

**City of Alma  
Planning Commission Minutes  
August 4, 2021**

Chairman Ayers called the special meeting of the Alma Planning Commission to order at 6:00 PM on August 4, 2021, at the Alma High School Auditorium, 1500 Pine Avenue. The venue was moved due to the anticipated number of community members attending the meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance to the United State of America was recited.

Ripley called Roll Call with a Verbal Confirmation

Present: Pitts, Schooley, Richter, Wheeler, Therrien, Ayers.

Absent: Mapes

Others Present: Aeric Ripley, City of Alma Zoning Administrator  
Tony Costanzo, City of Alma City Attorney

**Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Pitts and seconded by Therrien to approve the minutes of the July 12, 2021, Planning Commission meeting. Motion carried with a roll call verbal vote.

Yes: Richter, Wheeler, Therrien, Schooley, Pitts, Ayers.

No: None

City Attorney, Tony Costanzo provided an overview to open the tabled item from the July 12, 2021 Planning Commission meeting. He also provided an overview of the Conditional Rezoning Request. Mr. Costanzo also went over the sections of the zoning ordinance the Planning Commission is to use for making their recommendation to the City Commission.

**Open Tabled Item**

A motion was made by Richter and seconded by Therrien to open the tabled recommendation discussion from the July 12, 2021 Planning Commission meeting considering the conditional rezoning request from Masonic Pathways. Motion carried with a roll call verbal vote.

Yes: Schooley, Richter, Wheeler, Therrien, Pitts Ayers.

No: None

Ayers spoke to the many comments received through letters, the public hearing comments and face to face from individuals from each side has made it a difficult task to determine if this proposal is good for the community. The federal border policy has the community at odds and the community has a choice to support them here based on Section 60-381 (b) (5). Does not feel comfortable granting this proposal.

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Schooley spoke to the role of the Planning Commission's recommendation and setting precedent of the decision with conditional rezoning, the burden of approval is high Section 60-381 (b) (5). Resolving the issue needs to be open to all views with an unprecedented amount of public input, resolutions haven't been reached according to the stated section.

City Attorney Costanzo spoke to the recommendation motion regarding the finding of fact. If the motion is to be a recommendation of approval, the motion will indicate all five findings of fact in Section 60-381 have been met. If the motion is recommendation of denial, the motion will indicate which finding of fact was not met.

Richter spoke to the approval of several previous conditional rezoning's and to be consistent with the Master Plan with the zoning ordinance. Decision shouldn't be guided by emotions.

Schooley spoke to the previous conditional rezoning requests; affirmative resolution was found.

Richter spoke to the pervious use of an adult nursing home is not a large difference to a youth facility being proposed.

Zoning Administrator Ripley explained the possible motions of recommendation to the Planning Commission. Attorney Costanzo followed with some additional comments on for the recommendation.

A motion was made by Schooley and seconded by Wheeler to recommend denial of the conditional rezoning amendment request from the Michigan Masonic Home based on the findings of fact in Section 60-381 #5 are not affirmatively resolved in terms of the general health, safety, welfare, comfort and convenience of the citizens of the City of Alma. Motion carried with a roll call verbal vote.

Yes: Wheeler, Pitts, Schooley, Ayers.

No: Therrien, Richter.

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**Other Business**

No other business.

**Invitation to Public**

Robbie Rodriguez, St. Louis – spoke in favor of the decision.

Wayne – spoke about the pledge.

John Clore, Lansing – spoke in favor of the decision.

Gale Root, St. Louis – spoke in favor of the decision.

Sandy Gates, Alma – spoke about not being in favor of the use.

Candy Gilstrap, Alma – spoke in favor of the decision.

Cameron Little, Alma – spoke in favor of the decision.

Nancy O'Brian, Ithaca – spoke to not supporting the decision.

Stacey Evalid, St. Louis- spoke to children's needs.

Yevette Clark, Alma – spoke in favor of the decision.

A motion was made by Wheeler and seconded by Pitts at 6:42 PM to adjourn. Motion carried with a roll call verbal vote.

Yes: Wheeler, Therrien, Pitts, Richter, Schooley, Ayers.

No: None

Respectfully submitted,



Aeric Ripley  
Planning Commission Recording Secretary – 8-4-2021