RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
VILLAGE OF PENINSULA PLANNING COMMISSION

Held: Monday, April 28, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Walters called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Chairperson Karen Walters	Present
Kevin Royer	Present
Greg Canda	Present
Council Rep. Doug Steidl	Absent
Mayor Daniel Schneider, Jr.	Absent

OTHERS PRESENT: Planner Rita McMahon and Solicitor Brad Bryan

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES:

March 24, 2025 Joint Planning Commission and Council Meeting

Mr. Canda made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Royer to approve the March 24, 2025 Meeting Minutes with an amendment to correct the phrase '2029 Long Range Plan' to '2019 Long Range Plan'). Roll call vote: Ms. Walters, yes; Mr. Royer, yes; Mr. Canda, yes. The Minutes were approved as amended.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION:

Mo Riggins raised concerns about alcohol being sold and consumed publicly at the Bronson House during the Ramp Up Peninsula event. She asked whether the Village had or should consider an entertainment district like Richfield's DORA and asked about the difference between what uses were allowed in residential and commercial zoning districts. She stated this activity occurred in a residential area and questioned how any proposed zoning changes might affect neighborhoods. Ms. Walters explained that a DORA (Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area) is a state-licensed district with defined boundaries. Peninsula does not have and has not applied for a DORA. Planning Commission members explained that alcohol sales require proper permits and open containers of alcohol cannot be taken off private property. If there were violations, the Police Department should have been called at the time to deal with them.

Ms. McMahon explained that R2 residential zoning is primarily for single-family homes, while commercial zoning allows a broad range of uses like retail and restaurants. If a property is rezoned from residential to commercial, existing homes can remain as they are, and the code requires buffering and screening to protect adjacent residential properties. Most commercial uses, such as restaurants, are permitted by right, meaning nearby residents do not have input on whether they are allowed, unless the use is classified as conditional. In that event, a public hearing and Planning Commission approval are required for such uses. Ms. Riggins expressed concern about residents not being aware of potential changes, particularly involving alcohol-serving businesses, and stressed the need for neighborhood input. Mr. Canda confirmed that zoning changes go through multiple levels of public review, including Planning Commission and Council votes, and encouraged residents to stay involved in meetings to voice their concerns. Mr. Bryan stated no zoning district changes are moving forward at this time, they are just on the agenda for discussion.

Daniel DeAngelo encouraged people to show up for meetings so that they can weigh in on these issues.

Richard Slocum expressed concern that the projects tied to the OHM planning contract, funded at $77,000 and to be submitted for Ohio Public Works Commission grant consideration,

have not been reviewed by the Planning Commission. He emphasized the need for the Planning Commission to review these projects and integrate the Downtown Master Plan into the Village's Long Range Plan to maintain continuity and coherence. Multiple speakers, including Mr. Bryan and Ms. Walters, noted the tight grant application timeline and requirements that drove the quick Council approval for that work. Several members, including Mr. Slocum, Ms. Frank-Hensley, and Mr. Canda, suggested forming a committee to revisit zoning issues that were under addressed in the Area Master Plan, particularly concerning parking minimums, building size next to residences, and mismatches between current zoning and community character.

There was general agreement that permitting oversized buildings or lacking appropriate design controls require attention. Additional Planning Commission work sessions or subcommittees to address these issues were suggested. Amy Frank-Hensley stated she supported rezoning part of North Locust to a residential zone and raised concerns about unclear requirements in the Historic Overlay District, such as changes in building colors that may not be properly regulated or communicated. There is a need for better resident education about zoning and code expectations and for clear, collaborative processes between the Planning Commission, Council, and the public, to ensure that projects reflect the Village's long-term goals and character, was emphasized.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

In the Mayor's absence, Mr. Bryan reported the final draft of the Area Master Plan would be uploaded on the Village website the following day. He stated the Plan would be on the agenda for the next Planning Commission Meeting for the Commission's review and potential approval. Mr. Canda asked whether the plan should be reviewed in full or in sections, suggesting a piecemeal approach might be more appropriate due to the broad range of the document.

It was noted that all the projects to be referenced in the grant application are not binding. Mr. Bryan confirmed the process allows flexibility to tweak aspects of the projects after any grant money is awarded, with time for adjustments before any projects commenced.

Mr. Bryan informed the Commission about Ohio House Bill 83, which would require ODOT to pay for state highway maintenance costs within Ohio Villages. The State has been shifting those costs back to Villages over the last couple of years. The Village has had to make special appeals to ODOT over the past two years to avoid these unrealistic cost burdens. The Village submitted a letter of support for the Bill, and Senator Roemer's office responded positively, appreciating the communication from the Village. A discussion followed about jurisdiction over state infrastructure within the Village, especially related to the St. Rt. 303 Bridge and drainage and railings. Mr. Royer stated he was interested in knowing who was in control of that maintenance.

COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT:

Richard Slocum reported on the most recent Council meeting, highlighting a discussion about a dispute involving residential lighting shining into a neighboring home. That conflict prompted a residential lighting ordinance that is pending before Council. Mr. Slocum raised the issue as to whether the Planning Commission should review zoning or building code regulations related to lighting. Mr. Bryan clarified that the topic could be discussed further during the meeting. Mr. Slocum also recommended that the Planning Commission consider adopting elements of the "dark sky initiative" when evaluating lighting standards, citing issues with overly bright lighting, such as a disruptive light in the downtown area near the bike path.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
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Held: Monday, April 28, 2025

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:
Discussion of Changes to Zoning Map (West Side of N. Locust Street, Main Street, and Other Areas of the Village) and Discussion of Potential Zoning Code Amendments

Ms. Walters opened the discussion by highlighting that while the west side of N. Locust is currently zoned commercial, most properties are residential in use. Mr. Canda questioned the benefit of maintaining the commercial zoning, expressing concerns about the potential impacts on current residents and adjacent property owners. He noted that, while commercial zoning may offer flexibility, it could conflict with the existing residential character.

Ms. Walters clarified that the corner lot at North Locust and Mill Street is used commercially, but the remaining properties further north are entirely residential. Mr. Canda raised the issue of how rezoning from commercial to residential might affect future development. Ms. McMahon explained that under a residential designation certain home-based occupations would still be permitted, provided they do not increase traffic, involve customers coming to the home, or operate as full-scale businesses.

The Commission agreed on the importance of notifying property owners before making zoning changes. Mr. Canda proposed sending formal letters to homeowners, outlining the potential changes and requesting feedback. Ms. McMahon advised, although the Planning Commission is not legally required to issue such notices, doing so could foster transparency and goodwill. She also referenced a list of review criteria embedded in the zoning ordinance, encouraging the commission to consider whether any proposed amendments align with the Long-Range Plan, correct inequities, avoid exclusionary zoning, and are consistent with surrounding land use patterns.

The Commission reviewed different parcels, including those at the intersection of Mill Street and North Locust Street, as well as various properties along Main Street. Mr. Royer and Mr. Slocum discussed the mixed-use history of some lots and the possibility that not all property owners would support a change to residential zoning. Ms. Walters emphasized the need to preserve the residential character of these neighborhoods and warned against encouraging additional commercial development, especially on Main Street. Mr. Bryan supported this caution, noting that the area already includes grandfathered commercial uses and that expanding them could lead to unintended consequences, such as a reduced residential presence.

The discussion turned to the Conservation and Recreation Overlay District, particularly the former golf course property now owned by the National Park. Ms. McMahon informed the Commission the Conservation Recreation Overlay offers greater municipal oversight while still allowing for some recreational development. Development in those areas requires special permits and public review. Mr. Bryan and Mr. Slocum explained this zoning tool provides flexibility while protecting open space and controlling development near the river and within park-adjacent areas.

Ms. Walters recommended that the Commission prioritize the N. Locust Street area for further study. Rather than issuing letters immediately, she proposed that the Commission members walk the area before the next meeting to better understand the context and assess whether a zoning change is warranted. Mr. Canda agreed, suggesting that formal notifications and recommendations be postponed until after a thorough review. The idea of forming a subcommittee to handle broader zoning and architectural concerns was also introduced by Mr.

DeAngelo, who highlighted specific design issues such as garage orientation and proportionality in new residential construction.

The Commission also discussed whether the Village-owned lot at the end of Akron-Peninsula Road would be needed for construction vehicle parking and equipment staging when the sewer plant is being built. It was acknowledged that additional work on the lot is necessary if it is to be converted to an official Village parking lot. Mr. Bryan confirmed that the Village would typically create a design plan for such improvements, subject to Mayoral supervision and Planning Commission review.

Steve Craig asked whether the Steering Committee is now disbanded due to the completion of the final draft of the Area Master Plan. Mr. Bryan confirmed the Steering Committee's work has been completed. Daniel DeAngelo and others expressed that, while the Committee may have concluded its work, the Planning Commission retains the authority to revise the Plan and weigh in on the implementation of recommendations contained in the Plan. The meeting concluded with agreement that the N. Locust Street zoning issue would be further discussed at the next meeting along with time allotted for reviewing the Area Master Plan and parking issues.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Royer made a motion to adjourn the meeting that was seconded by Ms. Walters. Roll call vote: Ms. Walters, yes; Mr. Royer, yes; Mr. Canda, yes. The meeting was adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Karen Walters, Chairperson — Date

Karen J Walters — 5.28.2025