

CITY OF ALBION

PLANNING COMMISSION

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Adopted 02.18.2015

2015 Planning Commissioners

Scott Brown

Tom Pitt

George Strander

James Noble

Wesley Dick

John Tracy, City Administrative Officer

Joseph Domingo, Mayor

Garrett Brown, Council Member

The City of Albion Planning Commission, created and operating under the provisions of the Michigan Enabling Act (Public Act 33 of 2008), possesses the powers and functions required for comprehensive planning, initiating zoning amendments, granting special use permits, and planned unit developments.

In accordance with Article IX of the adopted Bylaws of the Planning Commission, an annual report is to be presented to the City Council by the first day of April of each year that highlights the activities of the previous fiscal year. This report addresses the status of the Master Plan, overview of 2014 activities, and goals for 2015.

Purpose of the Planning Commission - The purposes of the Planning Commission include:

- Preparing a plan to guide the physical development of the City of Albion, and to continually keep it up to date thereafter.
- Promoting the adoption and execution of such plans by the City, school, county, and other governments and agencies responsible for making public or other improvements in the City Municipality.
- Effecting economics in the City through the recommendation of a wise expenditure of funds to provide sound development.
- Encouraging and assisting public and private agencies in improving the attractiveness of the City Municipality.
- Working toward a “planned community” for the City by officially adopting a plan to guide the physical development of the community.
- Furthering cooperation between governmental and private agencies toward these ends.

MASTER PLAN

Purpose of a Master Plan

MCL 125.381 describes the role of a planning commission is to make and approve a master plan as a guide for development within the planning jurisdiction. In preparation of a Master Plan, the planning commission is required to:

- (a) Make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of present conditions and future growth within the planning jurisdiction with due regard to its relation to neighboring jurisdictions.
- (b) Consult with representatives of adjacent local units of government in respect to their planning so that conflicts in master plans and zoning may be avoided.
- (c) Cooperate with all departments of the state and federal governments, public transportation agencies, and other public agencies concerned with programs for economic, social, and physical development within the planning jurisdiction and seek the maximum coordination of the local unit of government's programs with these agencies.

In the preparation of the master plan, the planning commission may meet with other governmental planning commissions or agency staff to deliberate.

First Step - Notice of Intent to Plan - The Coordinated Planning Act requires municipalities that are in the process of amending or adopting a new master plan are to request cooperation and comments from adjacent communities to assist in the planning process. Notices must be sent by first class mail to:

- Planning commissions (or legislative body) of every township, village, or city located within or contiguous to the city.
- County or Regional Planning Commission
- Any railroad company or public utility that registers for such notice
- Other governmental entities may include: Downtown Development Authorities, Tax Increment Finance Authorities, school boards, road commissioners and other local governmental units

City of Albion - Comprehensive Plan

In 1990, the City of Albion adopted a comprehensive plan, which updated the original plan that was adopted in 1964. There was a particular emphasis on land use, particularly related to zoning, economic development, the provision of utilities, and capital improvements. The Comprehensive Plan for the City of Albion was again updated in 2000, in order to reflect upon, reassess, adjust or affirm previous planning goals and objectives.

Between 2011 and 2014, the Planning Commission has initiated steps to again update the Comprehensive Plan as the master planning document for the City of Albion. The following committees were established to address specific areas:

- Community Profile
- Land Use and Planning
- Infrastructure and Community Service
- Vision and Goals

Some recommendations have already been incorporated into the most recent draft document. A review of the Planning Commission minutes for this period of time indicates that the following areas still require attention:

- A community visioning process to identify the strengths, weaknesses, goals, and objectives to address the needs of the community for the next 10-20 years.
- Updating the census and geographic data
- Updating the housing inventory
- Updated surveys and maps of community facilities and community amenities
- Land use maps - updating for future land use and zoning

2014 Overview

In 2014, the Planning Commission met on three dates: January 1, June 17, and November 18. The updates for the Master Plan were reviewed. The most frequent issues to be considered by the Planning Commission include site plan reviews and special use permits. Actions taken by the Planning Commission in 2014 included:

- Public Hearing and rezoning request for 806 & 808 N. Albion street from R1C to B1
- Special Permit -338 Berner Street
- Presentation on the Food Hub project by Sandra Florence

2015 Planning Commission Goals and Objectives

➤ Complete Master Plan Update

- Obtain public input on the future direction of the City of Albion
- Gather and incorporate updated information
- Strategy and implementation plan that contains goals/actions, implementation steps
- Prioritize redevelopment sites, neighborhoods, and/or districts
- Redevelopment plan that includes timelines, benchmarks, and responsible parties
- Provision for annual updates to City Council on accomplishments, challenges and next steps

➤ Redevelopment Ready Community - Certification

The Planning Commission is invited to attend the March 16, 2015 Albion City Council meeting in which Jennifer Rigterink, Manager of Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (EDC) will be making a presentation on the Redevelopment Ready Communities® (RRC) program that is available to municipalities across the state. RRC is a voluntary, no cost certification program promoting effective redevelopment strategies through a set of best practices.

The program measures and then certifies communities that integrate transparency, predictability and efficiency into their daily development practices. The RRC certification is a formal recognition that a community has a vision for the future and the fundamental practices in place to get there.

Now a statewide program, local communities can use RRC as a framework for continuous improvement and reinvention. RRC supports community's efforts to identify

and market priority redevelopment sites. The enables communities to have available commercial and industrial property ready to go, so that investors have an easier time of getting that property through the city's system.

The Michigan Redevelopment Ready Communities Program provides technical and financial assistance for communities like Muskegon to become "certified" through a state evaluation process. The state evaluation will lead to a set of recommendations the community will be asked to adopt and implement with assistance from the MEDC

Those communities that are "certified" would have its three top redevelopment sites marketed through the MEDC and they would be priorities for MEDC and Michigan State Housing Development Authority funding, according to state officials.

The program includes adopting and implementing economic development "best practices" in areas such as community planning and public outreach, zoning and regulation policies, education and training, and getting sites redevelopment ready.