

# CITY OF MASON

## STAFF AGENDA REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

---

**Meeting Date:** August 6, 2007

**Agenda Item:** 7

---

### **AGENDA ITEM**

Report - Code Enforcement Update – David Haywood, Zoning & Development Director

### **EXHIBITS**

None.

### **STAFF REVIEW**

Zoning & Development Department

### **SUMMARY STATEMENT**

During 2007, the Zoning and Development Department continued to provide services to the community relating to zoning, planning, building inspections, code enforcement and facilities management. Building permits and development proposals continued to be at a steady rate. Rezoning and Historic District Commission reviews are down this year, while appeals and variance requests appear to be higher than normal.

The Zoning and Development Department is responsible for the following Chapters of the Mason City Code:

- Chapter 6 (Building and Building Regulations)
- Chapter 22 (Environment)
- Chapter 30 (Floods)
- Chapter 31 (Historic Preservation)
- Chapter 58 (Signs)
- Chapter 74 (Subdivisions and other divisions of land)
- Chapter 86, Article II (Vegetation)
- Chapter 94, (Zoning)

In addition to the code responsibilities the Department is responsible for the day-to-day maintenance needs for City Hall, Police Department, Library, and rental property.

### **ZONING ADMINISTRATOR**

The Zoning Administration was involved in a variety of projects during 2007, including but not limited to the following:

- A. Prepared staff reviews for special use permits, site plan reviews, ordinance amendments, variance requests, assignment of addresses, and land division requests.

- B. Prepared numerous drafts and revisions of Ordinance No. 159 (Signs). Prepared drafts, distributed copies to public, arranged meetings with business owners, scheduled public hearings, and reported to City Council on findings.
- C. Prepared amendment to the zoning ordinance to amend the wireless telecommunications towers regulations. Prepared draft ordinance for Planning Commission review.
- D. Worked with City Department Heads for annual update to the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).
- E. Participated in the beginning phases of the Census 2010. Attended workshop and introduction to the Census 2010 project timeline and responsibilities.
- F. Provided staff assistance to the Building Code Board of Appeals, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and Historic District Commission on a variety of development, variance, and appeals reviews.
- G. Through Tri-County Regional Planning Commission served as a member to the Urban and Rural Service District Committee.
- H. Through the Greater Lansing Regional Committee for Stormwater Management served as member of the Ordinance Subcommittee to guide implementation of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II program.
- I. Continued inventory of available commercial space for the EDC.
- J. Assisted the Historic District Commission in grant application to the State Historic Preservation Office and budget amendment request to City Council for re-inventory project.

The following table illustrates the comparative levels of applications, reviews and appeals in 2007:

| Type                           | 2007 |
|--------------------------------|------|
| Zoning Amendments              | 1    |
| Other Code Amendments          | 1    |
| Rezoning                       | 0    |
| Special Use Permits            | 2    |
| Preliminary Site Plan Reviews* | 0    |
| Final Site Plan Reviews        | 1    |
| Plats (Preliminary / Final)    | 0    |
| Planned Unit Development       | 0    |
| Land Divisions                 | 3    |
| Zoning Board of Appeals        | 5    |
| Historic District Commission   | 1    |
| Building Code Board of Appeals | 5    |
| TOTAL                          | 19   |

\* Preliminary site plan reviews not included in Special Use Permits.

### **BUILDING OFFICIAL/BUILDING INSPECTOR**

In addition to the day-to-day building inspections, plan reviews and code enforcement, the Building Official/Building Inspector has been involved in a variety of activities during 2007, including but not limited to the following:

- A. Assisted Gestamp US Hardtech in nearly daily inspections and worked with third-party inspection company to verify that work is performed to engineered specifications.
- B. Attended the Code Officials Conference of Michigan – 1 week.
- C. Attended HUVACO continuing education classes for Building Official, Plan Review and Inspector certification requirements – 4 days.
- D. Worked three Saturdays to catch up on paper work and make drive-by observation for contractors and vendors working without a permit.

### **BUILDING PERMITS/INSPECTIONS**

In 2007, there were 264 inspections for 139 building permits issued. The following table illustrates the comparative building activity for 2007:

| Type                    | 2007 |
|-------------------------|------|
| Residential, new        | 6    |
| Residential, alteration | 13   |
| Residential, addition   | 6    |
| Commercial, new         | 4    |
| Commercial, alteration  | 10   |
| Signs                   | 12   |
| Other permits*          | 88   |
| Total permits           | 139  |

\* Other permits include decks, demolitions, fences, garages, pools, re-roofs, siding, etc.

### **CODE ENFORCEMENT**

The Department has been very active in code enforcement this year. To give a relative comparison the following table shows the level of increased code enforcement activity in the past three years through July 25, 2007:

| Type                   | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 |
|------------------------|------|------|------|
| Code Enforcement Cases | 86   | 106  | 212  |

The following table illustrates the code enforcement activity by category for 2006 and 2007 through July 25, 2007. As you can see, over 83 percent of the cases since January of 2006 have been resolved.

| Type                   | Cases Opened | Cases Closed | Cases Pending |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Blight                 | 21           | 14           | 7             |
| Junk                   | 41           | 37           | 4             |
| Noise                  | 1            | 1            | 0             |
| Nuisance               | 37           | 29           | 8             |
| Property Maintenance   | 25           | 9            | 16            |
| Tall Grass/Weeds       | 91           | 83           | 8             |
| Unlicensed/Inop. Car   | 54           | 48           | 6             |
| Working W/out a Permit | 48           | 42           | 6             |
| Totals                 | 318          | 263          | 55            |

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

No action required.