

**CITY OF MUSKEGON
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

March 13, 2025

D. Keener called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and the roll was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: J. Montgomery-Keast, L. Willet-Leroi, D. Keener, K. Johnson (arrived at 4:05 pm), and S. Gawron
MEMBERS ABSENT: L. Simmons II
MEMBERS EXCUSED: J. Seyferth and B. Mazade
STAFF PRESENT: M. Franzak, S. Romine
OTHERS PRESENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the Minutes of the Planning Commission meeting on February 13, 2025, was made by J. Montgomery-Keast, supported by S. Gawron, and unanimously approved.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Hearing, Case 2025-09: Staff-initiated request to amend Sections 702, 802, 902, 1102, 1302, 1402, 1502, 1802, and 1902 and Article XX of the zoning ordinance to require all Planned Unit Developments and Specific Development Plans in these zoning districts to include public access to at least 50% of any waterfront in the development.

SUMMARY

1. Staff will ask to have this item tabled again until the legal opinion can be provided.

MOTION TO TABLE

S. Gawron moved, seconded by J. Montgomery-Keast, the staff initiated request be tabled until further information can be researched.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Montgomery-Keast: Yes	K. Johnson: Yes	D. Keener: Yes
L. Willet-Leroi: Yes	S. Blake: Yes	S. Gawron: Yes

MOTION PASSES

Hearing, Case 2025-10: Request for a special use permit to operate a marihuana retailer with a drive-through at 551 Young Ave.

SUMMARY

1. Greencraft, LLC has operated a Class C Marihuana Grow at this location since 2021.
2. The building's unique angle is a result of the stormwater drain and easement onsite owned by the Drain Commissioners Office. No building may be placed on or near the easement (setback determined by DC at their discretion).
3. The applicant is seeking a Marihuana Retailer’s license at this location and is applying for a special use permit to allow for a drive-through service. Please see the attached site plan. The retail store will not be open to the public, instead, a drive-through system with three ordering booths and a pick-up booth has been proposed. However, the location of the booths is problematic as the Drain Commissioner will not allow permanent structures on the easement, and the City does not allow temporary buildings. Please see the attached Temporary Buildings Ordinance.
4. The parking lot would be reconfigured into a one-way, with a new entrance that uses a portion of the unimproved Temple St to the west of the parcel. The Engineering Department would grant them access to Temple St as long as they make the necessary improvements to it.
5. It appears that the stormwater basin that was previously installed is located under the new driveway. This will require a modification to the stormwater system. The applicant has not yet applied to modify their stormwater permit.
6. The applicant has provided a traffic study from LaCroix Traffic Engineering. There appears to be plenty of stacking space for the drive-through as there will be three separate lanes available.
7. There are two temporary storage containers on site, which is considered a violation of the temporary building ordinance. The site should be compliant with all zoning regulations before any approvals can be issued.
8. Notice was sent to everyone within 300 feet of this property. At the time of this writing, staff had not received any comments from the public.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING – MOTION

A motion to close the public hearing was made by J. Montgomery-Keast, supported by S. Gawron, and unanimously approved.

MOTION

D. Keener moved, seconded by S. Gawron, that the request for a special use permit at 550 Young Ave., be tabled until further site plan adjustments can be made.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Montgomery-Keast: Yes	K. Johnson: Yes	D. Keener: Yes
L. Willet-Leroi: Yes	S. Blake: Yes	S. Gawron: Yes

MOTION PASSES

**Hearing, Case 2025-11: Staff-initiated request to rezone the following properties from Neighborhood Residential (R) to Form-Based Code, Neighborhood Edge (FBC-NE):
1769/1733/1715/1766/1752/1736/1724/1720/1714 Beidler St.**

SUMMARY

This section of Beidler St intersects with the business district along Laketon Ave and is comprised mostly of mixed-use and retail buildings. However, many of the buildings and most of their uses are considered legally non-conforming because they are all zoned R, Neighborhood Residential. The current zoning designation limits development and use options and requires building owners to apply for Special Use Permits for any commercial or multifamily uses. Staff believes these buildings would be better served with a Form-Based Code designation that allows for mixed-uses by right. The midblock alley serves as a natural barrier between the properties proposed for rezoning and the R district to the north. The property at 1727 Beidler St (listed on map on following page) was recently rezoned to FBC, NE this February.

In the master plan, goal two in the [economic development](#) section calls to “create viable commercial corridors and community nodes.” All five of the action steps associated with this goal appear to relate to this amendment request.

- Invest in placemaking opportunities that capitalize on community assets.
- Encourage the formation of business district associations and development of corridor improvement plans for active business districts.
- Support retail development, growth, and expansion through zoning amendments and economic incentives that encourage a range of potential unit sizes.
- Promote walkability through pedestrian-focused ground-level activities and use micro-transit to bridge long distances.
- Simplify zoning regulations to permit flexibility in business types.

Staff held a focus group in February with all of the associated property owners. Those in attendance were very supportive of the initiative and requested that we move forward with the rezoning. Notice was sent to all properties within 300 feet of the properties to be rezoned. At the time of this writing, staff has not received any comments from the public.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING – MOTION

A motion to close the public hearing was made by J. Montgomery-Keast, supported by K. Johnson, and unanimously approved.

MOTION

J. Montgomery-Keast moved, seconded by D. Keener, that the request that the request to rezone 1769, 1733, 1715, 1766, 1752, 1736, 1724, 1720, and 1714 Beidler St. from Neighborhood Residential (R) to Form-Based Code, Neighborhood Edge (FBC-NE) be recommended to the City Commission for approval

ROLL CALL VOTE

Montgomery-Keast: Yes
L. Willet-Leroi: Yes

K. Johnson: Yes
S. Blake: Yes

D. Keener: Yes
S. Gawron: Yes

MOTION PASSES

Hearing, Case 2025-12: Staff-initiated request to rezone the properties at 1201 and 1147 3rd St and 236 Monroe Ave from Convenience & Comparison Business (B-2) to Form-Based Code, Mainstreet (FBC, MS).

SUMMARY

The “Midtown” portion of 3rd was rezoned from B-2 to Form-Based Code, Mainstreet in 2015. During the rezoning process, a couple of property owners were hesitant to rezone because of current or potential developments. The vacant lot at 1201 3rd St was being used as a used car sales lot at the time, but it has been vacant for close to 10 years. It's not exactly clear why the parking lot of 1147 3rd St and 236 Monroe Ave were not rezoned at the time. However, both of the parcels are considered non-buildable under the B-2 designation because they do not meet the minimum lot size of 10,890 sf and 100 feet of width.

Staff was able to discuss the initiative with the owner of 1201 3rd St but was not able to get ahold of anyone at 1147 3rd St or 236 Monroe Ave, despite inviting them to a focus group. Notice was sent to all properties within 300 feet of the properties to be rezoned. At the time of this writing, staff has not received any comments from the public.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

D. Whynot, 235 Monroe Ave: Agrees with the rezoning of the 3rd Street property but believes the Monroe Ave property should be rezoned to Neighborhood Edge because it's not on the main street and it would allow the property owner more flexibility and the setbacks would allow it to be buildable.

P. McPherson, 243 Monroe Ave: Is in agreement with the previous speaker (D. Whynot) and is attending the meeting as the HOA President for the 10 residents living in the Monroe condos. Also had questions about the reasoning for the proposed zoning district

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING – MOTION

A motion to close the public hearing was made by J. Montgomery-Keast, supported by D. Keener, and unanimously approved.

MOTION

J. Montgomery-Keast moved, seconded by D. Keener, that the request to rezone the properties at 1201 and 1147 3rd St and 236 Monroe Ave from Convenience & Comparison Business to Form-Based Code, Mainstreet be recommended to the City Commission for approval, which was later withdrawn.

MOTION

J. Montgomery-Keast moved, seconded by D. Keener, that the request to rezone the properties at 1201 and 1147 3rd St from Convenience & Comparison Business to Form-Based Code, Mainstreet be recommended to the City Commission for approval.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Montgomery-Keast: Yes	K. Johnson: Yes	D. Keener: Yes
L. Willet-Leroi: Yes	S. Blake: Yes	S. Gawron: Yes

MOTION PASSES

Hearing, Case 2025-13: Staff-initiated request to rezone the properties at 1148 4th St, 318 Houston Ave from Limited Business (B-1), and 350 Houston Ave from High-Density Multiple-Family Residential (RM-3) to Form-Based Code, Neighborhood Core (FBC, NC).

SUMMARY

This area of “Midtown” was rezoned to Form-Based Code in 2015. Most of the parcels were zoned to FBC, UR because they were either single-family, duplex, or small multiplex buildings. At the time, these three properties were left out of the rezoning because they did not fit the FBC, UR designation. However, staff has reviewed the form-based code and has determined that the FBC, NC designation will work well for these properties and the buildings and uses would be considered legally conforming. The Nelson Place apartments would be considered a Flex building in the form-based code and the new designation would even allow for mixed-uses if they chose to do that someday. The properties at 1147 4th St and 318 Houston would be considered small multiplexes. Small multiplexes were not allowed as a permitted use in FBC, UR districts at that time, so this property was not included in the initial rezoning request of 2015. This density is allowed within the FBC, NC zoning designation and so are the office uses.

Staff held a focus group in February with all of the associated property owners. Those in attendance were very supportive of the initiative and requested that we move forward with the rezoning’s. Notice was sent to all properties within 300 feet of the properties to be rezoned. At the time of this writing, staff has not received any comments from the public.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING – MOTION

A motion to close the public hearing was made by J. Montgomery-Keast, supported by S. Gawron, and unanimously approved.

MOTION

J. Montgomery-Keast moved, seconded by S. Gawron, that the request to rezone the properties at 1148 4th St, 318 Houston Ave from Limited Business and 350 Houston Ave from High-Density Multiple-Family Residential to Form-Based Code, Neighborhood Core be recommended to the City Commission for approval.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Montgomery-Keast: Yes

K. Johnson: Yes

D. Keener: Yes

L. Willet-Leroi: Yes

S. Blake: Yes

S. Gawron: Yes

MOTION PASSES

Hearing, Case 2025-14: Staff-initiated request to rezone the following properties from Two-Family Residential (RT) to Form-Based Code, Neighborhood Edge (FBC, NE).

SUMMARY

There are only 70 properties within the City that are zoned RT, Two-Family Residential. The zoning designation could be considered outdated because we now have the FBC, UR designation that also allows for duplexes.

The RT designation requires large lots for the development of duplexes, whereas the FBC designation allows for their development on smaller lots. RT lots must be at least 8,712 sf in size and at least 75 feet wide. This requirement makes almost all properties zoned RT legally non-conforming because they are not wide enough. Nothing could be developed on most of these properties, and the existing houses are considered grandfathered. A duplex in the FBC designation can be built on a lot that is only 40 feet wide.

The FBC, UR designation allows for single-family detached houses, duplexes, and accessory dwelling units. It also allows for triplexes if there is an alley present.

Staff recommends eliminating the RT zoning designation. In order to do so, we must first rezone all 70 of the RT properties that currently exist. Staff proposes to rezone these 10 properties to FBC, NE because they are located along Apple Ave adjacent to a business district, and there are also alleys present, so the infrastructure already exists to support higher density.

Staff held a focus group in February with all of the associated property owners. Those in attendance were very supportive of the initiative and requested that we move forward with the rezoning. Notice was sent to all properties within 300 feet of the properties to be rezoned. At the time of this writing, staff has not received any comments from the public.

Please see the attached zoning ordinance excerpts for R and RT zones.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING – MOTION

A motion to close the public hearing was made by J. Montgomery-Keast, supported by K. Johnson, and unanimously approved.

MOTION

K. Johnson moved, seconded by J. Montgomery-Keast, that the request to rezone 429, 433, 451, 461, 477,

485, 491, 501, 507, 513, 521, 527 E Apple Ave and 1022 Williams St from Two-Family Residential to Form-Based Code, Neighborhood Edge be recommended to the City Commission for approval.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Montgomery-Keast: Yes

K. Johnson: Yes

D. Keener: Yes

L. Willet-Leroi: Yes

S. Blake: Yes

S. Gawron: Yes

MOTION PASSES

Hearing, Case 2025-15: Staff-initiated request to rezone the following properties from Two-Family Residential (RT) to Neighborhood Residential (R):

410/420/428/438/448/456/466/478/508/524/528/530/532/558/562/568/580/586/592/600 Adams Ave, 275 Marshall St, 462/478/494/508/524/540/556/568/594 S Quarterline Rd, 1150/1160/1168/1192/1206 Ambrosia St, 370/376/384/390 Catherine Ave, 1174/1185/1191 Wood St, 353/357/361/369 E Isabella Ave, 1113/1119 Sophia St, 396/422/428/438 McLaughlin Ave, 463 Catawba Ave, 557 McLaren St, 2407 Barclay St, 11/17 Delaware Ave, and 955 W. Laketon Ave.

SUMMARY

As described in the previous case, staff recommends eliminating the RT zones because we now have better options to allow for duplexes and higher densities.

Staff is proposing to rezone these properties from RT to R, Neighborhood Residential. These lots fit the size requirements for the proposed zoning district, and the rezoning will make most of these lots legally conforming, whereas most of them are considered legally non-conforming under the RT designation. These lots are characterized as small- to medium-sized residential lots without the presence of an alley. Without an alley present, the R designation allows only single-family detached houses, duplexes, and accessory dwelling units. Triplexes would not be allowed because there are no alleys associated with these lots.

Staff held a focus group in February with all of the associated property owners. Those in attendance were very supportive of the initiative and requested that we move forward with the rezoning. Notice was sent to all properties within 300 feet of the properties to be rezoned. At the time of this writing, staff has not received any comments from the public.

Please see the attached zoning ordinance excerpts for R and RT zones.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING – MOTION

A motion to close the public hearing was made by J. Montgomery-Keast, supported by S. Gawron, and unanimously approved.

MOTION

D. Keener moved, seconded by S. Gawron, that the request to rezone 429, 433, 451, 461, 477, 485, 491, 501, 507, 513, 521, 527 E Apple Ave and 1022 Williams St from Two-Family Residential to Form-Based Code, Neighborhood Edge be recommended to the City Commission for approval.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Montgomery-Keast: Yes

K. Johnson: Yes

D. Keener: Yes

L. Willet-Leroi: Yes

S. Blake: Yes

S. Gawron: Yes

MOTION PASSES

NEW BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm.