

Heather Hanover  
Chair

To Be Determined  
Vice-Chair

Commissioners

Scott Dzurka, Mayor

Vacant, Vice Mayor

Eric Harger

Mark Holden

Brian Mills

Melvin Renfrow

James Eshelman

Wendy Ward



**CITY OF ST. JOHNS  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**MEETING AGENDA**  
**MEETING DATE: August 9, 2023**

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The St. Johns Planning Commission will hold a regular meeting on August 9, 2023 at 5:30 pm in the County Commission Chambers located at the Clinton County Courthouse, 100 E. State Street, St. Johns, MI. (Please use Cass St. Entrance.)

**AGENDA**

- 1. Call to Order (5:30 pm)**
- 2. Approval of Agenda (5:31 pm – 5:32 pm)**
- 3. Approval of Minutes (July 12, 2023 Meeting) (5:33 pm – 5:34 pm)**
- 4. Public comment for non-agenda items (5:34 pm – 5:35 pm)**
- 5. Public Hearings: None**
- 6. New Business:**
  - A. Chain Link Fences in Front Yards Ordinance (5:36 – 5:45)**
  - B. Pets Amendment (5:46 – 5:55)**
  - C. Planning Commission Member Absence Policy (5:56 – 6:10)**
- 7. Old Business:**

**Election of Vice Chair (6:11 – 6:21) (ACTION ITEM)**
- 8. Commissioner Comments (6:22 – 6:30)**

## 9. Adjournment

*Please note that the Planning Commission will take up the following topics at future meetings, depending on available time:*

- *RV and Golf Cart Parking - Potential Zoning Amendment*
- *Downtown Edge Parking - Potential Zoning Amendment*

Meeting minutes from the **July 12<sup>th</sup>** Planning Commission meeting will be included when they are received.



# Memorandum

**TO:** City of St. Johns Planning Commission

**FROM:** Christopher Khorey, AICP, Senior Principal Planner

**SUBJECT:** **Chain Link Fences in Front Yards**

**DATE:** June 5, 2023

Section 155.187.M of the Zoning Ordinance states that “fences placed in a front yard or in the side yard of a corner lot that abuts a street right-of-way shall be decorative in nature.”

Subsection 4 of that section states “the use of wire fencing, including, but not limited to, so-called cyclone or chain link fencing, shall not be allowed on decorative fences.”

Together, these provisions have the impact of prohibiting chain link fences in front yards, City-wide, in St. Johns.

Recently, several property owners have expressed concerns about that rule, due to safety concerns for dogs, and the small side and rear yards that corner lots tend to have in the City.

At the June 14 meeting, the Planning Commission should discuss whether an amendment would be appropriate to allow chain link fences in front yards, or at least to allow them in some instances, such as on the street side yard of a corner lot.



# Memorandum

**TO:** City of St. Johns, MI  
**FROM:** Christopher Khorey, AICP  
 Emily Huhman  
**SUBJECT:** **Keeping of Animals Ordinance Comparisons**  
**DATE:** July 28, 2023

As requested, below please find comparisons of regulations regarding the keeping of pets and animals from the City of East Lansing, the City of Lansing, the City of Grand Ledge, and the City of Mount Pleasant. The following table outlines definitions of animals and pets within the ordinance, zoning limitations, limits on number and type of animal, and any additional regulations contained within the ordinance. **This data was collected by Code Enforcement Officer Jessica Austin and summarized by McKenna.**

There are many similarities that can be seen within these ordinances. Three cities include similar definitions for household pets, and the City of Lansing additionally defines livestock and wild animals. The City of Mount Pleasant does not define household pets or other types of animals. All the cities limit the number of dogs or cats to 3 or 4, with the City of Lansing also allowing up to 5 hens on a one- or two- family residential property. Lastly, apart from the City of Mount Pleasant, all cities specify the keeping of household pets as an accessory use in all zoning districts or allow the keeping of horses “by right” in agriculture districts.

	City of East Lansing	City of Lansing	City of Grand Ledge	City of Mount Pleasant
Definitions	Dogs, cats, canaries, or other animals which are commonly kept inside dwellings as household pets.	Livestock – horses, cattle, sheep, goats, poultry, pigs, and other animals normally raised on a farm  Wild animal – an animal not domesticated by humans or an animal a person is prohibited by law from possessing  Household pet – dogs, cats, fish, birds, hamster, and other animals generally regarded	Household pet – dogs, cats, fish, birds, hamsters, and other animals generally regarded as household pets	N/A



		as commonly living inside household dwellings as household pets		
<b>Zoning Limitations?</b>	Horses may be kept for private use in agricultural zones.	Keeping of household pets permitted as an accessory use in any zoning district  Wild animals not permitted in residential zoning districts	Keeping of household pets permitted as an accessory use in any zoning district  Wild animals not permitted in residential or agricultural zoning districts	N/A
<b>Limit on Number on Animals?</b>	No more than 4 animals – Dogs, cats, or a combination of the two.	No more than 3 dogs aged 4 months or older in one dwelling unit  No more than 5 hens on any one- or two-family residential property	No more than 3 dogs aged 4 months or older in one dwelling unit	Maximum of 3 – Unlawful to keep 4 or more dogs and/or cats aged 4 months or older
<b>Limit on Type on Animal?</b>	Limited to dogs, cats, canaries, or other animals commonly kept inside as household pets.	Wild animals not permitted in residential zoning districts	Wild animals not permitted in residential or agricultural zoning districts	Only dogs and cats specified in ordinance.
<b>Additional Regulations</b>	Single-Family and Duplexes – No dog can be confined to the front yard without a person being present in the yard.  No riding or keeping of horses on public property.	Hen enclosures shall not be closer than 10 ft from adjacent property or 40 ft from any residential structure on adjacent property.	N/A	Shall not apply to animal kennels, shelters, veterinary hospitals, and similar businesses that abide by the applicable zoning and licensing regulations.

We look forward to discussing these Keeping of Animal regulations further.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
November 6, 1969

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order at 7:34 P.M. by Vice-Chairman Morriss.

Present: Morriss, Wood, Huntoon, Wilcox, Weatherwax, Carpenter, Huard, Moore  
Absent: Rand  
Staff Present: City Attorney

Motion by Member Wilcox supported by Member Wood to dispense with the minutes from the last meeting until December 4, 1969 meeting.

YEA: Morriss, Wood, Huntoon, Wilcox, Weatherwax, Carpenter, Huard, Moore  
NAY: None

Motion carried.

Vice-Chairman Morriss requested that all members read the proposed by-laws before any action be taken.

BY-LAWS  
ST. JOHNS CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

ARTICLE 1 - OFFICERS

*SECTION 1: The officers of this Planning Commission shall be: A Chairman who shall preside at all meetings and shall have special duties as prescribed by the by-laws, and shall have the authority to preside at any recessed meeting, or call and preside at any special meeting.*

*A Vice-Chairman, who shall function in the same capacity as the Chairman in the case of the Chairman's absence or inability to act.*

*A secretary that shall record the minutes of all meetings and retain all pertinent information. The Secretary of the Planning Commission shall be the City Clerk of the City of St. Johns and he shall keep a written record of all business transacted by the Planning Commission, serve notification to all members of all meetings, keep on file all official records of the Planning Commission, certify all maps, records and reports of the Planning Commission, and more specifically serve notice of all hearings and public hearings and shall submit the annual report of the Planning Commission's activities to the City Commission.*

*The officers of the City Planning Commission shall be elected each year for a one (1) year term by the Planning Commission from the voting members at their annual November meeting.*



ARTICLE 11 - PERSONNEL

SECTION I: The Commission may employ a director and such employees as it seems necessary for its work, and may hire such consultants for part time or full time service as may be necessary for the prosecution of their responsibilities with the approval of the City Commission.

SECTION II: The Planning Commission shall prepare and adopt appropriate personnel regulations which shall apply to the conduct of any person hired.

ARTICLE III - MEETINGS

SECTION I: The regular meeting of the Planning Commission shall be the first Thursday of each month. All Planning Commission meetings either regular or special meetings shall be held at 7:30 P.M. and shall be adjourned at 8:00 P.M. if a quorum is not present at that time.

Special meetings may be held as required, subject to the call of the Chairman or Vice-Chairman acting in the Chairman's absence with notice to all members of the Planning Commission and notice of said meeting to be posted in a public place 24 hours preceeding the meeting.

SECTION II: The Planning Commission members shall be notified of the place and date of each regular meeting, by the Clerk, by a written notice mailed to the adress of the members not less than 24 hours proir to the date set for the meeting.

SECTION III: All regular and special meetings shall be public meetings.

SECTION IV: The Planning Commission shall conduct all meetings pursuant to Roberts Rules of Order.

SECTION V: The Chairman of the Planning Commission may call at his discretion "Committee of the Whole Meetings" to discuss matters of interest to the Planning Commission. Committee of the Whole Meetings may be private and business shall not be transacted.

ARTICLE IV - BUDGET

SECTION I: The Chairman shall prepare and submit to the Planning Commission at its January meeting the proposed budget for the next fiscal year. The Planning Commission may amend any budgetatory recommendations of the Chairman and the proposed budget shall be submitted to the City Manager.

SECTION II: The fiscal year of the Planning Commission shall be July 1 to June 30.



ARTICLE V - COMMITTEES

SECTION I: Internal committees shall be appointed by the Chairman as deemed necessary by the Planning Commission.

The Chairman of such committees shall be the Planning Commission members. Other members of the Committee need not be commission members.

SECTION II: The Commission may appoint advisory committees whose members may consist of individuals whose experience, training or interest in the program may qualify them to lend valuable assistance to the Planning Commission by acting in an advisory capacity in consulting with the Commission in technical and special phases of the program. Members of such advisory bodies shall receive no compensation for their services but may be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred in the performance of their duties at the discretion of the Planning Commission.

ARTICLE VI - AMENDMENTS

SECTION I: The by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of the membership of the Planning Commission at a regular meeting. Any proposed amendments to the by-laws shall be submitted to the membership at least 5 days prior to such meetings.

ARTICLE VII - STATUTE

SECTION I: Ordinance No. 154 of the City of St. Johns and Act no. 285 of the Michigan Public Acts of 1931 as amended is incorporated in and is hereby a part of these by-laws.

ARTICLE VIII - VOTING

SECTION I: All nine (9) members of the Planning Commission both regular members and ex-officio members appointed by the City Commission shall have the right to vote on any question, motion, resolution or such other matter that may come before the Planning Commission.

ARTICLE IX - QUORUM

SECTION I: A quorum and majority shall be defined as five (5) members, either regular or ex-officio.

Motion by Member Wood supported by Member Moore to adopt the proposed by-laws with typographical corrections to be made and the attachment of Act No. 285 by reference.  
YEA: Morriss, Wood, Huntoon, Wilcox, Weatherwax, Carpenter, Huard, Moore  
NAY: None  
Motion carried.