

City of Eaton Rapids

Planning Commission – Special Meeting

August 18, 2025 – 6:00 p.m.

City Hall, 200 S. Main Street

1. Call to Order

Vice Chair Baker called the Special Meeting to order at **6:00 p.m.**

2. Roll Call

Present: Vice Chair Baker, Secretary Tanner, Commissioners Wegner, Jobse, Hiltz, Wicker

Absent and Excused: Chairman Vanek, Commissioners Davis, Millington

Also in Attendance: City Manager Yvonne Ridge; Mayor Pamela Colestock; Council Member Deb Malewski

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Hiltz, seconded by Wegner, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried.

4. Public Hearing – Land Division, 400 Dexter Road

Vice Chair Baker opened the Public Hearing at **6:04 p.m.**

Staff Report:

City Manager Ridge explained that 400 Dexter Road LLC requested a land division creating two (2) parcels with the property line running through the existing building.

- **Parcel A:** 10.44 acres, ~10,050 sq. ft. of the building, designated for **community use**.
- **Parcel B:** 4.70 acres, ~32,572 sq. ft. of the building, designated for **multi-family housing**.

She noted that all necessary easements are in place.

Comments:

- **Cathy Demorest, 350 Hallawood Ln.** – Asked if anything had changed since the Planned Unit Development was approved. City Manager Ridge confirmed no changes. Ms. Demorest expressed no objection, requested good neighbors, and was provided a copy of the land division.
- **Ruth Gooch, 330 Dexter Rd.** – Reported flooding in her backyard from the Slocum Drain and noted lack of response from the Eaton County Drain Commissioner’s Office. City Manager Ridge advised continued contact with the Drain Office and stated she would notify County Commissioner Keith Barber. Commissioner Wegner clarified Ms. Gooch’s concern was with the drain, not the land division.
- **Mayor Pamela Colestock, 203 Cherry St.** – Expressed support for the community component, particularly the sledding hill and new recreational opportunities. She thanked the Commission for convening a special meeting to advance the project.

Vice Chair Baker closed the Public Hearing at **6:19 p.m.**

Commission Discussion and Action

Motion by Hiltz, seconded by Wicker, to recommend to City Council approval of the land division at 400 Dexter Road into two (2) parcels:

- **Parcel A – Community Component**
- **Parcel B – Multi-Family Housing**
as shown on the survey included in the Planning Commission packet.

Discussion:

- **Commissioner Hiltz** – Expressed strong support, stating the project will be a benefit to the community and provide needed resources for residents.
- **Commissioner Wegner** – Shared his perspective as a former teacher at the property when it was a school, noting that traffic levels were historically high and comparable to what is expected with the new use. He emphasized that the land division supports two priority needs in Eaton Rapids: **housing** and **community space**. He also highlighted the return of the sledding hill and the gymnasium as valuable public assets, commenting that projects like this strengthen community identity and pride. He stressed that this project was about turning a long underutilized building into a community benefit, saying, *“It’s like the building was the dark side, and this project is the bright side.”*
- **Commissioner Wicker** – Stated the Community Center is an ideal use for the property, with the potential to accommodate programs such as AA meetings, Scouts, and Helping Hands. He noted this type of flexible, community-based programming will have lasting value for residents.

- **Vice Chair Baker** – Agreed with the comments made, stating that the combination of new housing and a community component makes this a “wonderful opportunity” for the City. He noted the dual benefits to residents of all ages.
- **Commissioner Tanner** – Stated his excitement for the project, calling it a “great opportunity for the City.” He inquired about whether all zoning requirements had been met. City Manager Ridge confirmed that the developer had met all obligations and zoning approvals were in place.
- **Commissioner Wegner (to Ms. Demorest):** Addressed a resident’s earlier concern, encouraging her to contact the City directly with any future issues related to neighbors, noting that this meeting was “not a one and done” and that the City is always available to answer questions.

Motion passed unanimously.

5. Public Comment

None.

6. Correspondence

None.

7. Adjournment

Motion by Wegner, seconded by Tanner, to adjourn.

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at **6:31 p.m.**