

1. 6:30 P.M. CALL TO ORDER  
Mike Damm (Council Liaison)\_\_\_\_ Gary Kasper\_\_\_\_  
Buryl Binder\_\_\_\_ Ben Kaiser\_\_\_\_ Ian Rudnick\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer Miller\_\_\_\_ Nate Miller\_\_\_\_ Vacant\_\_\_\_

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 3.1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Documents:

[MAY 2021 PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES.PDF](#)

4. PUBLIC COMMENT (Persons May Speak For Five Minutes About An Item That Is NOT Listed As A Public Hearing On This Agenda. Please State Your Name And Address For The Record.)

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

- 5.1. Master Plan Discussion  
CIB Planning- Discussion about Master Plan

Documents:

[GOALS AND OBJECTIVES 06-04-21 MASTER PLAN.PDF](#)

6. COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

7. CITY MANAGER ANNOUNCEMENTS & STATEMENTS

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8. ADJOURNMENT

## 5/17/2020 Planning Minutes

### 5/17/2021 - Minutes

1. 6:30 P.M. CALL TO ORDER

Present: Damm, Kasper, Binder, Kaiser, J. Miller, N. Miller and Rudnick.

Call to order 6:30PM

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve agenda made my Binder, Second by J. Miller. All in favor

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve April minutes made my Binder, Second by N. Miller. All in favor

3.I. April Planning Commission Minutes

4. PUBLIC COMMENT (Persons May Speak For Five Minutes About An Item That Is NOT Listed As A Public Hearing On This Agenda. Please State Your Name And Address For The Record.)

John Chase introduced himself.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

5.I. Rezoning 254 S. Sherman St.

City Manager discussed the change, John Chase was included in the discussion.

Motion to allow for public hearing on Agenda item Made by Binder, 2nd by J. Miller. Public hearing opened at 6:37pm. Public hearing closed at 6:38pm.

Motion to approve rezone made by Kaiser, 2nd by Binder. All were in favor

6. COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

7. CITY MANAGER ANNOUNCEMENTS & STATEMENTS

8. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourn at 6:46pm

**June 4, 2021**

Planning Commission  
City of Vassar  
287 East Huron  
Vassar, MI 48768

Dear Planning Commissioners,

To move forward with the Master Plan update, the proposed Master Plan Goals are presented for your review, discussion, and action. CIB Planning will present these Goals to you at an upcoming Planning Commission meeting. After the Goals have been decided upon, CIB Planning will draft the Objectives and Implementation strategies to accomplish the Goals and Vision for Vassar.

### **Survey Results**

A Master Plan survey was completed in December 2020 to provide input from the community on Vassar: what is Vassar's strength's, challenges, assets, values, and vision for the community? Based upon the survey results, the following statements reflect the Vassar community.

Vassar is built on deep and lasting connections.

Each of us is connected to the shared history of this place and the stories we bring to it, and we are committed to working together to forge a shared future, aware of our connections to each other and respectful of our differences.

We are connected through our neighborhoods and the sense of belonging we feel in them, and we value our connections to the larger region around us.

We also take pride in our schools, our parks, and our public spaces.

As we work to keep our neighborhoods welcoming to all, we remain committed to preserving Vassar's economy.

We recognize that the future of Vassar is connected to the natural resources and systems we depend on and enjoy, as well as the local and regional economic relationships that have developed over time.

We envision a future in which our fiscal and environmental health are in balance and wisely stewarded.

### **A Vision for Vassar**

Each of resident has a vision of what Vassar should be like in the future. Although the visions may be different, they share common qualities and reference points.

Residents of Vassar want to create a safe, attractive community for themselves, their children and for future generations. They envision a community where the natural environment is protected, where excellent services are provided, and where citizens are true partners in their City government. They aspire to create a community that is economically healthy and a good place to do business. They envision a community that has balanced mobility options and connections to regional networks. Residents of Vassar see the community as a great place to live now and in the future.

## The Vision and Master Plan Goals

The primary purpose of the Master Plan is to help the people of Vassar realize their Vision and Goals for the future. A Master Plan is written with Goals and Objectives that recognize the specific needs, problems and opportunities that exist within the community. The Goals are broad in scope and long-range in commitment.

In a broad sense, “Goals” are general statements concerning an aspect of the City's desired ultimate physical, social and/or economic environment. Goals set the tone for development decisions in terms of the citizens' desired quality of life. “Objectives” express the kinds of action that are necessary to achieve the stated Goals without assigning responsibility to any specific action. “Implementation Recommendations” related to these Goals and Objectives are presented within a separate chapter of the Master Plan, and will help clarify and encourage specific courses of action for the City to undertake to achieve the applicable stated objective.

After review and gaining Planning Commission consensus on the proposed Goals below, CIB Planning will draft the Objectives to achieve the goals.

Goals have been identified for the following elements: Community Character and Identity; Quality of Life; Community-Wide; Sense of Community and Inclusivity; Utilities and Communication Facilities; Transportation and Mobility; Economy; Housing; Natural Environment; Future Land Use and Growth Management; Energy; and Resiliency.

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### Community Character and Identity Goals

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1. Foster an environment that will meet the physical, social, and economic needs of present and future residents.
2. Promote Vassar’s identity as a creative and innovative community where creative individuals and enterprises thrive.
3. Support vibrant, diverse, safe and well-connected neighborhoods
4. Maintain and enhance the City’s local character and aesthetic value through land use planning.
5. Preserve the unique quality and character of each of Vassar’s neighborhoods.
6. Ensure that new development and other physical changes in the City protect the character of the community and emphasize Vassar’s historic, cultural, natural, and other positive elements as it is applicable to the site and surrounding area.

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### Quality of Life

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1. Provide a high quality of life for all people who live and play in Vassar.
2. Create a vibrant, progressive, and diverse community through collaborative planning with neighboring communities and leveraging regional and state partnerships.
3. Achieve a community where people feel safe and are comfortable in engaging in a full range of community life.
4. Take advantage of Vassar’s unique facilities and events as a way to promote strong cultural identity.

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### Community-Wide, Sense of Community, and Inclusivity

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1. Encourage intergovernmental cooperation with surrounding communities.
2. Work with the school district to foster a positive environment for families.
3. Maintain Vassar as a community that is accessible to a range of income levels, ages, and households.
4. Encourage citizen participation and dialogue with elected and appointed officials and city administration to foster broad-based representation and input for local government decisions.
5. Foster a positive, interactive relationship with the public and encourage citizen involvement.

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### Utilities and Community Facilities

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1. Evaluate utility infrastructure system to ensure that it meets the needs of the City while protecting both surface and ground water.
2. Provide safe, adequate, and cost -infrastructure and services for the efficient and well-managed growth to meet current and future needs.
3. Provide a high level of service to residents and non-residents.
4. Continue to support community facilities and services including fire protection, emergency services, solid waste collection, education facilities, healthcare services, libraries, and social services for a variety of age groups, continually improving and expanding community services as needed.

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### Transportation and Mobility

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1. Provide safe and efficient transportation options that minimize the impacts of traffics on the City's character and quality of life.
2. Develop and maintain a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system balancing the needs of all users.
3. Ensure adequate funding options to implement transportation recommendations.

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### Economy

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1. Create a vibrant, diverse, and sustainable local economy that reflects Vassar's social fabric, values, and character.
2. Support the retention and expansion of local businesses.
3. Realize infill development of non-retail uses where appropriate, resulting in additional and local and commuter customers and expanded non-retail commercial tax base.
4. Encourage the establishment of new businesses and promote the retention of existing businesses in Vassar, thereby creating increased and diversified employment opportunities.
5. Attract and retain highly skilled workers to the community.

6. Facilitate proactive and sustainable economic development partnerships that maximizes economic partnerships to improve the quality of life through increased earned income and prosperity for all citizens.
  7. *Commercial:* Promote commercial growth in a way that enhances economic development .
  8. *Industrial:* Encourage a wide variety of industrial developments with attractive sites to strengthen the tax base and provide employment opportunities for area residents.
  9. *Downtown:* Leverage the unique identity that sets the downtown as a convenient, walkable, and attractive environment for doing business. Also, continue to promote downtown as a vibrant, mixed-use area and home to a variety of businesses and residences.
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## Housing

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1. Create well-designed neighborhoods that contribute to a sense of community which provide housing opportunities suited to the needs of a variety of household types and will contribute to the quality of life for current and future residents of Vassar.
  2. Provide a balanced blend of quality of housing opportunities, including price ranges that are affordable for all income levels and housing types that consider the needs of a diverse population including older residents, young families, and first-time home-owners.
  3. Protect the integrity of existing and future neighborhoods by ensuring that existing neighborhoods are maintained to a high standard and by ensuring that new neighborhoods are initially developed to a high standard.
  4. Work with the existing housing stock to meet affordable housing needs.
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## Natural Environment

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1. Advocate for the efficient use of resources and sustainable practices that work to eliminate harmful impacts to the health of the community and natural environment.
  2. Continue to promote and protect the natural environment of Vassar, including the Cass River, wildlife, scenery, and vegetation.
  3. Proactively improve environmental sustainability and reduce impacts on the natural environment.
  4. Ensure development practices and land use policies continue to improve the relationship between the City and the Cass River and provide recreation needs of all residents.
  5. Adopt a low-impact approach regarding natural resources and development for improved environmental health and enjoyment of the natural landscape.
  6. Enhance the connectivity and physical access to nature areas and useable open spaces for residents and visitors to readily enjoy.
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## Future Land Use and Growth Management

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1. Provide a diverse mixture of land uses and tax base that supports a sustainable balance between residential and non-residential development and serves the needs of residents, workers, and visitors.

2. Encourage the most desirable and efficient use of land while enhancing local aesthetics and respecting environmental elements.
3. Encourage infill development and redevelopment to take advantage of existing infrastructure.
4. Guide the physical redevelopment of the City in a sustainable manner that preserves vibrant, livable neighborhoods, and also encourages compact mixed-use development to meet the needs of a changing population and economy.
5. Employ land use planning to meet the long-term needs of residents and improved the quality of life in communities.

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## Energy

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1. Increase the adoption of renewable energy systems within the residential, commercial, and municipal sectors.
2. To provide safe, secure, reasonably priced energy supplies and services to Vassar’s commercial, industrial, transportation, and residential customers.
3. To encourage and maintain economic growth prospects for the City by recognizing and fostering the multiple functions of energy in the economy—as an integral part of producing and transporting goods and services; as a means of attracting business to Vassar with reliable, reasonably-priced energy; and as a potential driver of new areas of economic activity.

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## Resiliency

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1. Identify Vassar’s strengths and vulnerabilities thereby making it possible to concentrate flood protection measures where most efficient.
2. Create economic stability against the threat of flooding.
3. Protect Vassar’s critical infrastructure.
4. Improve emergency preparedness Citywide.

I look forward to discussing the Vision and Goals for the City of Vassar with you.

Regards,

CIB Planning



Kelly McIntyre  
Principal