



# MCKENNA

March 1, 2022

Planning Commission  
City of Harper Woods  
19617 Harper Avenue  
Harper Woods, MI 48225

**Subject: 2021 Annual Report of Planning Commission Activities and 2022 Work Plan**

Dear Commissioners,

In accordance with Michigan Compiled Laws §125.3819(2.) also known as the Michigan Planning Enabling Act PA 33 of 2008, as amended, McKenna has prepared and respectfully submits an annual written report to the City Council concerning Planning Commission operations and the status of planning activities. This report includes meeting summaries for all Planning Commission meetings in 2021 with specific cases as well as Board of Zoning Appeals actions. This report also contains recommendations for 2022 planning and development efforts beyond general ordinance administration.

## MEMBERSHIP

As of the date of this report, the Planning Commission had one vacancy and the following members:

- Gregory A. Vargo (Chair)
- Neil Patterson (Vice Chair)
- Lawrence Hakim (Secretary)
- Serafini Buscemi
- David Kien
- Kevin Koresky
- Lauren Mercer
- Frank Serraiocco

## MEETINGS

The Harper Woods Planning Commission met five times in 2021, exceeding the MPEA's recommended four meetings annually. They considered plans and planning-related topics at their meetings on the following dates:

- February 24, 2021 – Public hearing and review for the rezoning of 19353 Vernier Road.
- March 24, 2021 – Public hearing and review for the special land use and site plan for 19353 Vernier Road.
- June 23, 2021 – Public hearing and review for the rezoning of 18000 Vernier Road (Eastland Center) to a Planned Unit Development.
- July 28, 2021 – Public hearing and review for the rezoning of 18000 Vernier Road and 17830-17860 E. Eight Mile Road; public hearing for the lot split of 17830-17860 E. Eight Mile Road from 18000 Vernier Road.
- November 3, 2021 – Public hearing and review for the site plan of 18000 Vernier Road.

Additionally, the Board of Zoning Appeals met once on May 12, 2021, regarding the public hearing and review for the zoning ordinance variance request of 19233 Vernier Road (ImmunoTek Bio Center).

## HEADQUARTERS

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## APPLICATIONS

The Planning Commission reviewed the following planning and zoning applications in 2021:

### Site Plan Reviews

- **Tim Hortons** (19353 Vernier Road) – Approved with conditions – March 24, 2021
- **Immunotek Bio Centers** (19233 Vernier Road, Planned Unit Development) – Approved with conditions – November 3, 2021

### Rezoning Reviews

- **Tim Hortons** (19353 Vernier Road, rezone district from C-2 Special Business to C-1 General Business) – Recommended Approval – February 25, 2021
- **Eastland Center** (18000 Vernier Road, rezone district from RS-1 Regional Shopping to PUD Planned Unit Development) – Tabled, pending resubmittal based on recommendation of McKenna – June 23, 2021; Recommended Approval with conditions – July 28, 2021
- **Eastland Center Outlot** (17830-17860 E. Eight Mile Road, rezone district from RS-1 Regional Shopping to C-1 General Business) – Recommended Approval – July 28, 2021

### Special Land Use Reviews

- **Tim Hortons** (19353 Vernier Road) – Recommended Approval with conditions – March 24, 2021

### Lot Split Reviews

- **Eastland Center** (17830-17860 E. Eight Mile Road, split from existing property at 18000 Vernier Road) – Recommended Approval with conditions – July 28, 2021

Additionally, the Board of Zoning Appeals reviewed the following application in 2021:

### Variance Requests

- **Immunotek Bio Centers** (19233 Vernier Road, variance of zoning ordinance, Section 10-248) – Approved – May 12, 2021

## PROPOSED 2022 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT TASKS

Several new and ongoing projects will continue and be considered in 2022.

**Redevelopment Ready Communities Planning Activities** – to further the City's efforts towards becoming certified by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) program, the City will consider undertaking the following planning activities:

- **Master Plan Update** – the current Master Plan was last updated in 2013; now is the time to incorporate modern planning techniques and principles and ensure compliance with the RRC program's requirements, as well as the Michigan Planning Enabling Act's requirements, by completing a comprehensive update process.
- **Incentives, Analysis, and Synthesis** – also to further compliance with RRC requirements, the City should undertake an analysis of the available incentives and sites for redevelopment of all types of properties and synthesize the available options into a user-friendly – and administration-friendly – document to encourage redevelopment.
- **Other RRC Activities, As Arise** – during the compliance planning efforts, other RRC-encouraged or required components may arise, which the City should undertake for certification.



**Zoning Ordinance Technical Review** – We propose examining the current Zoning Ordinance considering modern best zoning practices, day-to-day zoning experience gained on zoning text, maps, and administrative functions. The review will be presented as a memo for each Article and will provide analysis of the following, as applicable:

- **General Zoning.** Review of the current Zoning Ordinance involving an article-by-article summary of potential and known problems with the Ordinance in terms of format, consistency with enabling legislation and case law, and our experience in other communities.
- **Definitions.** Recommend new or revised definitions for contemporary land uses and issues, including
- **Inconsistencies and Conflicts.** Check for fragmented, inconsistent, or outdated language, irrelevant and incorrect cross-references, redundancy, contradictions, conflicts, etc.
- **Clarity, Simplicity, and Ease of Use.** Determine regulations that can be clarified or enhanced using diagrams, charts, tables, or illustrations. The Zoning Ordinance format should include hyper-links for quick and easy electronic searching.
- **Zoning Board Appeals (ZBA) Decisions.** Review of list of recent ZBA variance decisions that identify recurring problems (non-conformities, porch overhangs, fences, etc.).
- **Current Legal Issues.** Review potential revisions generated by any relevant zoning litigation involving the City that might be beneficial, plus revisions resulting from recent Michigan state law and new case law.
- **Other City Codes and Standards.** Review of other codes and regulations provided by the City such as fire or engineering design standards, and identify engineering, drainage, pavement, and parking standards that need to be referenced or which may harm the City's unique character.
- **Master Plan.** Review and recommendations for regulations to facilitate implementing the Master Plan (once reviewed), including identification of existing provisions that may conflict with the Plan.

A proactive work program can help maintain a quality community, and we look forward to working with the City as it actively seeks to preserve – and expand – its economic base through any of the proposed 2022 planning and development tasks contained in this report the City wishes to proceed with. We will furnish additional information at your convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

**MCKENNA**

Senior Principal Planner

Assistant Planner