

PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION MINUTES
February 7, 2017
CHELSEA MUNICIPAL BUILDING COUNCIL CHAMBERS
311 S. MAIN STREET, CHELSEA, MICHIGAN

NAMES OF THOSE PRESENT: Erik Larsen, Peter Shaw, George Olsen, Larry Ledebur, Sarah Haselschwardt, Robert Dean, Steven Parker and Claire Robinson
MEMBERS ABSENT: Geoffrey Voshel

OTHERS PRESENT: Christine Linfield (City Staff)

Meeting started at 7:00 pm.

Discussion of Draft Sylvan Township Master Plan

The Planning Commission started the work session with sharing their individual comments regarding the draft Sylvan Township Master Plan. George Olsen said that it was a good plan and noted that the township is limited potential “big box” developments to very few locations which he thought was good. Erik Larsen liked the draft plan format and noted that the introduction as to why the township was doing the plan was well done. Peter Shaw commented on how he liked the implementation section that summarized the plan and recommended that the city include a section similar in our master plan. Sarah Haselschwardt liked the goals section and the reference to agriculture but thought that some areas of the plan was vague.

Chair Ledebur asked the Planning Commission if they had any comments about the sections of the draft plan that would affect the City of Chelsea. To help streamline the discussion, Chair Ledebur made copies of his comments for the commission to review and help generate conversation. Melissa Johnson’s comments were also reviewed. (Both sets of comments are attached to the minutes.) The Planning Commission reached a consensus that they agreed with the comments created by the Chair and would like his draft to be slightly amended to extend an invitation to Sylvan Township to work together to talk about regional transportation connections, non-motorized trail linkages and possible open space parkland opportunities. Melissa Johnson’s comments will also be forwarded to Sylvan Township.

Discussion of Draft Open Space Ordinance

Chair Ledebur had drafted an Open Space Ordinance for the Planning Commission to consider as an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. There was much discussion regarding the draft. Planning Commission reached a consensus to:

1. Remove the “Major Subdivision” from the title.
2. Remove the language regarding obtaining needing permission from Planning Commission to us the open space for other purposes. The uses will instead be outlined

on the development final site plan. If the land area is not being used as approved, then the development will be in violation of their final site plan. If changes are proposed, the preferred course of action would be to have the development apply for an Amended Final Site Plan review to the Planning Commission.

3. There is no need for a separate Parkland Plan, all the information will be part of the development final site plan.
4. Remove Option 1.
5. Remove the requirement to set aside open space for less than 8 lots. Open space will be required for those developments that have 8 or more lots.
6. Consider changing the "Number of Lots" in Table 1 to "Number of Dwelling Units." This way large multiple family developments shall be included in the open space requirements.
7. Have Christine Linfield review the percent open space in Table 1 and apply the proposed requirements to other developments to see if the percentages are reasonable and feasible. She will also review the order of the graduated percentages to see if they need to be reversed.
8. Table 2 needs to be reconfigured to remove column one (but keep the limitation section) and have it clearly stated that the stormwater detention areas cannot be counted as open space for recreation.
9. Chair Ledebur will update the ordinance draft and resend to the commission for final comments. Once that is done, Christine Linfield will convert the ordinance language in the same format as the zoning ordinance. The formatted language will then be sent to the City Attorney for legal review. Once legal review is complete and final language created, then the ordinance amendment will be posted in the newspaper and a public hearing on the new language held at a future Planning Commission meeting. After the public hearing is held, the Planning Commission will vote to recommend action on the amendment by the City Council.

Other Items of Discussion

Peter Shaw spent a few minutes talking about what happens after the new master plan is adopted. He recommended that the Planning Commission think about ways to help implement the cross cutting themes such as non-motorized pathways, complete streets, walking & biking networks, sidewalk amenities such as benches, etc. He recommended that the commission start thinking about creative ways to assist with implementing these specific themes to help bring the communities vision to reality.

Work Session adjourned at 9:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Christine Linfield



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 **Tuesday, February 7 at 7:00 pm**, at the Chelsea Municipal Building (Council Chamber) located at 311 S. Main Street, Chelsea, Michigan.

Agenda:

1. Discussion of draft Sylvan Township Master Plan
2. Discussion of draft open space ordinance.
3. Other items of discussion.

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

ENABLING COMPREHENSIVE PLANS AND ORDINANCES

2008 CITY OF CHELSEA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Parks, Recreation and Open Space Goals: In an effort to address park and recreation needs, this plan promotes the following parks and recreation goals:

- Provide safe and accessible recreation within close proximity to residential areas.
- Promote a mixture of active and passive programming and activities.
- Ensure that each neighborhood area, new and existing, has access to a park or schoolyard.
- Work in partnership with the school district and other community organizations to improve services while reducing costs and duplication of services.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space Recommendations

Neighborhood Park and Open Space: Parks and open spaces should be considered as landmarks within each neighborhood unit. Within established neighborhoods, the city should consider purchasing lots for parks as opportunities become available and new residential development should be required to provide recreational opportunities for residents. Site conditions shall determine the appropriate types of recreation to be provided.

Active Recreation Facilities: With the anticipated growth of the Chelsea area, additional demand for active recreation facilities such as ball fields and soccer fields can be expected.....

Unified Park System: An overall framework should be established that utilizes parks and pedestrian routes to create a complete open space system..... Both Sylvan and Lima Townships should be an active participant in this process to support completion of a open space network for the Chelsea area.....

CITY OF CHELSEA PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN 2015-2019

[Note: The above is the title on the cover of this document. The running page header says *Chelsea Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2015*. If the City Council passed it as master plan the cover title should be changed.]

Chelsea Recreational Vision

Chelsea endeavors to be vibrant small city characterized by a strong and enduring sense of community. It seeks to create an amenity-rich residential and recreational urban setting with a sustainable quality of life for all its residents: an age-friendly community that is a rewarding healthy environment in which to grow up, to raise families, and to age in place. The creation of recreational amenities that enhance the lives of its residents and attracts visitors from its immediate region and beyond is an important building block of this effort. The vision that undergirds this plan for parks and recreation is as follows.

Chelsea will have an array of high quality, environmentally friendly parks and recreational facilities that serve all ages. Pedestrian-friendly sidewalks, trails and crossings will link this network of well-maintained park facilities. The fulcrum of this network of recreational facilities will be a new all-ages community center ideally located in the repurposed building of the former high school facility.

Chelsea will be the dynamic urban hub of its surrounding scenic and natural resource-rich immediate region including Lima, Sylvan, Lyndon Townships and the adjacent part of Dexter Township. The City will seek to create partnerships with these adjacent communities to create and sustain linkages between and among their natural resource oriented recreational opportunities and the recreational opportunities of Chelsea.

The goal of these partnerships will be a network of trails for bikers and hikers that provide non-motorized access to [a] the amenities of the Townships and the City of Chelsea, [b] the recreational resources of Dexter, Manchester and Ann Arbor [c] the Huron River Watershed recreation area and [d] the non-motorized trail network under development within the State of Michigan. Page 3

Growth and New Park Spaces [Page 3]

As the City anticipates growth, it needs to plan for additional park spaces. New residential developments pose a great challenge to the parks and recreation environment in a small city like Chelsea. New developments are built on the borders of the City and are farther from the already established parks. Historically, usable park spaces have not been designed as part of new residential developments. Consequently, the growth of the park system has not kept pace with the number of new residences. This effectively diminishes park space accessibility to all of Chelsea's residents. New residential development must include park and recreation opportunities as integral elements. Just as

streets, utilities and storm water management are required elements of developments, parks and open space also should be required.

Park space is an important aspect of the quality of life in Chelsea and should be required in all future planning activities. All park and green spaces should be usable park space and accessible to all Chelsea residents. **Similarly, all new developments should include a plan to connect to existing or planned pedestrian/bicycle paths. The City of Chelsea should review its ordinances to ensure that such planning elements are incorporated into its zoning ordinances.**

Connect Parks and Recreation Areas

Perhaps the most neglected element of our parks and recreation “system” is the interconnection of the parks, green spaces, and recreational spaces that exist both in and outside of the City. Whether the parcels are government owned, school owned, or privately held, they are not connected nor are they easily and readily accessible by pedestrians or bicyclists. Implementation of a non-motorized path and trail system that connects parks and recreation areas as well as completion of sidewalk connections throughout the City of Chelsea would greatly improve access to the parks and recreation “system” while simultaneously dramatically increasing the opportunities for recreational biking, walking, and running.

GENERAL ORDINANCE

Orphan 1970 GENERAL ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF CHELSEA

[It does not appear in the General Codes document on the City’s website. Christine Linfield says it is none the less still in force.]

Sec. 406
16.095

OPEN SPACES: In the design of the plat, through and equitable consideration shall be given by the sub-divider and the Planning Commission to the provision of suitable sites for recreation, including Tot Lots, both active and passive recreation areas, schools, an for other public purposes.

The area reserved for recreation shall be **200 square feet per dwelling unit**. The minimum dimension of the recreations area at its smallest dimension shall not be less than 60 feet.

(ord. no. 73 eff. July 6, 1970)

16.153

PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENTS: The developer may request a variance from specified portions of this Ordinance in the case of a planned unit

development. If in the judgment of the Planning Commission such a plan such a plan provides adequate public spaces and includes provisions for efficient circulation, light and air and other needs, it shall take into account the nature of the proposed use of land and existing use of land in the vicinity, the number of persons to reside or work in the proposed subdivision, and the probable effect of the proposed subdivision upon traffic conditions in the vicinity. The Planning Commission shall report to the Village Council whether:

1. The proposed project will constitute a desirable and stable community development.
2. The proposed project will be (in) harmony with adjacent areas.

(ord. no. 73 eff. July 6, 1970)

ZONING ORDINANCES

PROCEDURES FOR SPECIAL ZONING DISTRICTS

15.02

D. STANDARDS FOR PETITION REVIEW

4. Common open space, other common areas, and all other elements of the project shall be planned that they will create a unified open space and all other elements in appropriate locations, properly related to each other, the site and the surrounding land.
5. The petitioner shall have made provisions to assure that areas shown on the area plan for common or public use have been or will be irrevocably committed for that purpose. Provisions shall be made to provide financing of improvements shown on the area plan for open space or other common areas and to assure that regular maintenance of the improvements.
11. Pedestrian circulation shall be provided for within the site, and shall interconnect all residential areas. The pedestrian system shall provide a logical extension of pedestrian ways and sidewalks from the site and shall provide pedestrian connections to the edges of the for future interconnections, where applicable.

15.07 CIRCULATION AND ACCESS

b. each lot or principal building shall have pedestrian access from a public or or private sidewalk where deemed necessary by City Council, upon recommendation by the Planning Commission. All parts of a special zoning

districts shall be connected by a sidewalk or pedestrian path system which will provide safe and convenient movement of pedestrians. A bicycle path system shall also be provided and may be part of the sidewalk or pedestrian path system.

15.09. OPENS SPACE REGULATION

- A. Open space areas shall be distributed throughout the petition area and shall be reasonably located with respect to natural features and residential areas.
- B. Open space areas shall have minimum dimensions that are suitable for the functions intended that will leave the open space maintainable.'
- C. Natural features such as woods, stream corridors, and wetlands, shall be preserved to the maximum feasible extent as part of the open space system.

SECTION 15.12 COMMON AREAS AND FACILITIES

- A. The location, extent, and purpose of common areas and facilities shall be identified on the area plan and on each site plan and plat. Such areas and facilities that are to be conveyed to a public agency shall also be identified.
- B. Public areas and facilities that are to be dedicated to a public agency shall be accepted by that agency prior to approval of a final site plan by the Planning Commission or approval of a final site plat by the City Council unless a binding agreement for dedication is provided.
- C. Legal instruments setting forth a plan or manner of permanent maintenance of common areas and facilities shall be submitted to the City Attorney for review as to legal form and effect, and to the City Council or Planning Commission, whichever is applicable, for review as to the suitability. The instruments shall become part of the approved final site plan or final plat, whichever is applicable.

Open Space Standards for Major Subdivisions In the City of Chelsea

All new residential development must include park and recreation opportunities as integral elements. Just as streets, utilities and storm water management are required elements of developments, parks and open space should be required. Further, all park and green spaces should be usable park space and accessible to all Chelsea residents. New developments and redevelopments must include a plan to connect to existing or planned pedestrian/bicycle paths and trails.

Implementation

1. All new residential developments and redevelopments in the City of Chelsea must dedicate open space for a public park within the new development. Open space must be appropriate for active and/or passive outdoor recreation opportunities for the general public.
2. When possible, open space shall be arranged so as to connect across property lines. Natural areas in subdivisions should connect to adjacent areas of open space and existing habitat on surrounding properties.

The developer must provide publically accessible sidewalks or pathways. If approved by the Planning Commission, pathways or sidewalks leading to the designated open space may constitute part of the open space requirement.

3. Land designated for open space shall be maintained as open space and shall not be developed or utilized for other purposes without permission of the Planning Commission.
4. An existing, predevelopment features/plat/site analysis map must be submitted to the Chelsea Planning Department. The map shall indicate all features that exist on the subject site. Open space areas shall be identified.
5. All preliminary residential area plans, site plans and plats must include a parkland plan. This parkland plan must demonstrate accessibility and connectivity to subdivision roads and existing or planned pedestrian/bicycle paths.
6. The parkland plan must be approved the Planning Commission during the subdivision plat approval process.
7. Upon approval by the Planning Commission, the parkland plan will be recommended to the City Council.

Open Space Dedication

Option 1

Land designated, as open space to meet the requirements of this ordinance must be transferred to the City of Chelsea. The ownership of this dedicated land will be conveyed to the City of Chelsea. If approved, the conveyance will be fee simple and without cost to the City.

Each dedicated or reserved open space parcel shall be shown on all subdivision plans and recorded with the county register of deeds, with a notation of its area and its intended open space use.

Option 2

Land designated, as open space shall be a part of the City of Chelsea park system. This land must be publically accessible and shall be maintained as public open space. Neither the developer nor the governing neighborhood association shall develop or utilize for other purposes the land so designated without the permission of the Planning Commission.

The developer has the option of conveying ownership of this open space to the City of Chelsea for development and maintenance as a City park. This action must be approved by the City of Chelsea before execution. If approved, the conveyance will be fee simple and without cost to the City.

Each dedicated or reserved open space parcel conveyed to the City shall be shown on all subdivision plans and recorded with the county register of deeds, with a notation of its area and its intended open space use.

Open Space Requirements

A percentage of the total area of the residential development or redevelopment must be designated as open space as required by Table 1 below. In determining the amount of open space required, the acreage of all lots, excluding road rights-of-way, and easements, shall be totaled.

Table 1 Open Space Requirements

Number of lots	Open space requirement
Less than 8	5% of total lot area
8 – 20	10% of total lot area*
21 – 50	15% of total lot area*
More than 51	20% of total lot area*

**Total lot area = area of all lots excluding road rights-of-way, easements, etc*

Applicable Open Space:

A percentage of the total area of the total area of the residential development or redevelopment must be designated as open space as required by Table 1 below. In determining the amount of open space required, the acreage of all lot, excluding road rights-of-way, and easements, shall be totaled.

Table 2: What Qualifies as Open Space

Included as Open Space	Not Included As Open Space
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wooded, uncleared, and undeveloped areas in natural state that may provide wildlife habitat.• Water bodies and streams and their buffers, including trout stream buffers• Greenways dedicated to environmental, scenic, or recreational purposes• Lands for passive, non-motorized recreation, including activities such as running/walking, hiking, biking, primitive camping, disc (Frisbee) golf, and similar low-impact outdoor activities• In the community open space, community amenities such as public decks, plazas, picnic shelters, gazebos, outdoor stages, or similar structures. <p>Limits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No more than 50 percent of the net open space shall be covered by permanent water bodies or streams; their buffers shall not be included in the calculation of this 50 percent restriction.• Impervious surfaces shall not exceed 12% of open space areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public or private sheds, open or enclosed storage facilities, barns, or similar accessory structures.• Areas for motorized recreational use such as boat ramps and off-road/four-wheeling trails• Any public or private road, driveway, or parking area, regardless of whether it is paved, unpaved, gravel, tile, brick, or pervious pavers. Rights-of-way and areas reserved for any existing or future road are also excluded.• Solid waste disposal areas (including dumpster location sites)• Areas for aboveground utility structures as well as cleared areas for solar panels or telecommunications installations (such as satellite dishes), whether for public or private use• Land that is contaminated with hazardous or toxic waste or materials (except land covered by an approved mitigation plan and deemed acceptable to the City)• All other impervious or unnatural ground covers or land use

GOAL

Chelsea will create an *Emerald Necklace* of new public parks around the outer perimeter of the City.

This necklace of new City parks will be publicly accessible and connect with existing and planned pedestrian/bicycle pathways by means of new paths and/or sidewalks.

Chelsea will encourage adjacent Townships to provide for open space and parkland in new residential developments bordering the City. Further, the City will encourage these Townships to provide connect these open spaces and parklands to existing pathways in the jurisdiction and Chelsea.

MEANS

The City will require all new residential developments and redevelopments to set aside land for a public park within the new development. This ownership of this dedicated land will be transferred to the City at no cost. All residential development plans before the Chelsea Planning Commission must include a parkland plan consistent with City Ordinances. This parkland plan must demonstrate accessibility and connectivity to Chelsea's existing network of pathways.