

# Village of Ellsworth 2025 Planning Commission Annual Report



## **INTRODUCTION:**

This 2025 Village of Ellsworth Planning Commission Annual Report was prepared pursuant to the requirements of Section 19(2) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act ("MPEA"), which states:

*A planning commission shall make an annual written report to the legislative body concerning its operations and the status of planning activities, including recommendations regarding actions by the legislative body related to planning and development.*

This report is intended to serve as the Planning Commission's report to the Village Council in accordance with the MPEA as quoted above, and it will also outline a work plan of items for the Planning Commission to address in the coming year.

## **BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:**

The following boards and commissions work directly and/or indirectly with the Planning Commission to move the Village forward on economic development and land use planning matters:

- Ellsworth Village Council
- Village of Ellsworth Planning Commission
- Village of Ellsworth DDA
- Banks Township and Village of Ellsworth Recreation Committee (Ad-hoc)

## **ADMINISTRATION:**

The Planning Commission receives administrative support from the Village President and Village Clerk, the Village Zoning Administrator, as well as a Planning Consultant. Development decisions and strategic planning documents are developed through community and stakeholder input, and planning commission meetings are conducted within the requirements of the OMA (Open Meetings Act). The Village of Ellsworth Zoning Administrator receives and processes land use permit applications, and seeks outside assistance in the case of more complex site plan review development applications.

## **PLANNING COMMISSION:**

The Planning Commission meets the second Thursday of even months and is responsible for reviewing development applications, preparing plans, and making recommendations to the Village Council on development applications and zoning amendments. This schedule will continue throughout 2026.

## **MEMBERS:**

The Village of Ellsworth Planning Commission consists of five (5) members in compliance with Section 15(2) of the MPEA which provides in relevant part: "*Planning Commissions shall consist of five (5), seven (7), or nine (9) members*" (MCL 125.3815).

The 2025 Village Planning Commissioners were:

Larry Essenberg, Chairperson  
Al Drenth  
Jerry Klooster  
Lynn Spearing, Village Council Representative  
Mary Neer

**MEETINGS:**

The Planning Commission held five (5) meetings in 2025, meeting the requirement in Section 21 (1) of the MPEA which provides in relevant part: "Planning Commissions shall hold not less than 4 regular meetings each year" (MCL 125.3821). Each meeting held a quorum.

- February 13
- April 10
- June 12
- August 14
- October 9 (Canceled due to lack of business items)
- December 11

**PLANNING ACTIVITY AND STATUS:**

The Planning Commission continued work on the components of the Michigan Redevelopment Ready Community program, working towards RRC Essentials certification. Components of the RRC Essentials certification that the Planning Commission discussed and updated in 2025 included the fee schedule, internal guide to development, Board and Commission orientation and application materials, and updates to the Capital Improvements Plan.

The Planning Commission continued with its 5-year review of the Village Master Plan, first initiated in 2024. The Master Plan was completed and adopted by the Planning Commission on December 11, 2025, in accordance with the requirements established by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.

**PLANNING COMMISSION PRIORITIES AND WORK LIST FOR 2026:**

- Complete the Michigan Redevelopment Ready Community certification process.
- Continue with annual updates to Village documents including the Capital Improvements Plan and fee schedule.
- Begin audit of 2025 adopted Master Plan for potential items to consider implementing.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS BY VILLAGE COUNCIL RELATED TO PLANNING:**

- Establish annual joint meeting of Village Council and Planning Commission.