



## CITY OF CHELSEA

### **CHELSEA PLANNING COMMISSION NOTICE OF WORK SESSION**

Notice is hereby given that the Chelsea City Planning Commission will hold a Work Session on **Wednesday, September 7, 2016 at 7:00 pm**, at the Chelsea Municipal Building (Council Chamber) located at 311 S. Main Street, Chelsea, Michigan.

The purpose of the meeting will be for the Planning Commission to review draft documents submitted by Carlisle Wortman and Associates regarding the Master Plan Revision.

Agenda:

1. Discuss Draft Sustainability Chapter
2. Discuss Draft Economic Development Chapter

Persons requiring reasonable accommodations due to disabilities in order that the meeting is accessible to them are requested to notify the Chelsea Planning Commission of such disability no later than five (5) business days prior to the date of the meeting.

Larry Ledebur, Chair

## **PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION MINUTES**

September 7, 2016

CHELSEA MUNICIPAL BUILDING COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
311 S. MAIN STREET, CHELSEA, MICHIGAN

NAMES OF THOSE PRESENT: Erik Larsen, Peter Shaw, George Olsen, Sarah Haselschwardt, Steven Parker, Geoffrey Voshel and Claire Robinson

MEMBERS ABSENT: Larry Ledebur, Robert Dean

OTHERS PRESENT: Christine Linfield, Cheri Albertson, Paul Montagno (Carlisle Wortman), Jane Pacheco, Scott Pacheco

Meeting started at 7:00 pm

### **Item #1: Discussion Regarding Draft Sustainability Chapter**

After reviewing the draft chapter prepared by Carlisle Wortman, the commissioners had the following comments:

- Discussion included highlighting existing city programs and infrastructure improvements. Such as EnergySmart programs for our power customers, solar powered crosswalk rapid flash beacons, solar powered school zoning signs, and switching over street lights to LED's. Linfield will go take pictures and forward them to Montagno. Montagno will contact the City Manager to discuss programs already in place.
- Research other opportunities.
- Shaw recommended more recycling bins downtown and investigating a community solar project similar to Cherryland Electric in Traverse City.
- Set goals and suggestions regarding exploring renewable energy opportunities.
- Discussed adaptive reuse of buildings and tree removal/replacements.

### **Item #2: Discussion Regarding Draft Economic Development Chapter**

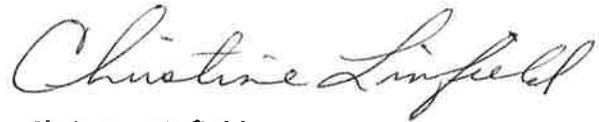
After reviewing the draft chapter prepared by Carlisle Wortman, the commissioners had the following comments:

- How to balance Chelsea as a bedroom community, with advocating for a stronger base for economic development.
- How to eliminate the need to drive outside of Chelsea to purchase items.
- Promote a "Park Once...and Walk More" community.
- Montagno recommended focusing on "Quality of Place" to lure smaller companies to Chelsea. Promote amenities for future employees. By focusing on where employees want to live and create an attractive community. Market what Chelsea has that is unique. Create quality of place and promote mixed use and adaptive redevelopment.

- Discussion included how to balance promoting “work where you live” goals and current home occupation regulations.

The next work session will continue with Economic Development comments and then discuss the proposed Recreation and Entertainment Chapters.

Respectively submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine Linfield". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Christine Linfield



## Sustainability

### Overview

Sustainability has been defined many different ways. At its core, sustainability is the principle that systems will have the ability to be maintained generally in homeostasis indefinitely. As sustainability relates to human societies, it is recognized that a healthy environment provides the resources that humans need to survive. "Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. To pursue sustainability is to create and maintain the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony to support present and future generations."<sup>1</sup> Ideally, the impact our communities have on the natural environment will be negligible in terms of the environment's ability to continue to provide the resources that current and future generations need in terms of food, clean water, and energy.

The application of sustainable principles can vary depending on the scale in which they are applied. On a local community level there are a variety of efforts that can be taken. Human activities including the way we travel, the amount of energy we use and the sources of that energy, even the type and source of food we consume can affect the natural environment. The City of Chelsea has made a commitment to protect the natural environment through saving energy and implementing practices that create lower environmental impact. Chelsea has the potential to take advantage of opportunities to incorporate sustainable practices into the community such as renewable energy, energy upgrades, building reuse, Low Impact Development (LID), and non-motorized transportation opportunities. Committing to these methods is not only a benefit to the environment but also the community.

### Responsible Resource Use

Water, food, and energy are the three major categories when discussing responsible resource use.

**Water:** Utilizing Low Impact Development (LID), as discussed in the section below, can reduce waste water. Continuing to promote responsible water use and educating citizens on recycling pollutants properly can also reduce contaminating this resource.

**Food:** Residents and businesses can increase their food sustainability through shopping locally at the farmers market, composting food waste, and choosing foods that limit production waste. Sustainable food choices often encourage healthy living along with environmental wellness.

**Energy:** Responsible resource use for energy does not only include renewable resources, like in the section below, but also using products that are energy efficient. For example, using materials that are recycled, energy saving appliances, or LED light bulbs are simple solutions to reduce waste. In addition, transportation consumes a tremendous amount of energy. Providing options for [alternate transportation](#) modes can help to encourage active transportation which can greatly reduce the community's energy consumption.

### Energy Upgrades

In public spaces and facilities, the City can look into various energy upgrades to reduce costs by saving energy. In buildings, having proper insulation and sealing or replacing older appliance units with energy efficient ones can drastically reduce costs. Outside on the street, the City can replace old light bulbs with LEDs.

<sup>1</sup> US Environmental Protection Agency ([www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov))

### **Adaptive Reuse of Buildings**

Buildings in downtown Chelsea have potential for restoration and adaptive reuse. When constructing a new building in Chelsea, the lifecycle of the structure should be accounted for after the first user leaves. Tearing down older buildings to construct newer ones, not only creates abundant waste, but also removes a building that potentially provides a unique element to the City. Local design guidelines, regulations, and development plan approvals should require consideration of potential reuse.

There are buildings in Chelsea that could be readapted including the old Post Office, old UAW, Pierce School, and old Screw Works. These places can be repurposed into a youth center, event space, farmers market, housing, or private business.

### **Low Impact Development (LID)**

Low Impact Development (LID) refers to systems and practices that mimic natural processes, such as infiltration or stormwater reuse, to protect water quality and aquatic environments. The aim of these systems is to preserve, restore, and generate natural landscape features to produce functional and aesthetically appealing drainage that considers stormwater to be a resource, not a waste product.

There are numerous practices that have been used to uphold these principles such as bio retention facilities, vegetated rooftops, rain gardens, rain barrels and permeable pavements. By implementing LID practices, water can be managed in a way that decreases the impact of built areas and promotes the natural flow of water within an ecosystem. Applied on a broad scale, LID can maintain or restore a watershed's hydrologic and ecological functions.

In addition, a considerable amount of stormwater pollution can come from the practice of putting fertilizer, and pest and weed control on lawns. Through education, both home owners and business owners can be encouraged to manage lawns and landscaping in a more responsible way to reduce the need for the application of such chemicals or create localized filters to clean stormwater before leaving a site.

### **Renewable Energy**

As a city, Chelsea can install individual photovoltaic solar collectors for individual facility needs such as pedestrian crossing signals, street lights, parking meters, and in various park facilities such as pavilions or restrooms. Residents also indicated potential opportunities to incorporate renewable energy sources such as solar panels, biomass energy, and wind energy. Utilization of alternative energy sources should be encouraged for residents and businesses. Energy systems should be designed and situated so as to minimize any negative aesthetic impact on neighboring properties.

### **Green Buildings**

Green building practices include lot design, preparation and development; resource, energy, and water efficiency; indoor environmental quality; and operation, maintenance, and building owner education.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) buildings are the current standard for having a building qualify as being sustainable. To be eligible, LEED buildings are inspected after construction and then scored in several categories including Energy, Resources, Design, and Sustainability. While LEED is a voluntary certification, it reflects a sustainable image of the City.



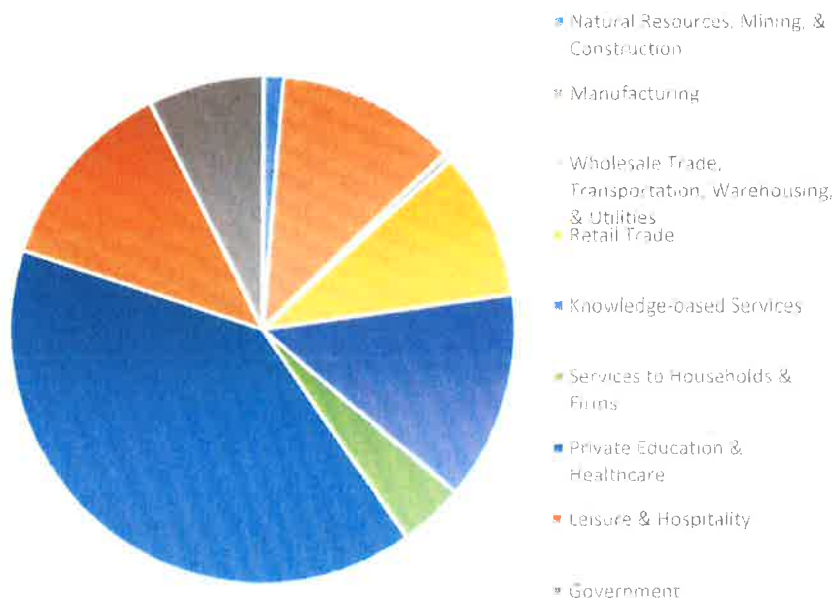
## Economic Development

### Overview

Economic development is an important component to the future prosperity of the City of Chelsea. Currently, the City boast over 6,000 jobs, and has a population of roughly 1,800 workers 16 and older. Of which only about 415 work in Chelsea. Chelsea is in a unique position within the regional economy. While the City competes with larger markets such as Ann Arbor for job creation and retention, it is also physically located in Washtenaw County in a position which makes it the regional center of the rural western half of the County. Historically, Chelsea was the regional hub for distribution of agricultural products which helped to fuel the growth of the community. This is no long true, however, residents in the region still look to the city to provide job opportunities, as well as many retail and entertainment opportunities. Roughly 84% of the jobs in the City are filled by workers who do not live in Chelsea. The number of jobs in the community is projected to climb to 7,375 by the year 2040. Based on the 2010 Census, the medium household income was \$53,611.

### Jobs By industry

The city has a relatively diverse make up of jobs based on industry. By far the largest sector is in education and health care. This is not surprising due to the location of St. Joseph's Mercy Hospital and the fact that the Chelsea school district includes a large portion of the surrounding Township. In addition, there is a decent percentage of the local economy considered knowledge based services.



Based on 2015 SEMCOG Data

### Knowledge Based Jobs

The economy has been undergoing a significant transformation from industry and manufacturing to a knowledge economy based on technology and the management of information. Communication technology, globalization, and the availability and manipulation of information have been evolving for many years. The knowledge economy can be defined as production and service based on knowledge-

intensive activities that contribute to an accelerated pace of technical and scientific advance. The key component of a knowledge economy is a greater reliance on intellectual capabilities rather than a physical input or natural resource.

If the City of Chelsea wants to attract and retain knowledge economy workers and businesses, it will find itself in a national, and even worldwide, competition. The unique features of the community and its quality of life become increasingly important competitive advantages that need to be protected, nurtured, and promoted.

Economic development strategies that rely on pursuing the “old economy”, frequently referred to as smokestack chasing, will likely be unsuccessful. Strategies which focus on attracting talent and making the City an attractive place to invest will result in long-term, more sustainable growth.

Traditional economic development has focused heavily on financial incentives. The theory behind this approach is that business will only be attracted to a place if there is sufficient financial incentive to do so.

By far the most common method used in economic development has been to **stimulate** private investment activity with indirect public investment using tax abatements. Tax abatements have become the single most common tool for local government to attract business. Tax abatements are so prevalent that when one community offers an abatement, a competing community feels compelled to do the same. While such indirect investment can stimulate private investment, the long term benefit is difficult to quantify.

An even more aggressive approach is to directly invest public dollars in private activity through **partnering**. Direct investment puts government in the position of becoming a partner, in one form or another, in a private enterprise. Specific direct investment activities typically include optioning and/or assembling land, providing low-cost loans, and providing direct grants. While the return on initial investment may be felt sooner, the public partner also assumes a higher degree of risk.

Many have argued that neither indirect nor direct investment work well in creating sustainable business development. Companies that benefit from direct investment often relocate when a “better deal” is offered elsewhere.

There has been a shift in the approach to economic development. This shift seeks to better understand investment decisions made by “new entrepreneurs” and to **create** an improved investment environment through place.

The decision of either an individual or company to invest in a community will be heavily influenced by how the community is perceived as an environment for investment. Investments are made based upon an assessment of the potential return and relative risk. The perception of a favorable investment environment will heavily influence the decision.

In formulating an economic development strategy that best responds to the shift in the economy, the first and most essential step is for City of Chelsea to view itself as an environment for investment. Why would someone want to invest in Chelsea? What assets, services and growth opportunities does City of Chelsea provide? How can the community be seen as an environment for investment that is attractive and reduces the risk for the investor?

The perception of an investor regarding the quality of place is also influenced by the message communicated by decision-makers. A strong and positive message of who we are and where we are going can be far more important than any type of incentive that can be offered. A place-based investment strategy signals a stronger commitment to the community and doesn't reflect policy changes based on political or outside influences. This in turn reflects a stable community, and thus reduces risk.

**Place-Based Investment**

*Place-based investment takes an inclusive approach to community development by targeting performance-based quality of place initiatives that maximize investment and collaboration by local governments, economic development organizations, and local institutions. This approach coordinates and builds on the combined skills and experience of multiple entities including national, state, and local agencies, business community, community residents, and community leaders.*

### **Quality of Place**

The quality of a place plays a much larger role in today's economic decisions than in recent years. As capital and people are more mobile than ever, the quality of a place matters more. Quality places retain and attract skilled and talented people who in turn retain and create jobs. People choose to live, and ultimately invest, in places that offer community amenities, social and professional networks, resources and opportunities.

Placemaking in the sense of place-based community investment considers the concept in a broader sense as a transformative tool that focuses on talent retention and attraction by creating quality communities, providing quality amenities and services, and offering an overall high quality of life. While placemaking is not a new concept, placemaking as a strategy for economic development is receiving increased attention and funding from both the public and private sector.

### **Community Assets**

The key to the future success in Chelsea is retaining and creating high paying jobs. Retaining and growing current small businesses and attracting talent and entrepreneurs is the key to sustainable, long-term job growth. This can be done by recognizing and promoting the City's existing and developing community assets, efficiently providing the necessary service and infrastructure, and promoting the best logical choices for business growth and development. The success of this method is dependent on a positive and close relationship between city government and business owners. Open and consistent communication between the local business community and local government is necessary in order to fully understand the needs of the business community and what assets are being provided by the local government.

The city of Chelsea already has many assets that are attractive to both employers and employees. The community clearly exhibits signs that let potential entrepreneurs know the City invests in the community. These signs include clean public spaces, community signage, street lighting, and well maintained



infrastructure such as streets and sidewalks. Investment in public art is also an outward sign of community stability.

In addition, business are attracted to a community where they know that highly educated, talented workers will choose to live. 46% of Chelsea residents have a bachelor's degree or Higher. Without looking at demographic information, it can be understood that the community is attractive to educated professional who can choose where they want to locate. These decisions are based on many of the same signs indicated above. They also include quality walkable neighborhoods with well-maintained housing stock, public spaces such as parks and a vibrant downtown, active transportation options, and quality school.

### **Marketing and Branding**

Develop a strong and consistent marketing campaign for the City. Ensure there are consistent messages and themes between all entities. Identify and promote/focus on/celebrate positive aspects of the community such as historic buildings, history and culture, parks, nearby recreation opportunities, traditional neighborhood design, festivals, and the great downtown.

Identify what entities are engaged in the promotion of the City including the City Government, the DDA, the Chamber, and various other non-profits. Determine who has the best capacity to manage the message and to work with all the entities engaged in such efforts to ensure consistency. These groups should work together to make sure resources are efficiently being allocated in a strategic manner. Efforts by different entities should not be duplicated. Efforts by different entities should never be competing.

Maintain and enhance traditional community design including neighborhoods, local commercial nodes, and commercial and business centers. Maintain and enhance commercial centers like downtown and Midland Street. Traditional neighborhood design has been identified as an attractive quality to those individuals and families with the financial means to choose their residential location from a variety of options.

- Preserve historic buildings downtown.
- Preserve historic housing stock.
- Require specific design criteria for new buildings in urban areas to include massing and appearance consistent with the existing or intended character.

Identify community beautification needs. Develop strategies to empower local businesses and homeowners to invest capital and effort into rehab and beautification projects. Identify prime areas where rehab and beautification projects could have the most positive effect on changing attitudes or perceptions about an area.

Continue to promote community art and quality landscape enhancements including and especially street trees. Street trees are an important community asset in both residential neighborhoods, urban environments, as well as transportation corridors.

### **Growth Potential**

While there is limited space for traditional office parks, or new industrial buildings within the city, as indicated in the land use chapter, the changing economy does not rely on such space for growth.

Ultimately, the City will be better off with 20 new 20-employee start-ups. These jobs tend to be higher paying and though somewhat slower growing, will not decimate a city if one fails. These businesses can locate in an existing building downtown, or within the second floor a new mixed use development in the commercial sections of town. In fact, the concentration of these spaces in existing or developing commercial areas can support or provide opportunity for new secondary food and service oriented business. The development of new mixed use buildings that are created with traditional building design and substantial building material tend to have higher taxable value and maintain their value longer as the life cycle of such buildings can be extended through adaptive reuse for multiple generations of industry and use trends.