

DRAFT

**City of Inkster
Planning Commission Meeting
February 24, 2025
6:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers
Open to the Public**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission was held on Monday, February 24, 2025 in the Inkster City Hall Council Chambers, located at 26215 Trowbridge, Inkster, Michigan 48141. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Chisholm at 6:37 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman S. Chisholm, Mayor Byron Nolen, Commissioner A. Williams, Commissioner T. Williams, Commissioner S. Hayes-Bradford, Commissioner T. Hall, Commissioner D. Davis, Commissioner M. Willis

Excused: Commissioner N. McDaniel

Others in Attendance: Georgina Holliday, City Clerk, Councilwoman D. Richardson, Derek Dowdell, Director of Community Development, D. Smith of McKenna. For 1173 Henry Ruff - Owner Ali Sawami, and attorney Sean Norceegan, For 2617 Middlebelt - Jason, owner and Zaid Arabo, architect; and members of the public.

Quorum Present: Yes.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion made and seconded to adopt Agenda with changes. (Item V. B. Master Plan approval – next City Council; Item VI. Public Hearings. A. Mater Plan, B. Case #25-02 1183 Henry Ruff (SLU), C. Case #25-03 2617 Middlebelt (SLU); Item VIII. New Business - separate site plans and special land use for cases 25-02 - 1183 Henry Ruff – Item A. Site Plan, Item B. Special Land Use, Case # 25-03, 2617 Middlebelt, Item C. Site Plan, Item D. Special Land Use; X .City Council Public Comment Policy adoption. Motion carried.

III. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Review of Minutes of January 27, 2024 Joint Meeting with City Council.
Motion made and seconded to adopt Minutes. Motion carried.

IV. FIRST HEARING OF THE PUBLIC (*for items not scheduled for a public hearing but on the Agenda*) No public comments.

V, MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Review draft of Master Plan for recommendation to the City per Michigan Planning Enabling Act requirements. Mr. Donovan Smith of McKenna presented findings from the 63-day comment period. Resident offered innovative ideas with some economic development aspects. Another resident comment noted the importance of single-family homes and requested additional input on their economic development value. Several changes were added to reflect the need for single family homes as well as multi-family units and types recommended by McKenna.

Chairman Chisholm opened the floor for questions or comments. There were no additional question or comments.

Item V. B. Approval to recommend proposed Master Plan to City Council per Michigan Planning Enabling Act requirements. Mayor Nolen stated that the City Council would vote on Item V. B. at the next Council meeting on Monday, March 3rd.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING(S)

A. Master Plan

Chairman Chisholm called for a motion to open the public hearing. Motion made and seconded to open the public hearing. There were no questions or comment from the public. Chairman Chisholm called for a motion to close the public hearing. Motion made and seconded.

B. **Case #25-02 1183 Henry Ruff (SLU)**

Chairman Chisholm called for a motion to open the public hearing for Case #25-02 (SLU). Motion made and seconded. Mr. Dowdell, Director of Community Development, stated that the purpose of the public hearing was for a special land use for the sale of alcohol, beer and wine in B-1 district. He reminded the Commission that a text amendment was approved in 2024 for the sale of alcohol in B-1 and B-2. The location is a convenience store (Quick Corner Convenience) that is currently open located in a strip mall (corner of Henry Ruff and Glenwood). Mr. Dowdell recommended approval. Sean Norceegan, attorney for the applicant/owner, presented a drawing showing the improvements that had been made to the building and noted that it was a large store (4,000 square feet). There are plans to also open a pizza place and an ice cream shop. The owners are working to revitalize the strip mall. Per Mr. Norceegan beer and wine sales can assist with bringing in more business.

Chairman Chisholm called for public comment. Resident Tina Raymond who lives in a trailer park on Henry Ruff spoke and said the store is very helpful to residents from the trailer park, particularly those who don't have transportation and walk to shop and for the disabled in wheelchairs who live in the neighborhood, Resident Mr. Daryl Jordan, who has lived on Henry Ruff since 1972, spoke in favor of the store as well - shopping for those who do not have

transportation. He noted that there were a lot of elderly people living in the area and the store in the neighborhood is a help to them and a “nice addition.”

Petitions from residents in favor of the store were given to the Commissioners.

Councilwoman Richardson commented that she thought the renovations to the building were “beautiful.” She asked if the owners had thought of anything else, such as a deli which makes sandwiches, other than liquor as, in her opinion, there were already an abundance of liquor stores in Inkster.

Commissioner Hayes-Bradford stated that she would prefer something that uplifts the community that is family friendly – something to enjoy without being concerned about police presence because of problems with people who abuse alcohol.

Commissioner M. Willis stated that he did not oppose the sale of alcohol at the convenience store.

Commissioner D. Davis also stated that he did not oppose the sale of alcohol at the convenience store.

Commissioner A. Williams spoke and noted that Inkster is a small city in a good location and the Commission should be diligent in monitoring the number of businesses that sell alcohol and marijuana businesses so that in the future it is not said that there is an abundance of these businesses, and that the City is known only for these types of businesses.

It was noted that the store that occupied that location in the past also sold beer and wine.

Commissioner T. Williams asked the owner if they had plans for potential loitering as some people tend to hang out around the neighborhoods and stores that sell alcohol. The attorney for the owner stated that there are state minimums for the sale of alcohol. He noted that loiterers would not be good for business as their presence would deter other customers. He pointed out that the area is well lit. The Commissioner also asked what percentage of the store would be used for the sale of alcohol. The attorney answered that the liquor would be behind the counter, there would be coolers for beer and some rows of wine. He said the store was already 90% full and invited the Commissioners to visit the store.

Commissioner A. Williams said that data shows that businesses that sell alcohol have a detrimental effect on the neighborhoods where they are located.

Mayor Nolen interjected the idea that if some stores that sell alcohol have unsavory characters loitering around and some stores that sell alcohol do not that it is a management problem. He noted that the concern of some of the Commissioners is that Inkster already has many liquor stores.

Commissioners asked the hours of operation - 10 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Sunday. Mr. Dowdell reminded everyone that if the City Council denies the SLU the applicant must wait one (1) year before they can re-apply.

Motion to close public hearing was made and seconded.

Case #25-03 2617 Middlebelt (SLU)

Chairman Chisholm called for the motion to open the public hearing. Motion to open public hearing was made and seconded. Purpose of the hearing is to consider a special land use permit to allow for a gas station in the B-3 General Business District at 2617 Middlebelt. Per Mr. Dowdell, the location was formerly an auto repair shop. That use is not currently allowed in the B-3 but a gas station is allowed with a special land use permit. Applicant is also including a convenience store. The current building will not be torn down but reconfigured. Mr. Zaid Adabo, architect for the owners, said that the building is going to be completely renovated inside and outside. They will be removing the old tanks and putting in four (4) new two-sided pumps-eight (8) pumps. They are also seeking the approval for the sale of beer, wine and liquor (to set them apart from the other gas stations in the neighborhood). The proposed sale of alcohol is not stated in the SLU application. When the issue was raised that there are already two (2) gas stations close by and why have another, Mr. Arabo said that it costs a great deal of money to clean underground tanks and would be a major investment for a small business. Noting that the building is very unsightly he surmised that it would remain as is unless a gas station was put there because of the expense to fix and clean the site, particularly the underground tanks. He also said that the site is too small for multiple businesses, such as a strip mall, as it is a corner. Mr. Arabo asked that the vote on the gas station be tabled so that the owners can re-vise their application to include the sale of alcohol. He also said that data shows that liquor, beer and wine increase sales by 20 to 30% and without them in would take many more years to see a return on the investment in the business. He mentioned that the Commissioners' concern regarding loitering is only a small percentage. Mayor Nolen stated that the interests of the residents of Inkster must be considered and expressed his concern that gas station convenience stores that do not currently sell alcohol will also want to obtain a liquor license. Application to be revised to include the sale of liquor, beer and wine. Motion made and seconded to close the public hearing.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Case #25-02 1183 Henry Ruff (SP)

Per Mr. Dowdell, two things were missing from the Site Plan – landscaping plan and a security plan – in process. Motion made and seconded to approve Site Plan with conditions proposed by the Planning Department.

B. Case #25-02 1183 Henry Ruff (SLU)

Mr. Dowdell reviewed the nine (9) conditions that the SLU must meet. Motion made and seconded to deny SLU - for recommendation to the City Council. Three (3) in favor of denial, two (2) opposed to denial.

C. Case #25-03 2617 Middlebelt (SP)

D. Case #25-03 2617 Middlebelt (SLU)

Tabled. Applicant to return with revised Application to include the sale of liquor, beer and wine at the convenience store.

E. Public Comment Policy

Consider approval to adopt City Council policy to accept written requests for public comment to be sent at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. Comments are received and distributed to the body but not read aloud at the meeting. Motion made and seconded to approve the City Council public comment policy.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS

Public Comment. One (1) public comment from Charles Blackwell was received and distributed to the Planning Commission and the City Council.

Master Plan. Motion made and seconded to approve the Master Plan and send recommendation for approval to the City Council.

X. SECOND HEARING(S) OF THE PUBLIC (*for items not scheduled for a public hearing or on the Agenda*)

No public comment.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned
At 8:10 p.m.

Secretary _____

Date Adopted: _____

