carried.

It was moved Laitila and seconded by McKenzie to approve the December 10, 2012 minutes.

AYES: All

NAYES: None

Motion Carried

Public Comments: None

Updates/Information

-Reviewed the November 8, 2012, December 13, 2012 and January 10, 2013 US41/M26 Corridor Committee meeting notes.

-Reviewed the November 15, 2012 and December 20, 2012 Western UP Health Dept. Hancock Bike & Pedestrian Committee meeting minutes.

-Noted that the city will host the Friday, April 12th Sesquicentennial Gala Dinner at the MUB ballroom on the MTU Campus.

-Heard that FinnFest 2013 will hold both a business forum and an educational symposium on Wednesday, June 19th. Both events are by invitation.

-Heard that the reconstruction of the burned out building located at 116 Quincy St. by new owner Mike Lahti should be done by the end of February. Seven new apartments and one new commercial space will be available. The city helped fund the project with a \$240,000 MSHDA rental rehab grant, along with other DDA and city housing program funds.

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- Heard that Portage Health was seeking a larger health care partner to acquire a 51% ownership, with a final deal completed by the end of 2013.
- Noted that the State Legislative had enacted personal property tax reform, including starting in 2014 an elimination of up to \$40,000 taxable value, and a phase out of industrial personal property starting in 2016 to 2022. Utility companies such as UPPCO & SEMCO would continue to pay its current personal property taxes.
- Heard that HB #4496 was enacted into State law, which allows community colleges to issue 4 year degrees for cement technology, maritime technology, energy production technology and culinary arts. Nursing degrees were not included.
- Learned that the 10 year 1.5 mill county wide road millage will expire at the end of the 2013 tax years. The city gets its pro-rata share of this millage which amounts to about \$70,000 per year for city snow removal costs.
- Reviewed the new Reshape Downtown 2013 spring projects, which the city is hoping to accomplish by FinnFest.
- Heard a reminder that Citizen Band had been taken over by First Merit Bank, and local signs will be replaced sometime this summer.

Glenn Anderson reported to the commission on the MDOT public meeting held on December 13, 2012 on the 2014 reconstruction of M-26 from the Lift Bridge through Ripley, with repaving into Dollar Bay from the area by Jerry's Transmission. MDOT is also planning to add 8' paved shoulders on each shoulder, undertake storm drainage improvements, and construct a 3rd turn lane through the Ripley area. Slattery Road where it enters M-26 would be eliminated. The project cost is \$4,628,000. Members expressed concern about the interaction of snowmobile and vehicle traffic, especially at night, given the proximity of the DNR trail which runs parallel in some areas. MDOT said they would look into this potential conflict.

MDOT representative also agreed to meet with the Hancock Bike & Pedestrian Committee to discuss possible improvements to the M-26 area near the Northern approach of the Lift Bridge.

The Commission reviewed the scope of work for a small repair/improvement project for the historic East Hancock Stairway. The cost of the project is estimated at \$20,490, and may be funded with an Americana Foundation grant of \$10,490, and \$10,000 from city funds.

It was moved by Wenc and supported by McKenzie to appoint the following officers for the Commission:

Chairperson-Dan Lorenzetti
Vice-Chairperson-David Lucchesi
Secretary- Glenn Anderson
AYES: All
NAYES: None

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Motion Carried

It was moved by Baxandall and seconded by Laitila to thank Terry Monson for his years of service on the Planning Commission, including his service as Vice Chairperson.

AYES: All

NAYES: None

Motion Carried

The Commission reviewed draft detailed plans for the new 362 lineal foot Navy St. Park Boardwalk Project with Charles Johnson, P.E., OHM Advisors. Johnson presented the Commission with information on existing dock elevations, and Lake Superior water levels to determine the level of the new boardwalk. The dock elevation of the Ramada Dock is 606.5, the County Marina docks are at 605.3. OHM is proposing a dock height of 605.7.

Planning Commission member Baxandall suggested the use of round steel piles versus the proposed H pile as less likely to have problems with winter ice.

Chairman Lorenzetti asked members to further review the proposed design and to send comments to Glenn Anderson for consideration.

Anderson noted that the Corps of Engineers will be doing a Public Notice on this planned project to allow public comment.

The Commission reviewed a new DEQ grant program to fund up to 90% of asset management plans and assessments of existing wastewater and storm water systems owned by tribes and municipalities. It will be funded in the amount of \$650,000,000 left over from an earlier state bond issue. The city will investigate the new program further.

The Commission reviewed a study dated January 23, 2013 from the MTU Transportation Enterprise Student Study titled a financial analysis of Houghton/Hancock bus transit system expansion. The plan would add longer service hours and new fixed routes in both cities to encourage MTU & FU students and employees to commute to work and school. The plan would partially be funded by MTU student fees of \$30/\$40 per semester. Lisa McKenzie said the concept is encouraging and could add value to both cities if the bus expansion was implemented.

Dan Lorenzetti mentioned the front wall subcommittee continues to meet to develop a low cost improvement to the appearance of the wall.

Deborah Mann stated she felt a full service pharmacy would be a great asset for the downtown.

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Bob Wenc stated he hoped MTU would fund raise for a much needed expansion of Mount Ripley's Chalet capacity.

Dave Lucchesi commented on the liberal use by MDOT of the salt brine on state highways in Houghton County.

It was moved by Baxandall and seconded by Lucchesi to adjourn at 8:10 p.m.

AYES: All

NAYES: None

Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Glenn Anderson
Secretary